

The Truth of Marian Coredeption, the Papal Magisterium and the Present Situation

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Slightly over eighteen years ago I participated in a symposium that took place at the shrine of Our Lady in Fatima with the title “Mary, Unique Cooperator in the Redemption”.¹ My own paper on that occasion bore the same title that I have chosen for my presentation on this occasion as well. While in the course of these intervening years the truth has not changed because it cannot change and the authentic papal magisterium has not changed because it cannot change, the present situation, however, is obviously no longer what it was from the 3rd to the 7th of May in 2005 immediately after the death of Pope Saint John Paul II and the election of Pope Benedict XVI. What is particularly fortuitous on this occasion is that two symposia on this same topic are taking place on these two most appropriate days in 2023 as the Church celebrates the Triumph of the Cross and the Sorrows of Mary in Dundee, Scotland and in Steubenville, Ohio at the Franciscan University. I am very honored to be a link between these two symposia, while noting that the Reverend Dr. Manfred Hauke, who is participating in the Dundee symposium, made an important contribution to the Fatima symposium in 2005 and Dr. Mark Miravalle, who played a major role in organizing the Fatima symposium, plays a similar role at the Franciscan University of Steubenville today. I pray that both of these symposia, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, will kindle anew great ardor for the truth of Mary’s active collaboration in the work of the Redemption throughout the universal Church.

I. Mary, the New Eve

Even though the explicit treatment of Mary’s collaboration in the work of redemption has appeared in ever sharper relief in the papal

¹ *Maria “Unica Cooperatrice alla Redenzione”. Atti del Simposio sul Mistero della Corredenzione Mariana, Fatima, Portogallo 3-7 Maggio 2005* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2005).

magisterium only within the past two centuries, there is well founded reason to say that it is part and parcel of the tradition that has come down to us from the Apostles and makes progress in the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (cf. *Dei Verbum* #8). The indissoluble link between the “Woman” and “her seed,” the Messiah, is already presented to us in the protoevangelium (Gen. 3:15)², where the first adumbrations of God’s saving plan pierce through the darkness caused by man’s sin. The identification of the “Woman” with Mary is already implicit in the second and nineteenth chapters of the Gospel of St. John where Jesus addresses his mother as “Woman”³ and in the twelfth chapter of the Book of Revelation.⁴ The Apostle Paul had already explicitly identified Jesus as the “new Adam” (cf. Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 45-49) and it was a natural and logical development for the sub-Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr (+ c. 165), Irenaeus of Lyons (+ c. 202) and Tertullian (+ c. 220), to see Mary as the “new Eve”⁵, the God-given helpmate of the “new Adam”. Virtually all of the experts are agreed that the classic presentation of Mary as the “New Eve” achieves full maturity in the writings of Saint Irenaeus of Lyons. Of Irenaeus’ Eve-Mary comparison the late René Laurentin says:

Irenaeus gives bold relief to a theme only outlined by Justin [Martyr]. With Irenaeus the Eve-Mary parallel is not simply a literary effect nor a gratuitous improvisation, but an integral part of his theology of salvation. One idea is the key to this theology: God’s saving plan is not a mending or a “patch-up job” done on his first product; it is a resumption of the work from the beginning, a regeneration from head downwards, a

² Cf. Michael O’Carroll, C.S.Sp., *Theotokos: A Theological Encyclopedia of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc.; Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1982) 370-373; Stefano Manelli, FI, *All Generations Shall Call Me Blessed: Biblical Mariology* Revised and Enlarged Second Edition (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2005) 20-37; Brant Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of Mary: Unveiling the Mother of the Mother of the Messiah* (NY: Image, 2018) 14-18

³ Cf. *Theotokos* 373-375; Manelli 364-383; Pitre 185-193.

⁴ Cf. *Theotokos* 375-377; Manelli 394-414; Pitre 60-63.

⁵ Cf. *Theotokos* 139-141.

recapitulation in Christ. In this radical restoration each one of the elements marred by the fall is renewed in its very root. In terms of the symbol developed by Irenaeus, the knot badly tied at the beginning is unknotted, untied in reverse (*recirculatio*): Christ takes up anew the role of Adam, the cross that of the tree of life. In this ensemble Mary, who corresponds to Eve, holds a place of first importance. According to Irenaeus her role is necessary to the logic of the divine plan. ...

With Irenaeus this line of thought attains a force of expression that has never been surpassed. Later writers will broaden the bases of the comparison but to our day no one has expressed it in a way more compact or more profound.⁶

Before moving on to the papal magisterium as such, it will not be out of place to underscore why I believe Saint Irenaeus is such an important figure for our consideration. Not only is he invoked implicitly – by being included among the Fathers – in the Marian magisterium of Blessed Pius IX, but he is also referred to explicitly in that of the Venerable Pius XII, Pope Saint Paul VI, the Second Vatican Council and most notably in that of John Paul II. The notable scholar Jaroslav Pelikan provides us with a fascinating hint about the importance of the Bishop of Lyons:

When it is suggested that for the development of the doctrine of Mary, such Christian writers as Irenaeus in a passage like this [in *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*] “are important witnesses for the state of the tradition in the late second century, *if not earlier*” that raises the interesting question of whether Irenaeus had invented the concept of Mary as the Second Eve here or was drawing on a deposit of tradition that had come to him from “earlier.” It is difficult, in reading his *Against*

⁶ René Laurentin, *A Short Treatise of the Virgin Mary* trans. by Charles Neumann, S.M. (Washington, N.J.: AMI Press, 1991) 54, 57. Italics (except for “recapitulation” and “recirculatio”) my own.

Heresies and especially his *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, to avoid the impression that he cited the parallelism of Eve and Mary so matter-of-factly without arguing or having to defend the point because he could assume that his readers would willingly go along with it, or even that they were already familiar with it. *One reason that this could be so might have been that, on this issue as on so many others, Irenaeus regarded himself as the guardian and the transmitter of a body of belief that had come to him from earlier generations, from the very apostles. A modern reader does need to consider the possibility, perhaps even to concede the possibility, that in so regarding himself Irenaeus may just have been right and that therefore it may already have become natural in the second half of the second century to look at Eve, the “mother of all living,” and Mary, the mother of Christ, together, understanding and interpreting each of the two most important women in human history on the basis of the other.*⁷

Put simply, Irenaeus was a disciple of Polycarp who was a disciple of the Apostle John. There is every reason, then, to believe that what he transmits to us about Mary as the “New Eve” is an integral part of “the Tradition that comes to us from the Apostles”.⁸

This datum of the tradition has come into ever clearer focus through the teaching of the Popes in the course of the past one hundred fifty years, most notably in Blessed Pope Pius IX’s Bull of 1854, *Ineffabilis Deus*⁹, Pius XII’s Apostolic Constitution of 1950, *Munificentissimus*

⁷ Jaroslav Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996) 43-44. Italics in second part of passage my own.

⁸ Cf. my study “*Maria Reparatrix: Tradition, Magisterium, Liturgy*” in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross*, III: *Maria, Mater Unitatis – Acts of the Third International Symposium on Marian Coredemption* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2003) 223-232.

⁹ Cf. my study “*The Immaculate Coredemptrix in the Life and Teaching of Bl. Pius IX*” in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross*, V: *Redemption and Coredemption under the Sign of the Immaculate Conception – Acts of the Fifth International Symposium on Marian Coredemption* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2005) 508-541.

*Deus*¹⁰, and his Encyclicals *Mystici Corporis* of 1943¹¹ and *Ad Cali Reginam* of 1954. In the last mentioned document the Holy Father spoke in these explicit terms:

From these considerations we can conclude as follows: Mary in the work of redemption was by God's will joined with Jesus Christ, the cause of salvation, in much the same way as Eve was joined with Adam, the cause of death. Hence it can be said that the work of our salvation was brought about by a "restoration" (St. Irenaeus) in which the human race, just as it was doomed to death by a virgin, was saved by a virgin. Moreover, she was chosen to be the Mother of Christ "in order to have part with Him in the redemption of the human race" [Pius XI, *Auspicatus profecto*].

"She it was, who, free from all stain of personal or original sin, always most closely united with her Son, offered Him up to the Eternal Father on Calvary, along with the sacrifice of her own claims as His mother and of her own mother love, thus acting as a new Eve on behalf of Adam's children, ruined by his unhappy fall" [*Mystici Corporis*].

From this we conclude that just as Christ, the new Adam, is our King not only because He is the Son of God, but also because He is our Redeemer, so also in a somewhat similar manner the Blessed Virgin is Queen not only as Mother of God, but also because she was associated as the second Eve with the new Adam..¹²

¹⁰ *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* [subsequently *AAS*] 42 (1950) 768; #519]; *Our Lady: Papal Teachings* trans. Daughters of St. Paul (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1961) #383 [subsequently *OL*].

¹¹ *AAS* 35 (1943) 247-248; *OL* #383.

¹² *Quibus ex rationibus huiusmodi argumentum eruitur: si Maria, in spirituali procuranda salute, cum Iesu Christo, ipsius salutis principio, ex Dei placito sociata fuit, et quidem simili quodam modo, quo Heva fuit cum Adam, mortis*

We may note that with the clarity which characterized all of his dogmatic statements the great Pontiff insisted on Mary's active, but subordinate role in the work of our salvation and in doing so he invoked the authority of Saint Irenaeus, the "father of Catholic dogmatic theology," who, on the 21st of January 2022, was duly recognized by Pope Francis as a Doctor of the Church.

The theme of Mary as the "New Eve", with explicit references to Saint Irenaeus, was duly cited in chapter eight of the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* #56 thusly:

Rightly, therefore, the Fathers see Mary not merely as passively engaged by God, but as freely cooperating in the work of man's salvation through faith and obedience. For, as St. Irenaeus says, she "being obedient, became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race." Hence not a few of the early Fathers gladly assert with him in their preaching: "the knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience: what the virgin Eve bound through her disbelief, Mary loosened

principio, consociata, ita ut asseverari possit nostrae salutis opus, secundum quandam «recapitulationem» peractum fuisse, in qua genus humanum, sicut per virginem morti adstrictum fuit, ita per virginem salvatur; si praeterea asseverari itidem potest hanc gloriosissimam Dominam ideo fuisse Christi matrem delectam «ut redimendi generis humani consors efficeretur», et si reapse «ipsa fuit quae vel propriae vel hereditariae labis expers, arctissime semper cum Filio suo coniuncta, eundem in Golgotha, una cum maternorum iurium maternique amoris sui holocausto, nove veluti Heva, pro omnibus Adae filiis, miserando eius lapsu foedatis, aeterno Patri obtulit»; inde procul dubio concludere licet, quemadmodum Christus, novus Adam, non tantum quia Dei Filius est, Rex dici debet, sed etiam quia Redemptor est noster, ita quodam analogiae modo, Beatissimam Virginem esse Reginam non tantummodo quia mater Dei est, verum etiam quod nova veluti Heva cum novo Adam consociata fuit. AAS 46 (1954) 634-635; OL #705.

by her faith.” Comparing Mary with Eve, they call her “Mother of the living,” and frequently claim: “death through Eve, life through Mary.”¹³

In his *Professio Fidei* of 30 June 1968 Paul VI, expressly citing *Lumen Gentium* #56 as a source, called Mary the “New Eve”¹⁴ and Pope John Paul II without a doubt made more references to Mary as the “New Eve” and examined the implications of this title more than all of his predecessors combined.¹⁵

II. Development of Doctrine

In his catechesis of 25 October 1995 Pope John Paul II traced the history of doctrinal development regarding Our Lady’s cooperation in the work of Redemption in broad strokes, beginning, not surprisingly with the Bishop of Lyons:

At the end of the second century, St. Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp, already pointed out Mary’s contribution to

¹³ *Merito igitur SS. Patres Mariam non mere passive a Deo adhibitam, sed libera fide et oboedientia humanae saluti cooperantem censent. Ipsa enim, ut ait S. Irenaeus, «oboediens et sibi et universo generi humano causa facta est saluti». Unde non pauci Patres antiqui in praedicatione sua cum eo libenter asserunt: «Hevae inobedientiae nodum solutionem accepisse per oboedientiam Mariae; quod alligavit virgo Heva per incredulitatem, hoc virginem Mariam solvisse per fidem»; et comparatione cum Heva instituta, Mariam «matrem viventium» appellant, sapiusque affirmant: «mors per Hevam, vita per Mariam».* Austin Flannery, OP, General Editor, *Vatican Council II Vol.1: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* revised edition (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Company, 1996) 416 [subsequently Flannery].

¹⁴ *AAS* 60 (1968) 438-439.

¹⁵ Cf. the Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem* of 15 August 1988 #11 [*Inseg* XI/3 (1988) 337-340]; general audience of 24 January 1996 [*Inseg* XIX/1 (1996) 115-117; Pope John Paul II, *Theotókos – Woman, Mother, Disciple: A Catechesis on Mary, Mother of God* (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2000) [Subsequently *MCat*] 61-63; general audience of 29 May 1996 #3-5 [*Inseg* XIX/1 (1996) 1390-1392, *MCat* 93-96]; general audience of 18 September 1996 [*Inseg* XIX/2 (1996) 372-374; *MCat* 136-138]. These are just a few of the more important citations.

the work of salvation. He understood the value of Mary's consent at the time of the Annunciation, recognizing in the Virgin of Nazareth's obedience to and faith in the angel's message the perfect antithesis of Eve's disobedience and disbelief, with a beneficial effect on humanity's destiny. In fact, just as Eve caused death, so Mary, with her "yes", became "a cause of salvation" for herself and for all mankind (cf. *Adv. Haer.*, III, 22, 4; *SC* 211, 441). But this affirmation was not developed in a consistent and systematic way by the other Fathers of the Church.

Instead, this doctrine was systematically worked out for the first time at the end of the 10th century in the *Life of Mary* by a Byzantine monk, John the Geometer. Here Mary is united to Christ in the whole work of Redemption, sharing, according to God's plan, in the Cross and suffering for our salvation. She remained united to the Son "in every deed, attitude and wish" (cf. *Life of Mary*, Bol. 196, f. 123 v.).

Mary's association with Jesus' saving work came about through her Mother's love, a love inspired by grace, which conferred a higher power on it. Love freed of passion proves to be the most compassionate (cf. *ibid.*, Bol. 196, f. 123 v.)¹⁶

¹⁶*Alla fine del secondo secolo sant'Ireneo, discepolo di Policarpo, pone già in evidenza il contributo di Maria all'opera della salvezza. Egli ha compreso il valore del consenso di Maria al momento dell'Annunciazione, riconoscendo nell'obbedienza e nella fede della Vergine di Nazaret al messaggio dell'angelo l'antitesi perfetta della disobbedienza e dell'incredulità di Eva, con effetto benefico sul destino dell'umanità. Infatti, come Eva ha causato la morte, così Maria, col suo "sì", è divenuta "causa di salvezza" per se stessa e per tutti gli uomini (cf. Adv. Haer. 3,22,4; SC 211,441). Ma si tratta di un'affermazione non sviluppata in modo organico e abituale dagli altri Padri della Chiesa. Tale dottrina,*

It took almost a millennium, but the seed of the doctrine already expounded by Saint Irenaeus would continue to bear fruit.

III. Papal Teaching on Mary's Union with Jesus in the Work of Redemption before the Council

In his Rosary Encyclical *Jucunda Semper* of 8 September 1894 Pope Leo XIII drew out, even more explicitly than his predecessor, Mary's sufferings on Calvary:

When she professed herself the handmaid of the Lord for the mother's office, and when, at the foot of the altar, she offered up her whole self with her child Jesus – then and thereafter she took her part in the painful expiation offered by her Son for the sins of the world. It is certain, therefore, that she suffered in the very depths of her soul with His most bitter sufferings and with His torments. Finally, it was before the eyes of Mary that the divine Sacrifice for which she had borne and nurtured the Victim was to be finished. As we contemplate Him in the last and most piteous of these mysteries, we see that “there stood by the cross of Jesus Mary His Mother” (Jn. 19:25), who, in a miracle of love, so that she might receive us as her sons, offered generously to Divine

invece, viene sistematicamente elaborata per la prima volta, alla fine del decimo secolo, nella “Vita di Maria” di un monaco bizantino, Giovanni il Geometra. Maria è qui unita a Cristo in tutta l’opera redentrice partecipando, secondo il piano divino, alla Croce e soffrendo per la nostra salvezza. Ella è rimasta unita al Figlio “in ogni azione, atteggiamento e volontà” (Vita di Maria, Bol. 196, f. 122 v.). L’associazione di Maria all’opera salvifica di Gesù avviene mediante il suo amore di Madre, un amore animato dalla grazia, che le conferisce una forza superiore: la più esente da passione si mostra la più compassionevole (cf. Vita di Maria, Bol. 196, f. 123 v.).] Inseg XVIII/2 (1995) 934-935 [ORE 1414:11; MCat 25-26].

Justice her own Son, and in her Heart died with Him,
stabbed by the sword of sorrow¹⁷

In this passage Leo touched upon themes that his successors would continue to develop in an ever swelling crescendo in the course of the twentieth century: Mary's offering of herself in union with Jesus in expiation for the sins of the world, her "mystical death" described in terms of "dying with him in her heart" [*cum eo commoriens corde*] and the spiritual maternity which flows from her participation in the sacrifice.

Surely one of the most famous passages on this theme is that which we find in Benedict XV's Letter *Inter Sodalicia* of 22 May 1918:

The choosing and invoking of Our Lady of Sorrows as patroness of a happy death is in full conformity with Catholic Doctrine and with the pious sentiment of the Church. It is also based on a wise and well-founded hope. In fact, according to the common teaching of the Doctors it was God's design that the Blessed Virgin Mary, apparently absent from the public life of Jesus, should assist Him when He was dying nailed to the Cross. Mary suffered and, as it were, nearly died with her suffering Son; for the salvation of mankind she renounced her mother's rights and, as far as it depended

¹⁷ *Quum enim se Deo vel ancillam ad matris officium exhibuit vel totam cum Filio in templo devovit, utroque ex facto iam tum consors cum eo extitit laboriosa pro humano genere expiationis: ex quo etiam in acerbissimis Filii angoribus et cruciamentis, maxime animo condoluisse dubitandum non est. Ceterum praesente ipsa et spectante, divinum illud sacrificium erat conficiendum, cui victimam de se generosa aluerat; quod in eisdem mysteriis postremum flebilisusque observatur: stabat iuxta Crucem Iesu Maria Mater eius, quae tacta in nos caritate immensa ut susciperet filios, Filium ipsa suum ultro obtulit iustitiae divinae, cum eo commoriens corde, doloris gladio transfixa* Amleto Tondini, Ed., *Le Encicliche Mariane* second edition (Rome: Angelo Belardetti Editore, 1954) [subsequently Tondini] 204-206; OL #151.

on her, offered her Son to placate divine justice; so we may well say that she with Christ redeemed mankind.¹⁸

It should be noted here that Benedict indicates that Mary's presence beneath the Cross of Christ was "not without divine design" [*non sine divino consilio*], the very same phrase reproduced verbatim in *Lumen Gentium* #58, although with no reference to this text. Evidently deriving from the principle that "God, by one and the same decree, had established the origin of Mary and the Incarnation of Divine Wisdom,"¹⁹ Benedict XV held that God had also predestined Mary's union with her Son in his sacrifice to the extent of offering him in sacrifice insofar as she was able to do so [*quantum ad se pertinebat*]. It should also be pointed out here that Benedict was certainly not stating that the sacrifice of Jesus was not sufficient to redeem the world, but rather that, on the basis of the understanding of the "recapitulation" already articulated by Saint Irenaeus, God wished the sacrifice of the New Eve to be joined to that of the New Adam. He wished the active participation of a human creature to be joined with the sacrifice of the God-man.

Let us consider now how this theme is treated in two encyclicals of the Venerable Pope Pius XII. Our first passage comes from the Encyclical *Mystici Corporis* of 29 June 1943, promulgated during the height of World War II:

¹⁸ *Quod autem Virgo Perdolens bonae mortis Patrona deligitur atque invocatur, id cum mirifice doctrinae catholicae pioque Ecclesiae sensui respondet, tum spe innititur recte feliciterque collocata. Enimvero tradunt communiter Ecclesiae Doctores, B. Mariam Virginem, quae a vita Iesu Christi publica veluti abesse visa est, si Ipsi mortem appetenti et Cruci suffixo adfuit, non sine divino consilio adfuisse. Scilicet ita cum Filio patiente et moriente passa est et pæne commortua, sic materna in Filium jura pro hominum salute abdicavit placandæque Dei iustitiae, quantum ad se pertinebat, Filium immolavit, ut dici merito queat, Ipsam cum Christo humanum genus redemisse. AAS 10 (1918) 181-182; OL #267.*

¹⁹ Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus* of 8 December 1854 in Tondini 32; OL #34.

She [Mary] it was who, immune from all sin, personal or inherited, and ever most closely united with her Son, offered Him on Golgotha to the Eternal Father together with the holocaust of her maternal rights and motherly love, like a new Eve, for all the children of Adam contaminated through this unhappy fall, and thus she, who was the mother of our Head according to the flesh, became by a new title of sorrow and glory the spiritual mother of all His members.²⁰

Let us underscore here the emphasis on Mary's offering of Christ to the Eternal Father as a "New Eve", effectively drawing out the implications of the teaching of Saint Irenaeus. He would offer yet another beautiful perspective on this joint offering of the Son and the Mother in his great Sacred Heart Encyclical *Haurietis Aquas* of 15 May 1956:

That graces for the Christian family and for the whole human race may flow more abundantly from devotion to the Sacred Heart, let the faithful strive to join it closely with devotion to the Immaculate Heart of the Mother of God. By the will of God, the most Blessed Virgin Mary was inseparably joined with Christ in accomplishing the work of man's redemption, so that our salvation flows from the love of Jesus Christ and His sufferings intimately united with the love and sorrows of His Mother²¹

²⁰ *Ipsa fuit, quæ vel propria, vel hereditaria labis expers, arctissime semper cum Filio suo coniuncta, eundem in Golgotha, una cum maternorum iurium maternique amoris sui holocausto, nova veluti Eva, pro omnibus Adæ filiis, miserando eius lapsu foedatis, Æterno Patri obtulit; ita quidem, ut quæ corpore erat nostri Capitis mater, spiritu facta esset, ob novum etiam doloris gloriæque titulum, eius membrorum omnium mater. AAS 35 (1943) 247-248; OL #383.*

²¹ Quo vero ex cultu erga augustissimum Cor Iesu in christianam familiam, imo et in omne genus hominum copiosiora emolumenta fluant, curent cristifideles, ut eidem cultus etiam erga Immaculatum

In this classic passage every word is carefully weighed and measured in order to make a declaration on the redemption and Mary's role in it, which remains unparalleled for its clarity and precision. No doubt for this reason it is included in Denzinger-Hünemann's *Enchiridion Symbolorum*.²² Pius professes that "our salvation flows from the love of Jesus Christ and His sufferings" [*ex Iesu Christi caritate eiusque cruciatibus*] which are "intimately united with the love and sorrows of His Mother" [*cum amore doloribusque ipsius Matris intime consociatis*]. The Latin preposition *ex* indicates Jesus as the source of our redemption while three other Latin words, *cum* and *intime consociatis*, indicate Mary's inseparability from the source. Finally, let us note Pius' insistence on the fact that this union of Jesus with Mary for our salvation has been ordained "by the will of God" [*ex Dei voluntate*].

On this topic I have only been able to highlight some of the most important texts from among the numerous passages which could have been cited,²³ but before moving on to the eve of the Council, it is necessary to speak of the use of the term "Coredemptrix" to describe Mary's active participation in the work of our redemption. I have sketched elsewhere the origins of this term and how it had entered into pontifical documents and was used three times by Pope

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

²² Denzinger, Heinrich. *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, 43rd Edition edited by Peter Hünemann for the bilingual edition and for the English edition by Robert Fastiggi and Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012) #3926.

²³ For further references, cf. Arthur Burton Calkins, "Il Mistero di Maria Corredentrica nel Magistero Pontificio" in Autori Vari, *Maria Corredentrica: Storia e Teologia I* (Frigento [AV]: Casa Mariana Editrice «Bibliotheca Corredemptionis B. V. Mariae» Studi e Ricerche 1, 1998) [subsequently *MMC1*] 188-218 and *Ibid.*, "The Mystery of Mary Coredemptrix in the Papal Magisterium" in Mark I. Miravalle, S.T.D. (ed.), *Mary Co-redemptrix: Doctrinal Issues Today* (Goleta, CA: Queenship Publishing Company, 2002) [subsequently *MMC2*] 64-79.

Pius XI in addresses and a prayer.²⁴ It had, in effect, become the most common way to indicate Mary's active role in the work of our redemption, secondary, subordinate and dependent upon Jesus and at the same time altogether unique in comparison with any other human being.

IV. The Situation on the Eve of the Second Vatican Council

First, it must be remembered that the Second Vatican Council was convoked just at a time when Marian doctrine and piety had reached an apex²⁵ which had been building on a popular level since the apparition of Our Lady to Saint Catherine Labouré in 1830²⁶ and on the magisterial level since the time of the dogmatic definition of the Immaculate Conception on 8 December 1854.²⁷ This Marian orientation had accelerated notably during the nineteen-year reign of the Venerable Pope Pius XII (1939-1958) with the Consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on 31 October 1942,²⁸ the dogmatic definition of the Assumption of Our Lady on 1 November 1950,²⁹ the establishment of the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1944³⁰ and of the Queenship of Mary in the Marian Year of 1954.³¹

²⁴ Cf. MMC1:147-153; MMC2:29-35.

²⁵ Cf. Michael O'Carroll, C.S.Sp., "Still Mediatrix of All Graces?", *Miles Immaculata* 24 (1988) 121-122; *Theotokos* 351-352.

²⁶ This apparition of Our Lady would be succeeded by a number of others in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which would eventually be recognized by the Church as worthy of credence. Cf. Donal Foley, *Marian Apparitions, the Bible, and the Modern World* (Herefordshire: Gracewing, 2002) 113-346.

²⁷ Cf. *Theotokos* 179-180. Interestingly, Father O'Carroll acknowledges an impetus for the definition in the apparition of 1830, cf. *Theotokos* 182.

²⁸ Cf. Arthur Burton Calkins, *Totus Tuus: Pope Saint John Paul II's Program of Marian Consecration and Entrustment* Second edition, revised and brought up to the end of the Pontificate of Pope Saint John Paul II (New Bedford: Academy of the Immaculate, 2017) 100-103.

²⁹ Cf. *Theotokos* 555-556.

³⁰ Cf. *Totus Tuus* 101-102.

³¹ Cf. *Totus Tuus* 105-108.

Secondly, and as a consequence of this comprehensive “Marian movement”, much study, discussion and debate had been devoted to Mary’s role in salvation history, specifically to the topics of coredemption and mediation. While there had been vigorous disputation regarding Mary’s active collaboration in the work of our redemption during the reign of Pope Pius XII, by the time of the International Mariological Congress in Lourdes in 1958 there was a fairly unanimous consensus regarding Our Lady’s true cooperation in acquiring the universal grace of redemption. Not surprisingly, then, a good number of bishops entered the Council with the desire to see a comprehensive treatment of these questions. Father Michael O’Carroll, C.S.Sp. informs us that of the 54 bishops at the Council who wanted a conciliar pronouncement on Mary as Coredemptrix, 36 sought a definition and 11 a dogma of faith on this matter.³² On the related question of Mary’s mediation, he tells us that 362 bishops desired a conciliar statement on Mary’s mediation while 266 of them asked for a dogmatic definition.³³ Father Besutti, on the other hand, holds that over 500 bishops were asking for such a definition.³⁴ A fundamental reason why no such definition emanated from the Council was the expressed will of Pope Saint John XXIII that the Council was to be primarily pastoral in its orientation, specifically excluding any new dogmatic definitions.³⁵

Thirdly, at the very same time another current was entering into the mainstream of Catholic life, that of “ecumenical sensitivity”. While Father Besutti confirms that the word “Coredemptrix” did appear in

³² Cf. *Theotokos* 308.

³³ Cf. Michael O’Carroll, C.S.Sp., “Mary’s Mediation: Vatican II and John Paul II” in *Virgo Liber Verbi: Miscellanea di studi in onore di P. Giuseppe M. Besutti, O.S.M.* (Rome: Edizioni «Marianum», 1991) 543; *Theotokos* 352. In the latter article Father O’Carroll gave the number of Fathers asking for a statement on Mary’s mediation as 382. Toniolo gives the number as 381, cf. Toniolo 34.

³⁴ G. Besutti, O.S.M., *Lo schema mariano al Concilio Vaticano II* (Rome: Edizione Marianum-Desclée, 1966) 17.

³⁵ Cf. Alessandro M. Apollonio, *Il “calvario teologico” della Corredenzione mariana* (Castelpetroso, IS: Casa Mariana Editrice, 1999) 14; Serafino M. Lanzetta, *Vatican II, A Pastoral Council: Hermeneutics of Council Teaching* (Leominster, Herefordshire: Gracewing, 2016) 1-53.

the original schema of the Marian document prepared in advance for the Council,³⁶ the *Prænotanda* to the first conciliar draft document or schema on Our Lady contained these words:

Certain expressions and words used by Supreme Pontiffs have been omitted, which, in themselves are absolutely true, but which may only be understood with difficulty by separated brethren (in this case Protestants). Among such words may be numbered the following: “Coredemptrix of the human race” [Pius X, Pius XI]; “Reparatrix of the whole world” [Leo XIII]³⁷

This original prohibition was rigorously respected and hence the term “Coredemptrix” was not used in any of the official documents promulgated by the Council and, undeniably, “ecumenical sensitivity” was **the** prime factor in its avoidance³⁸ along with a distaste for the general language of mediation on the part of more progressive theologians.³⁹ I believe that it is more than time to question the wisdom and effectiveness of such a highly questionable strategy.⁴⁰

³⁶ *Lo Schema* 28-29; cf. Ermanno M. Toniolo, O.S.M., *La Beata Maria Vergine Nel Concilio Vaticano II* (Rome: Centro di Cultura Mariana «Madre della Chiesa», 2004) 36.

³⁷ Omissæ sunt expressiones et vocabula quædam a Summis Pontificibus adhibita, quæ licet in se verissima, possent difficulius intelligi a fratribus separatim (in casu a protestantibus). Inter alia vocabula adnumerari queunt sequentia: «Corredemptrix humani generis» [S. Pius X, Pius XI] ... «Reparatrix totius orbis» Leo XIII. *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani Secundi*, Vol. I, Pt. VI (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1971) 99; my trans. Cf. Toniolo 98-99; Gabriele M. Roschini, O.S.M., *Maria Santissima nella Storia della Salvezza II* (Isola del Liri: Tipografia M. Pisani, 1969) 111-112.

³⁸ Cf. Thomas Mary Sennott, O.S.B., “Mary Mediatrix of All Graces, Vatican II and Ecumenism,” *Miles Immaculatæ* 24 (1988) 151-167; *Theotokos* 242-245.

³⁹ Cf. Ralph M. Wiltgen, S.V.D., *The Rhine Flows into the Tiber: A History of Vatican II* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1985, c. 1967) 90-95, 153-159.

⁴⁰ Cf. My exchange with the then don [later Archbishop & Cardinal] Angelo Amato. Angelo Amato, “Verso Un Altro Dogma Mariano? Marianum LVIII (1996) 229-232 and my response, “Towards Another Marian Dogma? A Response to Father Angelo Amato,” *Marianum* LIX (1997) 163-165.

We need to note further that the working draft document on Our Lady, which eventually became chapter 8 of *Lumen Gentium* was the single most contested text of the council and went into eight drafts. Its main drafters were Padre Karlo Balić⁴¹, a Croatian Franciscan scholar and founder of the Pontifical International Marian Academy [PAMI] who managed to insert footnotes in the final document referring to papal documents, which spoke clearly of Marian coredeemption, and Monsignor Gérard Philips⁴² of the University of Louvain. On at least one occasion Balić resigned from the drafting committee and subsequently returned. Father Serafino Lanzetta has dealt with the complexity of this situation in his magisterial book *Vatican II, A Pastoral Council*.⁴³

V. The Second Vatican Council

The above discussion already gives some idea about the various currents that came to the fore at the time of the Second Vatican Council and I have dealt with them as well in other places.⁴⁴ Here I will limit myself to the positive presentation on Our Lady's active participation in the work of the Redemption which emerged in the Council's great Marian synthesis, chapter 8 of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*. *Lumen Gentium* #56 speaks forthrightly of Mary's collaboration in the work of redemption:

Committing herself whole-heartedly to God's saving will and impeded by no sin, she devoted herself totally, as a handmaid of the Lord, to the person and work of her

⁴¹ Cf. *Theotokos* 68; Dinko Aračić, *La Dottrina Mariologica negli Scritti di Carlo Balić* (Rome: Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis, 1980); Roberto de Mattei, *The Second Vatican Council: An Unwritten Story* (Fitzwilliam, NH: Loreto Publications, 2012) 289-299.

⁴² Cf. G. Philips, "La Vierge au IIe Concile du Vatican et l'Avenir de la Mariologie" in Hubert du Manoir, S.J. (ed.), *Maria: Études sur la Sainte Vierge*, VIII (Paris: Beauchesne et Ses Fils, 1971) 43-88; de Mattei 300-303.

⁴³ Cf. Lanzetta 363-418.

⁴⁴ Cf. *MMC*1:154-161 and *MMC*2:35-41.

Son, under and with him, serving the mystery of redemption, by the grace of Almighty God.⁴⁵

In the same paragraph there is further specification about the active nature of Mary's service which I have already cited in the discussion of Mary as the "New Eve". Quite clearly, then, the Council Fathers speak of an active collaboration of Mary in the work of the redemption and they illustrate this with the Eve-Mary antithesis as found in Saint Irenaeus.

Further, the Council Fathers did not content themselves with a general statement on Mary's collaboration in the work of the redemption, but went on to underscore the personal nature of the "union of the mother with the Son in the work of salvation" [*Matris cum Filio in opere salutari coniunctio*] throughout Jesus' hidden life (#57) and public life (#58). Finally, in #58 they stress how she:

...faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross, where she stood, in keeping with the divine plan, enduring with her only begotten Son the intensity of his suffering, associating herself with his sacrifice in her mother's heart, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this victim which was born of her.⁴⁶

Not only, then, does the Council teach that Mary was generally associated with Jesus in the work of redemption throughout his life, but that she associated herself with his sacrifice and consented to it. Furthermore, the Council Fathers state in #61 that Mary:

...shared her Son's sufferings as he died on the cross. Thus, in a wholly singular way she cooperated by her

⁴⁵ Salvificam voluntatem Dei, pleno corde et nullo retardata peccato, complectens, semetipsam ut Domini ancillam personæ et operi Filii sui totaliter devovit, sub Ipso et cum Ipso, omnipotentis Dei gratia, mysterio redemptionis inserviens. *Flannery* 416 (I have altered the word order of the translation).

⁴⁶ *Flannery* 417.

obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in the work of the Savior in restoring supernatural life to souls.⁴⁷

Not only did Mary consent to the sacrifice, but she also united herself to it. In these final two statements we find a synthesis of the previous papal teaching on Our Lady's active collaboration in the work of the redemption as well as a stable point of reference for the teaching of the postconciliar Popes.

VI. The Immediate Postconciliar Situation

While it may well be argued, as Pope John Paul II did, that:

...the Council's entire discussion of Mary remains vigorous and balanced, and the topics themselves, though not fully defined, received significant attention in the overall treatment,⁴⁸

it is also true that the battles on Our Lady's mediatorial role which took place on the council floor and behind the scenes continue to have their negative effects.⁴⁹

Effectively, the interpretation of the Second Vatican Council's Marian treatise found most frequently in the English-speaking world and very often elsewhere is represented by Cardinal Avery Dulles, S.J.:

The achievements of Vatican II have been called a watershed. The chapter on Mary in the Constitution on the Church seemed to mark the end of an isolated, maximizing Mariology, and the inclusion of Mary in the theology of the Church.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Flannery 418.

⁴⁸ *Inseg* XVIII/2 (1995) 1369; *MCat* 51.

⁴⁹ Cf. *Theotokos* 351-356.

⁵⁰ Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J., "Mary Since Vatican II: Decline and Recovery," *Marian Studies* LIII (2002) 12.

This departs notably from all of the commentaries on the Mariology of Vatican II offered by Pope Saint John Paul II in the course of his long pontificate and constitutes what I refer to as “Vatican II triumphalism”.

“Vatican II triumphalism” is virtually always a partial and one-sided interpretation of the council documents which favors a position espoused by one party at the time of the council and studiously avoids mention of any conciliar statements which would counterbalance the “favored” position. In the case of chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium* on “the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the mystery of Christ and of the Church”, the “favored” position heavily emphasizes Mary’s role as model of the Church. This reflects the rediscovered insights of ecclesiotypical Mariology (which sees an analogy between Mary and the Church) which were emerging again at the time of the council while very largely ignoring christotypical Mariology (which sees an analogy between Christ and Mary) and dismissing it as deductive and “privilege-centered”.⁵¹ The late Father Eamon R. Carroll, O.Carm. consistently presented ecclesiotypical Mariology as the great triumph of the council even as he disclosed his discomfort at the christotypical elements which remained in the eighth chapter of *Lumen Gentium*.

The Council did indeed favor the notion that Mary is model to the Church, even archetype, without using that word, but its chapter on Our Lady is in fact a complicated compromise that sought to keep a balance between Mary’s association with her Son’s mediation and the obedient faithful Virgin as ideal of the Church’s own response to the Lord.⁵²

⁵¹ Cf. the comments by Fathers George F. Kirwin, O.M.I. and Thomas Thompson, S.M. in Donald W. Buggert, O.Carm., Louis P. Rogge, O.Carm., Michael J. Wastag, O.Carm. (eds.), *Mother, Behold Your Son: Essays in Honor of Eamon R. Carroll, O.Carm.* (Washington, DC: The Carmelite Institute, 2001), 17 & 202.

⁵² Eamon R. Carroll, O.Carm., “Revolution in Mariology 1949-1989,” in *The Land of Carmel: Essays in Honor of Joachim Smet, O.Carm.* (Rome: Institutum Carmelitanum, 1991)

There were obviously many theological insights which were coming to the fore at the time of the council, largely due to the historical researches begun in the previous century in the areas of biblical, liturgical, patristic and ecclesiological studies. Many of these found expression in the council documents and specifically in chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium*. All too often, however, an overemphasis on certain of these insights on the part of the majority of commentators to the exclusion of the other insights, in fact, led to a “low Mariology” which focuses on Mary much more as “woman of faith,” “disciple” and “model” than as “spiritual mother” or “mediatrix” and tends to depreciate the importance of the antecedent papal magisterium. All too often the virtually exclusive emphasis on ecclesiotypical Mariology is coupled with the whole-hearted embracing of the historical-critical method of biblical exegesis and “lowest common denominator” ecumenism.⁵³ The practitioners of this methodology are almost always notably devoid of that awe before the mystery of Mary which comes instinctively to “little ones”.

VII. The Contribution of Pope Saint John Paul II

I have been studying the Marian magisterium of the late Pope John Paul II almost from the beginning of his pontificate and I believe that it is his greatest single legacy to the Catholic Church. While a large number of prominent modern mariologists have settled for presenting us with a one-sided interpretation of the Second Vatican Council’s Marian teaching in an almost exclusively ecclesiotypical key, Pope John Paul II managed to keep a remarkable balance in his presentation of Marian doctrine, emphasizing both the christotypical and ecclesiotypical dimensions. He quoted extensively from chapter 8 of *Lumen Gentium* both in his Marian Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater* as well as in the extensive corpus of his Marian teaching, opening the

457-458. On the former page one also finds his evaluation of Fathers Cyril Vollert, S.J., Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M. and Charles Balić, O.F.M., all of whom represent the christotypical approach to Mariology.

⁵³ Cf. Carroll, “Revolution in Mariology” 455.

conciliar texts up to their maximum potentiality, unlike so many “minimalists” who dominate the field of Mariology today. In terms of the number and depth of his Marian discourses, homilies, Angelus addresses and references in major documents, there is no doubt that his output exceeds that of all of his predecessors and successors combined.⁵⁴ His Marian magisterium alone would fill several large volumes and in assessing it, one should not forget the clear indications given in *Lumen Gentium* #25 for recognizing the authentic ordinary magisterium of the Roman Pontiff:

This loyal submission of the will and intellect must be given, in a special way, to the authentic teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff, even when he does not speak *ex cathedra* in such wise, indeed, that his supreme teaching authority be acknowledged with respect, and sincere assent be given to decisions made by him, conformably with his manifest mind and intention, which is made known principally either by the character of the documents in question, or by the frequency with which a certain doctrine is proposed, or by the manner in which the doctrine is formulated.

What is true in general about his Marian magisterium is true in particular about his teaching on Our Lady’s active cooperation in the work of the redemption or coredemption. His teaching in this area has been extraordinary and I have already published two lengthy essays on it⁵⁵ and some shorter ones⁵⁶ as well as treating it in the

⁵⁴ Cf. Giovanni Paolo II, *TOTUS TUUS. Il Magistero Mariano di Giovanni Paolo II* a cura di Arthur Burton Calkins (Siena: Edizioni Cantagalli, 2006). [Reviews in *Mariologisches Jahrbuch* 9 (2005) Bd. 2:102-105; *Milizia Mariana* LX:5 (Giugno 2006) 35; *Teresianum* LVII:2 (2006) 630-631; *Miles Immaculatae* XLII (Luglio-Dicembre 2006) 812-814; *Immaculata Mediatrix* VII, No. 2 (2007) 182-198; *Divinitas* LI «Nova Series» (2008) 338-339.]

⁵⁵ “Pope John Paul II’s Teaching on Marian Coredemption” in Mark I. Miravalle, S.T.D., (ed.), *Mary Coredemptrix, Mediatrix, Advocate, Theological Foundations II: Papal, Pneumatological, Ecumenical* (Santa Barbara, CA: Queenship Publishing Company, 1997) 113-147; also published in *Miles Immaculatae* XXXII (Luglio/Dicembre 1996) 474-508 and “Pope John Paul II’s Ordinary Magisterium on Marian Coredemption:

course of other studies of the papal magisterium on Marian coredeemption⁵⁷ without in any way having analyzed it exhaustively. To my knowledge, Monsignor Brunero Gherardini⁵⁸ and I are the only students of Mariology to have done so at length. Besides the passages which I have already presented in the course of this paper, I can only hope to share a small sampling of what I consider to be the most outstanding texts.

Perhaps occupying pride of place among these is his treatment of Our Lady's suffering in his Apostolic Letter *Salvifici Doloris*. In that letter he had already stated in #24 that:

The sufferings of Christ created the good of the world's Redemption. This good in itself is inexhaustible and infinite. No man can add anything to it.⁵⁹

That is a premise from which no Christian can depart, but the mystery is even deeper as he tells us in #25 of that same letter:

Consistent Teaching and More Recent Perspectives” in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross – II: Acts of the Second International Symposium on Marian Coredeemption* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2002) 1-36; also published in *Divinitas* XLV «Nova Series» (2002) 153-185.

⁵⁶ “The Heart of Mary as Coredeptrix in the Magisterium of Pope John Paul II” in *S. Tommaso Teologo: Ricerche in occasione dei due centenari accademici* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana “Studi Tomistici #59,” 1995) 320-335; “Il Cuore di Maria Corredentrice nel Magistero di papa Giovanni Paolo II” in *Corredemptrix: Annali Mariani 1996 del Santuario dell'Addolorata* (Castelpetroso, Isernia, 1997) 97-114; “Amorosamente consenziente al sacrificio del Figlio: Maria Corredentrice nei discorsi di Giovanni Paolo II,” *Madre di Dio* 67, N° 11 (Novembre 1999) 28-29.

⁵⁷ “Il Mistero di Maria Corredentrice nel Magistero Pontificio” in Autori Vari, *Maria Corredentrice: Storia e Teologia I* (Frigento [AV]: Casa Mariana Editrice «Bibliotheca Coredeemptionis B. V. Mariae» Studi e Ricerche 1, 1998) 141-220 and “The Mystery of Mary the Coredeptrix in the Papal Magisterium,” in Mark I. Miravalle, S.T.D. (ed.), *Mary Co-redeptrix: Doctrinal Issues Today* (Goleta, CA: Queenship Publishing Company, 2002) 25-92.

⁵⁸ Cf. Brunero Gherardini, *La Corredentrice nel mistero di Cristo e della Chiesa* (Rome: Edizioni Vivere In, 1998) 135-139.

⁵⁹ *Inseg* VII/1 (1984) 307 [St. Paul Editions 37].

It is especially consoling to note – and also accurate in accordance with the Gospel and history – that *at the side of Christ, in the first and most exalted place, there is always His Mother through the exemplary testimony that she bears by her whole life to this particular Gospel of suffering. In her, the many and intense sufferings were amassed in such an interconnected way that they were not only a proof of her unshakable faith but also a contribution to the Redemption of all. In reality, from the time of her secret conversation with the angel, she began to see in her mission as a mother her “destiny” to share, in a singular and unrepeatable way, in the very mission of her Son . . .*

It was on Calvary that Mary’s suffering, beside the suffering of Jesus, reached an intensity which can hardly be imagined from a human point of view but which was mysteriously and supernaturally fruitful for the Redemption of the world. Her ascent of Calvary and her standing at the foot of the cross together with the beloved disciple were a special sort of sharing in the redeeming death of her Son. And the words which she heard from His lips were a kind of solemn handing-over of this Gospel of suffering so that it could be proclaimed to the whole community of believers.

As a witness to her Son’s passion by her *presence*, and as a sharer in it by her *compassion*, Mary offered a unique contribution to the Gospel of suffering, by embodying in anticipation the expression of St. Paul which was quoted at the beginning. She truly has a special title to be able to claim that she “completes in her flesh” – as already in her heart – “what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions.”

In the light of the unmatched example of Christ, reflected with singular clarity in the life of His Mother, the Gospel of suffering, through the experience and words of the Apostles, becomes *an inexhaustible source for the ever new generations* that succeed one another in the history of the Church.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ *Inseg* VII/1 (1984) 308-309 [St. Paul Editions 40-41] Italics my own.

These two citations from *Salvifici Doloris* help us to hold in tension the dynamic truths which underlie Marian coredemption. On the one hand “The sufferings of Christ created the good of the world’s Redemption, this good in itself is inexhaustible and infinite. No man can add anything to it.” On the other hand, “Mary’s suffering [on Calvary], beside the suffering of Jesus, reached an intensity which can hardly be imagined from a human point of view but which was mysteriously and supernaturally fruitful for the Redemption of the world.” Thus, the Pope strikes that careful balance which is always a hallmark of Catholic truth: he upholds the principle that the sufferings of Christ were all-sufficient for the salvation of the world, while maintaining that Mary’s suffering “was mysteriously and supernaturally fruitful for the Redemption of the world.” Is this a contradiction? No. It is a mystery. The sacrifice of Jesus is all-sufficient, but God wished the suffering of the “New Eve,” the only perfect human creature, to be united to the suffering of the “New Adam”. Does that mean that Mary could redeem us by herself? By no means. But it does mean that she could make her own unique contribution to the sacrifice of Jesus as the “New Eve”, the “Mother of the living”.

VIII. The Present Situation

I hope that what I have already presented sets the context for the present situation. One might have thought that the clarity of the conciliar teaching on Mary’s active collaboration in the work of the Redemption and its elucidation by Pope Saint John Paul II would have solidified the magisterial teaching on the doctrine, but obviously that is not the case. Rather, the hidden directives in the *Prænotanda* forbidding the Council Fathers to even use the words Coredemptrix and Reparatrix are now marching orders with this further clarification: it was originally admitted that these words are absolutely true in themselves [*verissime in se*], but now this is to be denied. Why? I remain convinced that the ultimate reason lies in the promotion of (1.) “lowest common denominator ecumenism”; (2.) Catholic theologians genuinely ignorant of the great tradition and (3.) the acceptance by many of very deep Protestant prejudices against

Catholic magisterial teaching.⁶¹ All of these positions seem to have been present on the council floor.⁶²

At this stage, to my great sadness, I am forced to admit that the present official position of the Holy See is resolutely and deliberately set against the concept of Mary as Coredemptrix and therefore Mediatrix of all graces, a truth which was already clearly enunciated in the great Encyclical of Pope Saint Pius X, *Ad Diem Illum Lætissimum* of February 2nd 1904:

When the supreme hour of the Son came, beside the cross of Jesus there stood Mary, His Mother, not merely occupied in contemplating the cruel spectacle, but rejoicing that her only Son was offered for the salvation of mankind; and so entirely participating in His Passion that, if it had been possible “she would have gladly borne all the torments that her Son underwent” [St. Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, d. 48, ad Litt. dub. 4].

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

It cannot of course be denied that the dispensing of these treasures is the particular and supreme right of Jesus Christ, for they are the exclusive fruit of His death, who by His Nature is the Mediator between God and man. Nevertheless, by this union in sorrow and

⁶¹ Cf. Brunero Gherardini, “Unity and Coredemption” in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross – III: Maria, Mater Unitatis. Acts of the Third International Symposium on Marian Coredemption* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2003) 54-63; “Ecumenism on e Corredenzione” in *Maria “Unica Cooperatrice alla Redenzione”. Atti del Simposio sul Mistero della Corredenzione Mariana, Fatima, Portogallo 3-7 Maggio 2005* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2005) 463-475; *La Corredentrica nel mistero di Cristo e della Chiesa* (Rome: Edizioni Vivere In, 1998) 302-318.

⁶² Cf. Ralph M. Wiltgen, SVD, *The Rhine flows into the Tiber* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1985) 90-95;

suffering, We have said, which existed between the Mother and the Son, it has been allowed to the August Virgin “to be the most powerful Mediatrix and advocate of the whole world, with her Divine Son” (cf. *Ineffabilis Deus* [OL #64]).

The source, then, is Jesus Christ, “and of his fullness we have all received” (Jn. 1:16); “from him the whole body (being closely joined and knit together through every joint of the system according to the functioning in due measure of each single part) derives its increase to the building up of itself in love”. But Mary, as St. Bernard justly remarks, is the “aqueduct,” or if you will, the neck by which the body is joined to the head and the head transmits to the body its power and virtue: “For she is the neck of our Head, by which he communicated to his mystical Body all spiritual gifts” (St. Bern. Sen., *Quadrag. de Evangelio æterno*, Sermon X, a. 3, c. 3).

We are thus, it will be seen, very far from declaring the Mother of God to be the authoress of supernatural grace. Grace comes from God alone. But since she surpassed all in holiness and union with Christ, and has been associated with Christ in the work of Redemption, she, as the expression is, merits *de congruo* what Christ merits *de condigno*, and is the principal minister in the distribution of grace. He sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. 1:3); but Mary sits as a Queen on his right hand, the securest refuge of those who are in peril, as well as the most faithful of helpers, so that we have naught to fear or despair of, as long as she is our guide and our patroness, she is our defender and our protector (cf. *Ineffabilis Deus* [OL #65]).

With these principles laid down and returning to our subject, will it not appear to all that it is right and proper to affirm that Mary, whom Jesus made His constant

companion from the house of Nazareth to the place of Calvary, knew, as no other knew, the secrets of his heart, distributes as by a mother's right the treasures of His merits, and is the surest help to the knowledge and love of Christ? They prove it only too truly who, by their deplorable manner of life, deceived by false teaching, or the wiles of the devil, fancy they can dispense with the aid of the Virgin Mother. Miserable and unhappy are they who neglect her under pretense that thus they honor Christ. They forget that the "Child is not found without Mary His Mother" (cf. Mt. 2:11; Lk. 2:16).⁶³

It also saddens me to say that this opposition was clearly stated by the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger as Prefect of the Congregation of the Faith in his conversation with Peter Seewald, stating that *the theology* of Coredemptrix is entirely orthodox, but *the term* is problematic because it often leads to confusion as to the *first cause* of salvation being Christ. And further, that other Marian titles are better able to communicate Mary's role in salvation. We argue that *Mother of the Church*, *Mother of the Eucharist*, or *Mother in the Order of Grace*, as we've seen from *Lumen Gentium*, express Mary's role adequately while also emphasizing the fact that she is not the first cause of grace. In response to the petitions for the definition of Mary as Coredemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate as the fifth Marian dogma⁶⁴, Cardinal Ratzinger stated to Peter Seewald:

The response of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is, broadly, that what is signified by this is already better expressed in other titles of Mary, while the formula "Co-redemptrix" departs to too great an extent from the language of Scripture and of the Fathers and therefore gives rise to misunderstanding. ...

⁶³ ASS 36 (1903-1904) 451-457 [OL #232-235]; D-H #3370.

⁶⁴ The promotion for the fifth Marian dogma stems from the book that launched the movement by Mark I. Miravalle, *Mary: Coredemptrix, Mediatrix, Advocate* (Santa Barbara, CA: Queenship Publishing, 1993).

Mary, too, is everything that she is through him [Christ].

The word “Co-redemptrix” would obscure this origin. A correct intention is being expressed in the wrong way. For matters of faith, continuity of terminology with the language of Scripture and that of the Fathers is itself an essential element; it is improper simply to manipulate language.⁶⁵

With the greatest respect for the late Pope Benedict XVI and his papal teaching, I regret that as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith he did not consult more widely in this regard. My point is that once one grasps that Mary’s role is always, secondary, subordinate and totally dependent on Christ,⁶⁶ I don’t believe that Ratzinger’s proposals say what the word Coredemptrix really means nor do other such titles such as Cooperator, Collaborator, Associate, Ally, Sharer, Partaker, Participant, etc. Find a better word if you like, but the word Coredemptrix has been used in the Church since the fifteenth century⁶⁷ and I humbly believe that it is still the best word. My point is that it is not beyond the capability of any intelligent person to grasp that the term does not say or imply that Jesus, the God-man, and Mary, God’s most perfect creature, are on the same level. The term is not a manipulation of language as regards the use of scriptural language. With regard to the term Coredemptrix not being in continuity with the language of the Scripture and the Fathers what about the term God-bearer or *Theotokos* or Immaculate Conception?

⁶⁵ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *God and the World: A Conversation with Peter Seewald* Trans. by Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002) 306. Cf. also the interpretation given by Tim Staples in his very fine book *Behold Your Mother: A Biblical and Historical Defense of the Marian Doctrines* (El Cajon, CA: Catholic Answers Press, 2014) 237, footnote 328.

⁶⁶ Cf. *Lumen Gentium* #60, 62.

⁶⁷ Cf. Mark Miravalle, *“With Jesus”: The Story of Mary Co-Redemptrix* (Goleta, CA: Queenship Publishing, 2003) especially 101ff.

I now offer three instances of the questioning of established Catholic teaching about Our Lady's active collaboration in the work of Redemption from important fonts allied with the Holy See.

1. The first is the so-called Declaration of Częstochowa signed during a session of the Mariological Congress held in Częstochowa, Poland from the 18th to the 24th of August 1996, but only released in the June 4th 1997 edition of *L'Osservatore Romano* while John Paul II was on a pilgrimage to his homeland. It was accompanied by an anonymous article and one authored by Salvatore Perella, OSM⁶⁸. All was extremely negative about the prospects of a dogmatic definition of Mary's maternal mission as Coredemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate. The statement was signed by eighteen Catholic theologians, three orthodox theologians, an Anglican theologian and a Lutheran theologian. The last sentence stated: "Finally, the theologians, especially the non-Catholics, were sensitive to the ecumenical difficulties which would be involved in such a definition."⁶⁹ The declaration was not announced in advance and took place during an ecumenical roundtable discussion. Many questions might be asked about the entire procedure while one of the constrained signatories told me that the whole thing was rigged by the Secretariat of State [*Tutto era manipolato dalla Segreteria di Stato.*] There is added irony in that John Paul II's message to that Mariological Congress dated the 15th of August 1996 was strikingly supportive of Marian Coredemption, but only appeared in *L'Osservatore Romano* and its

⁶⁸ Father Salvatore M. Perella, OSM, a longtime professor at the Pontifical Theological Faculty "Marianum" and a great opponent of Marian Coredemption, once authored a study entitled *The "Vota" and "Consilia" of the Italian Bishops on Mariology and on Coredemption in the Ante-preparatory Phase of the Second Vatican Council* in a very positive light. Cf. *I «Vota» e I «Consilia» Dei Vescovi Italiani sulla Mariologica e sulla Mariologia e sulla Corredenzione nella Fase Antipreparatoria del Concilio Vaticano II* (Rome: «Marianum», 1994). *Vota* here indicates wishes, desires whereas *Consilia* indicates recommendations.

⁶⁹ English edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*, 25 June 1997, 12.

English edition, not in the *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II* or in the *Acta Apostolica Sedis*.⁷⁰

2. The second instance has to do with the official position of the Pontifical Faculty Marianum. I was personally invited by Father Ignacio Calabuig, OSM to present my position on the question of Marian Coredemption at a one-day meeting to discuss this issue at the Marianum on the 28th of May 1998. Professors and the student body were present along with other interested academics. Not surprisingly, I was the only person present who took the podium to speak positively on the issue. Afterwards Father Calabuig informed me that a dossier on the question would eventually be published in the Mariological journal *Marianum* and that I would be invited to submit further material supporting my position. That never happened. What did happen was that the journal *Marianum* published an 88-page dossier⁷¹ strongly opposing the whole idea of Marian Coredemption and Mediation in the course of which Father Calabuig inserted a footnote stating

With commendable precision the list of the usage of the title *Coredemptrix* in the magisterium of the Supreme Pontiffs was traced: A. BURTON CALKINS. *Il mistero di Maria Corredentrice nel magistero pontificio*, in A.A.V.V. *Maria Corredentrice*, I (cit. nota 4), pp. 141-220. The accurate and exhaustive study confirms what I have written: on the one hand *Coredemptrix* is not a proscribed title; it is susceptible to being correctly understood, which nonetheless requires some previous explanations of a linguistic and theological nature; on the other hand, such a title was rarely used by Supreme Pontiffs and in documents not of a magisterial character.⁷²

⁷⁰ *L'Osservatore Romano* 6 settembre 1996, p. 4; *Miles Immaculata* 32:2 (Luglio/Dicembre 1996) 440-444; English edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*, cumulative edition [subsequently ORE] #1461:8.

⁷¹ "Dossier di Una Giornata Teologica sulla Richiesta di definizione Dogmatica di «Maria Corredentrice Meatrice Avvocata» 28 Maggio 1998: Nota Introduttiva, Relazione di Ignazio M. Calabuig, Reportorio Bibliografico di Antonio Escudero Cabello" *Marianum* LXI (1999) 123-211.

⁷² *Marianum* LXI (1999) 157. Con encomiabile precisione è stato tracciato l'elenco dell'uso del titolo *Coredemptrix* nel magistero dei Sommi Pontefici: A. BURTON

I was also informed by a student that the student body had already been indoctrinated as to the correct position well in advance. There was also at least one other priest present who could have spoken in favor, but feared repercussions.

3. For the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, the Pontifical International Marian Academy published a set of Marian Guidelines for the new millennium entitled *The Mother of the Lord*. I suspect that most of the committee that composed these guidelines were “the experts” from the Pontifical Faculty Marianum, all carefully following the appropriate script. Here is how they chose to impose their position in #69 and 70 of the guidelines:

Genuine ecumenism does not compromise or change the *depositum fidei* on the Blessed Virgin Mary, but proposes, through shared and sincere study and dialog, to help the brothers and sisters of other Christian confessions to know the full revelation concerning Mary of Nazareth and to ponder their situation in view of our historical and cultural explanation of the image of the Virgin Mary. *We believe that it would be a serious disappointment if the current discussions on the Mother of God would be an obstacle to rather than a factor for promoting Christian unity.*

Relying on the teaching of John Paul II, we believe it opportune to recall some principles and norms which should guide theologians in mariological questions. They should follow the lines traced out in Vatican II's decree *Unitatis redintegratio* and the constitution *Lumen Gentium*, which urge theologians to “carefully refrain from

CALKINS. *Il mistero di Maria Corredentrice nel magistero pontificio*, in *A.A.V.V. Maria Corredentrice*, I (cit. nota 4) pp. 141-220. L'accurato ed esauriente studio conferma quanto ho scritto: da una parte il titolo *Coredemptrix* non è un titolo proscritto; è suscettibile di una lettura corretta, che richiede tuttavia alcune spiegazioni previe di natura linguistica e teologica; dall'altra, tale titolo è usato rarissime volte dai Sommi Pontefici e in documenti di indole non magisteriale.

whatever might by word or deed lead the separated brethren or any others whatsoever into error about the true doctrine of the Church.” ...

This requires that Marian studies:

- avoid long-standing prejudices (through *a purification of the historical memory*) and eliminate “expressions, judgments and actions which do not represent the condition of our separated brethren with truth and fairness and so make mutual relations with them more difficult”; ...
- refrain from imposing on brothers and sisters not in full communion with the Catholic Church “any burden beyond that which is strictly necessary (cf. Acts 15:28), *a counsel especially applicable to doctrinal matters concerning Mary which are disputed even among Catholic theologians themselves.*
- use carefully, with great surveillance, terms and formulas related to the Virgin Mary (*purification of language*). *Words or formulas which are not of ancient provenance or are not accepted by a great number of Catholic theologians do not promote mutual understanding; moreover, they arouse grave uneasiness among our brothers and sisters who are not in full communion with the Church; it is best to use terms which express the doctrine precisely and effectively without allowing the possibility of false interpretations.*⁷³

Of course, “Genuine ecumenism does not compromise or change the *depositum fidei* on the Blessed Virgin Mary,” but the “experts” effectively go on to imply that any teaching on Mary’s active collaboration in the work of the redemption and mediation of grace is merely an in-house dispute and would be upsetting to our separated brethren. First of all, a clear distinction needs to be made

⁷³ *Mother of the Lord: Memory, Presence, Hope* trans. Thomas A. Thompson, S.M. (St. Paul/Alba House, 2007) 104-106 Italics my own. The original Italian edition was *La Madre del Signore: Memoria Presenza Speranza* (Vatican City: Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis, 2000) 113-115.

between “development of doctrine” in the Catholic Church and ecumenical dialogue. John Paul himself would point out that speaking of Mary’s active collaboration in the work of the redemption is not a new concept, but deeply rooted in the tradition and has been developing for at least the second millennium:

At the end of the second century, St. Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp, already pointed out Mary’s contribution to the work of salvation. He understood the value of Mary’s consent at the time of the Annunciation, recognizing in the Virgin of Nazareth’s obedience to and faith in the angel’s message the perfect antithesis of Eve’s disobedience and disbelief, with a beneficial effect on humanity’s destiny. In fact, just as Eve caused death, so Mary, with her “yes”, became “a cause of salvation” for herself and for all mankind (cf. *Adv. Haer.*, III, 22, 4; *SC* 211, 441). But this affirmation was not developed in a consistent and systematic way by the other Fathers of the Church. Instead, this doctrine was systematically worked out for the first time at the end of the 10th century in the *Life of Mary* by a Byzantine monk, John the Geometer. Here Mary is united to Christ in the whole work of Redemption, sharing, according to God’s plan, in the Cross and suffering for our salvation. She remained united to the Son “in every deed, attitude and wish” (cf. *Life of Mary*, Bol. 196, f. 123 v.).

In the West St. Bernard, who died in 1153, turns to Mary and comments on the presentation of Jesus in the temple: “Offer your Son, sacrosanct Virgin, and present the fruit of your womb to the Lord. For our reconciliation with all, offer the heavenly victim pleasing to God” (*Serm. 3 in Purif.*, 2: *PL* 183, 370).

A disciple and friend of St. Bernard, Arnold of Chartres, shed light particularly on Mary’s offering in the sacrifice of Calvary. He distinguished in the Cross “two altars: one in Mary’s heart, the other in Christ’s body. Christ sacrificed his flesh, Mary her soul”. Mary sacrificed herself spiritually in deep communion with Christ, and implored the world’s salvation: “What the mother asks, the Son

approves and the Father grants” (cf. *De septem verbis Domini in cruce*, 3: PL 189, 1694).

From this age on other authors explain the doctrine of Mary’s special cooperation in the redemptive sacrifice. At the same time, in Christian worship and piety contemplative reflection on Mary’s “compassion” developed, poignantly depicted in images of the *Pietà*. Mary’s sharing in the drama of the Cross makes this event more deeply human and helps the faithful to enter into the mystery: the Mother’s compassion more clearly reveals the Passion of the Son.

By sharing in Christ’s redemptive work, Mary’s spiritual and universal motherhood is also recognized. In the East, John the Geometer told Mary: “You are our mother”. Giving Mary thanks “for the sorrow and suffering she bore for us”, he sheds light on her maternal affection and motherly regard for all those who receive salvation (cf. Farewell Discourse on the Dormition of Our Most Glorious Lady, Mother of God, in A. Wenger, *L’Assomption de la Très Sainte Vierge dans la tradition byzantine*, p. 407). ...

The Second Vatican Council, after stating that Mary “in a wholly singular way cooperated in the work of the Saviour”, concludes: “for this reason she is a mother to us in the order of grace” (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 61), thus confirming the Church’s perception that Mary is at the side of her Son as the spiritual Mother of all humanity.⁷⁴

The question as to whether one calls Mary’s “sharing in Christ’s redemptive work” coredemption or something else is quite secondary. The approach of the “experts” would have effectively stifled any of the Marian dogmas already defined: Mother of God, Ever Virgin, Immaculate Conception and Assumption.

The “experts” were also clever in their selective citing of John Paul II. For instance, the International Theological Commission under the guidance of the then Cardinal Ratzinger produced a document

⁷⁴ *Inseg* XVIII/2 (1995) 934-937; ORE 1414:11.

entitled *Memory and Reconciliation: The Church and the Faults of the Past*⁷⁵ in 1999 as a preparation for the Jubilee Year of 2000 and it was followed up by John Paul II, who openly confessed the faults of the Church in the past and asked forgiveness for them.⁷⁶ The “experts” seized upon this terminology and proposed “a purification of the historical memory” and even more specifically of a “purification of language” i.e., “words or formulas which are not of ancient provenance or are not accepted by a great number of Catholic theologians” and which obviously “do not promote mutual understanding”. They had already stated that “terminology and images used by many theologians before Vatican II” should be eschewed. Then they went a step further and implied that such terminology as coredeemption and mediation should be avoided as a “purification of language” as if it were sinful. The fact is that John Paul II promoted none of this abandonment of classical mariological vocabulary in any way.

IX. CONCLUSION

No doubt the great majority of Catholics today might be tempted to think that what I have been presenting here is a “tempest in a teapot” and that it has nothing to do with the real world. Obviously, I don’t think that. What I see is a struggle between light and darkness: the temporal enmity between the Woman and the serpent also known as the dragon.⁷⁷ Without intending to identify any person or persons as working on the side of the enemy, I have felt it important to sketch the present situation in the Church as I see it. The odds are stacked very heavily against those of us who believe that the Woman, the Mother of the Lord, who is Mother and image of the Church, must be recognized for the mission that God envisioned for her in union with her Son before time began. She is the helpmate of the “New

⁷⁵ Documents of the International Theological Commission may be found on the Vatican website:
https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_index-doc-pubbl_en.html

⁷⁶ *Inseg* XX/1 (2000) 351-355.

⁷⁷ Cf. Gen. 3:15; Rev. 12:1-17.

Adam”, the New Eve, but not his equal. Nonetheless, no creature is greater than she is. I am personally convinced that until we recognize her mission as Coredemptrix, Mediatrix of all graces and our Advocate after Jesus and the Holy Spirit, the chaos in the Church and in the world will not cease whereas the solemn recognition of her mission will help to usher in the triumph of her Immaculate Heart. Even if I do not live to see that triumph, I want to help bring it about.