

**Fr. Joseph Kentenich**

# **The Marian Person (1924)**

*Excerpts from*

*Der Marianische Mensch*

*Workshop for the Federation, April 13-16, 1924*

translated by Fr. Jonathan Niehaus, 2006

## **Introduction**

In the early 1920s the Apostolic Movement of Schoenstatt was rapidly growing in Germany. Fr. Joseph Kentenich, since 1919 assigned to the full-time position of movement director, traveled all over Germany to encourage the growing membership and provide spiritual nourishment and strength.

Regular workshops were offered to the members of the movement, especially to members of the Apostolic Federation. In the early 1920s, there were two Federation communities: for men (priests and seminarians) and for women (primarily teachers, who were single women). Fr. Kentenich worked with both communities as they explored a new and vibrant style of Catholic faith and everyday sanctity.

The workshop translated here was held in 1924. It was for the Federation of Priests and Seminarians and considered the role of Marian devotion in forming vibrant faith and sanctity. The topic was the *Marian person* and unique features of Catholic living when one deeply loves the Mother of God. Driving this topic was the first ten years of Schoenstatt's experience, going back to the founding of the Shrine of the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt in 1914. Here young men and

women discovered that Mary's presence was powerful and transforming, and changed their love of Mary from something (for some) vague and abstract – or (for others) concrete but too sugary and sentimental – to something deeply personal and down-to-earth. This Marian love, they noticed, created both a new kind of person and a new kind of community. This workshop was devoted to uncovering the Catholic foundations of this experience.

The workshop is preserved in a transcript of written notes made by one of the participants. While it is not a word-for-word stenograph of Fr. Kentenich's talks, it offers a reliable record of the topic and how Fr. Kentenich presented the theme [1](#).

For the purposes of this translation, the transcript found in the archives of the USA Delegation of the Schoenstatt Fathers (Brell-Haas Papers) will be used [2](#). This transcript is 21 pages long and is headed with the date:

13.-16.April,1924

Internal clues give reason to believe that the USA transcript is older and more accurate than the transcript dated April 22-26. In cases where the bottom line of a page was illegible, the April 22-26 transcript has been used.

Subtitles have been added and some paragraphs have been divided for easier reading. The choppy nature of the transcript (sentence fragments, incomplete thoughts) has been partially smoothed out and partially filled out with insertions from the editor [in brackets]. The surveys of Catholic teaching are supplemented by footnotes that can help the reader pursue related themes.

One will notice that Fr. Kentenich's vocabulary has not yet matured to its more familiar post-Dachau form. While many of the themes are familiar, the terms are still more generic. For instance, he speaks of *heimisch werden* (to feel at home) and not yet of *Beheimatung* (at-homeness). The frequent use of the adjective *innig* (here translated as "tender") is hardly as generic as it sounds: he is using it to try to capture the personal quality of the Marian devotion which has developed in Schoenstatt: she is close to me and I am close to her; I show through my deeds that I really love her, and she shows through her deeds that she really loves me, etc. Later on, Fr. Kentenich would try to capture this reality with terms like *Zweieinheit* (two-in-oneness), *persönlich* (personal), and ultimately *Liebesbündnis* (covenant of love).

### ***First Conference***

{1} First, I want to greet and most cordially welcome you to the Shrine of our Heavenly Mother. Here is a corner of the world that is dear to our hearts, which draws us into its orbit again and again. Why? Because we are vitally aware of how much our souls feel at home here. But today we are attracted to the Shrine in a most special manner because we want to participate in a totally Marian workshop. In our previous workshops the second day was the Marian day, the high point. This time the entire workshop will be totally Marian, entirely dedicated to our love of Mary. We want to experience this Marian devotion together.

The Ingolstadt-Schoenstatt parallel [1](#) comes to my mind. Marian devotion in Ingolstadt was so eloquent and surrounded the Colloquiants [2](#) with such a homey atmosphere that new students spontaneously caught the Marian spirit. This is how it should be for us in Schoenstatt.

Whoever is with us ought to spontaneously catch something, ought to be inspired and uplifted by the tender atmosphere surrounding us. And the tender love of Mary which captivated the hearts of the Colloquiants drove them to work for Mary's interests in the apostolate, urging them to invest their belongings and lives for the religious and moral renewal of Germany. They were convinced that I am only an apostle to the extent that I am filled with Marian spirit. This same conviction was deeply held by our *Congregatio Militaris* [3](#) and left a deep mark on our first academic meetings.

### *The Spark of Love for Mary in Every Catholic Heart*

But I am getting ahead of myself. I am already speaking too enthusiastically. Back to reality. At past workshops we had to overcome many difficulties of mind and heart. And today? Today many of you are at very different stages of spiritual growth. I must first establish some common ground.

After all, we are all Catholic. In every Catholic there is at least a spark of Marian devotion. This is true for each of us without exception. The Church applies to Mary the words, “*Ego diligentes me diligo* . I love those who love me” (Prv 8,17) [4](#). As a result, all of us can hope that our love for Mary will increase.

A legend about St. Alphonsus Rodriguez [5](#) tells about how he once asked the Mother of God in childlike simplicity, “Do you love me?”

– “Yes, of course!”

– “Really?”

– “Yes, without doubt! My love for you is much more than even your love for me!”

St. Clement M. Hofbauer [6](#) once said, “When I discover in someone’s heart even the tiniest spark of love of Mary, I am certain that this person will not perish.” *Ego diligentes me diligo!* Mary sees in our heart the spark of love. “Let the children come to me!” (Mt 19,14). The Mother’s love for me must be much more than my love for her. [Why?] Precisely because I am so weak. And the stronger my love of Mary is, the more helpless I will feel, because I realize the distance between her and me.

We have therefore found the common ground we need to discuss our Marian devotion. Hence, we all have the right to trustingly pray from the bottom of our heart, “MTA, *ora pro nobis* – pray for us!”

### *Mary as Mother Thrice Admirable*

Let us meditate for a moment on this invocation [ – ***Mother Thrice Admirable*** ]. It awakens many images in my soul. I feel drawn back to Ingolstadt. There a young priest is kneeling before the picture of Our Lady. He sees what a superabundance of graces would overflow the earth if all people had a tender love of Mary. Driven by this conviction he founded the Marian Colloquium [7](#).

Fr. Rem loved Mary with a supernatural love. He therefore loved Mary precisely as the person raised up by God to the high dignity of Mother of God. He long asked himself: is there not one title that completely exhausts Mary’s greatness? And is there one which our heavenly Mother most favors? He prayed long and ceaselessly that Mary would show him which title it was. He was with his Colloquants in the chapel.

They were praying the Litany of Loreto. Fr. Rem had a vision at the invocation *Mater Admirabilis* [Mother Most Admirable]. Twice he signaled to the cantor to repeat this title. In the vision it became clear to him that Mary wanted to be venerated in a most special way as *Mater Ter Admirabilis* [Mother Thrice Admirable]. Since that time there has been a picture of the MTA [in Ingolstadt] [8](#).

Still other thoughts come to me about this title. What is its dogmatic background? Mary is admirable [9](#) as the Mother of God, admirable as the Mother of the Redeemer, admirable as the Mother of the redeemed.

Is Mary not also thrice admirable in other ways? The Mother of God is admirable in her childlikeness before God. {2} For Mary, being the Mother of God is not just an exterior dignity. With her exterior dignity comes a divine childhood unlike that of any other creature before or since. Is anything more admirable in this life than being a child of God? Go through life. You will find vegetative being, sentient being, intellectual being and, high above all else, divine being [10](#). Being a child of God means to share in this divine being. Is it not something admirable to be both human and a child of God? For her part, Mary is a child of God to the highest degree. What an admirable world!

This divine being as a child of God child has [distinct] stages, a path of development leading to the heights. Mary ascended to the highest stage of growth. The angel addresses her as “full of grace.” This is how Mary stands before us, as the most admirable child of God, the one chosen to be the Savior’s Mother.

What are the signs of divine life? They are faith, hope, and love. How sorely we feel the lack of this divine life in us! Only the one who is completely supernatural can save the world. But whoever is still a slave of sensuality, how can he be an instrument in the hand of God? God

works through us. The more we carry God's life in us, the more we are his instrument. In this world is found the solution to all our difficulties. Unless we are at home in this world, we will only be half-priests.

*Mary, Admirable in Faith, Hope, and Love*

*Mater ter admirabilis – Filius ter admirabilis !* [Mother Thrice Admirable – Child thrice admirable!]

Mary is admirable in *faith*. She believed the angel who brought her the message from heaven that she was chosen to be the Mother of God. In the destitute stable in Bethlehem she knelt next to a poor, weak Child who is the Eternal God, the Creator of the world, the Redeemer of mankind. She professes him to be God and Savior – He who is hated by all, abandoned by his disciples, hung on the scandalous tree of the Cross. And *our* faith...?

Mary is admirable in *hope*. Mary's hope and trust were gigantic. She cast all her cares on the Lord when she saw her bridegroom's anxious features after she had conceived. Full of trust, she embarked on the arduous journey to distant Egypt. She saw her beloved [Jesus] whipped, beaten, and grieved by brutal thugs. But she still trusted that the world would be redeemed. How is it with our trust? Who do we turn to in our struggles? None other than the faithfully caring Mother! Today one finds so little hope in the world. Pessimism and despair! What an example do the saints give us in their unlimited trust! The trust of our venerable founder [11](#) was nearly limitless. He had a rock-solid faith in his vocation – *I am an instrument of God in Mary's hands* – this was his firm conviction. Our founder's idea matches that of the Federation. But if the Federation is an instrument in the hand of God, and the Federation



is my vocation, then I, too, must have rock-solid trust in the victory of our cause.

F. Mayer writes of Alban Stolz [12](#): When he felt the call to write books for popular edification, he wrote in his diary, “I must and will sacrifice myself for the people.” And he had rock-solid faith in this idea. This is how it must be for us. The idea “I must engage myself as an instrument of the Blessed Mother for the religious and moral renewal of the world” must be the dominant idea in our life.

And the *love* of our Blessed Mother? She was indeed a glowing hearth of Divine Love. The closer one is to God, the more tender the love. But Mary had the most intimate connection to God possible for a creature.

After all, she is the *Mother of God* , and she is *full of grace* . She powerfully expresses her ardent love of God in her song: *Exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo* [My spirit rejoices in God my Savior, Lk 1,47]. And *our* love...?

### *Mary and the Fundamental Forces of World History*

Another relationship comes to my mind. Solomon was standing at the parapet of the palace. Turning his prophetic gaze to the desert, he saw a woman crowned with stars. Astonished, he called out: “Who is the one who arises like the dawn, beautiful as the moon, radiant as the sun, terrible as an army in battle array” (Song 6,10). We have been introduced to Mary in her gifts of grace, admirable in her childlikeness before God, admirable in its effects in her soul. But the words of Solomon introduce Mary to us in her relationship to the fundamental forces of world history: ***God, Man, the Devil.***

*Pulchra ut luna – Beautiful as the moon* , with its soft, charming light. The moon's light is reflected from the sun. The same is true of Mary. She radiates a fascinating light, bright in the raiment of her virtues. But the source of all her greatness is God.

*Electa ut sol – Radiant as the sun* . Mary is for us what the sun is for the earth. Remove the sun, which bathes the earth in its light, and there is no more day. {3} If we remove Mary, our life's "star of the sea," what are left with? We will be surrounded by deep darkness, the shadow of death, and impenetrable night.

Mary is the Mediatrix of Graces. We receive everything through her hands. One seminarian said: Remove Marian devotion and our Federation would no longer exist. If we accept her mediation of all grace, then Mary is most certainly the sun of our life, and all the more the sun of our Federation. "Mother Thrice Admirable, increase [the life of] grace in me. I did not come [to this workshop] to hear many things, but to receive strength. We are a community. Give us all in the Federation the strength to develop a practical love of Mary."

*Terrible as an army in battle array* . Does the Devil still exist? Far too few believe in him. Sometimes he seems to us [moderns] like an old wives' tale. Yet, the Devil does exist, and he is prowling like a lion looking for someone to devour (cf 1 Pt 5,8). If we were consistently convinced of this truth, how much more we would accomplish in the confessional! How often we would then use the exorcism [13](#) even as our venerable father [14](#) did.

All of these thoughts lead us into a world in which we should feel at home. Go into the depths. Translate the thoughts into life so that you can share this wealth with others.

With this we have established the common ground needed to proceed with our workshop. If we still feel inwardly reluctant about Marian devotion, then we pray all the more and all the more tenderly to the MTA.

The general superior of the Jesuits once visited the novitiate. There he found two novices who did not feel a strong urge to tender love of Mary. As he left, he said to the novice master, “Pay attention to these two novices. They will not stay with us.” And in fact, the two soon left the order. There are supernatural realities which can only be grasped by a supernatural sensitivity. Is not a deep and thorough love of Mary part of what we priests must have? MTA, help me overcome the gap! For I am only a member of the Federation to the extent that Marian devotion is part of my life.

## *Second Conference*

Yesterday we solidified our common ground. The starting point was the minimum quota of Marian devotion and Marian love which each Catholic has. We then tried to connect Mary’s life with the three fundamental powers of the world [1](#).

## *Out-of-tune Instruments*

I feel like a musician about to lead a concert. But the players’ instruments are still mostly out of tune. In the Federation we still have much that is out of tune. A teacher wrote: “When I pray I still experience many contradictions. For years I could only pray the first

part of the Hail Mary.” She cannot pray to Mary [because] Mary is only a creature. An out-of-tune instrument! [2](#)

A Franciscan priest told me that he once had a tender love of Mary. During his novitiate a priest told him, “If you had to choose between reading something about God or Mary, you would read about God first, wouldn’t you?” He answered, “Yes, of course.” Later he earned two doctorates. But the more he grew in science, the cooler his relationship to Mary became. Once, at a pilgrimage place, he saw the sacristan touching devotional items to the main statue of Mary; he turned away and thought that the Church must forbid such nonsense... [3](#)

Some time ago in Bavaria there was a congress of the Marian Sodalities for students. It was said, “We always talk about Marian devotion. What about Christ? Are we finally going to get to know Christ?”...

In the clergy voices are being raised, saying, “We put too much emphasis on Mary. Our way of living is so Marian. This isn’t right.” ... So many out-of-tune instruments!

How is it with *our* Marian devotion? Is *our* instrument also out-of-tune? We must approach the topic of Marian devotion as is customary in the Federation. The Federation’s Marian devotion must embrace the entire person. Federation members are asking me from all sides: Where is our Marian devotion going? Why is it becoming less prominent in our workshops? One even insisted that the Federation ought to have a slave-like Marian devotion. How many out-of-tune instruments!

Now let us look into our souls. Is our instrument also out-of-tune? Perhaps we are also struggling with difficulties with Marian devotion. The difficulties can be of two kinds:

1. Is the ideal exaggerated? (If my difficulties are in the goal.)
2. Is there something wrong in my soul? (If they are in me.)

### *The Essential Definition of the Marian Person*

The ideal of our Marian devotion is [to become] a *Marian person* .

We distinguish between two definitions: descriptive and essential. To find the first we would need to look at the types [of Marian persons] and then study them. We would then need to probe them critically, that is, dogmatically, to arrive at a description of the true Marian person. The essential definition goes the opposite way. It determines the essence of the Marian person and then evaluates it dogmatically. We will go this second route in order to do a more thorough job.

We begin by establishing the essential definition [of the Marian person].

If I say that someone is a sensual person, I am saying that sensuality is a permanent characteristic of the person. And so, a Marian person is someone in whom Marian love and all things Marian are dominant, permanent characteristics.

#### **Definition:**

*The Marian person is a person  
who understands as deeply as possible,  
in the spirit and light of faith,*

*Mary's role in the work of redemption,  
allowing her to permanently impact his practical life  
even to the last consequence,  
so as to become a holy apostle.*

### *Part I: Understanding Mary's Role in the Work of Redemption*

First the intellect must understand as deeply as possible Mary's role in the plan of salvation.

The object of knowledge for the Marian person is [Mary's role in the plan of salvation. It] is something real, not fiction [4](#). We are all influenced by the current trends in modern philosophy. The current tendency is to retreat from Kant, Hegel, etc. and to turn more and more to concrete reality [5](#). New theories of knowledge [6](#) are being sought, but without negating the reality of the concrete world. This is good, because it comes closer to Catholicism, [where] we know things that are real.

Mary is real, too. For many of us – including myself [7](#) – our Marian devotion developed along a path from idea to person. Others go from person to ideal. [Either way,] if I am to grow interiorly, it is essential that I be interiorly gripped. It is therefore essential that I find my way to Mary as a *person*, as the person to whom my heart totally belongs.

The object of knowledge for the Marian person is Mary's role in the work of redemption. We can try to understand it from her position

as Coredemptrix,

as one of the redeemed,

and as the Mother of the Redeemer.

St. Bonaventure says of her, “God could have created a greater earth and a greater heaven but he could not have created a greater Mother than Mary [8](#).” Is not Mary in her greatness and nearly infinite eminence also a world of her own? Let us deeply immerse ourselves in this world and work toward helping as many people as we can to discover this world as deeply as possible. Those who think they know enough about Mary don’t realize how profound a link there is between Mary and the most blessed Trinity.

St. Augustine called Mary the *dignitas terrae* – the dignity of the earth [9](#). Who can comprehend it? We can understand it if someone [is so fascinated that he] spends his whole life studying ants. Should we not also understand it if someone spends his whole life trying to understand the world of the Blessed Mother as deeply as possible? Can one ever say: Now I know everything? That was alright in our teenage years, but do I not need more now? Whoever thinks this way does not know the supernatural world, does not know how deeply Mary’s role reaches into the most blessed Trinity, into all of dogmatic theology, into [all of] life.

Krebs tells in his book *Lebenswert der Dogmen* that he once met a doctor in Rome who told him: “What has always attracted me to the Catholic Church is the teaching of Mary’s purity. I have traveled all over the world, have seen depravity at its deepest, and there the thought laid hold of me: We have lost the ideal of purity in which one can gain strength and courage again and again in the battle with one’s passions. This is the ideal which gives the Catholic Church its faith in Mary! If only I could believe, I would become Catholic alone because of this dogma!” Yes, what we need so much is the soul, the one soul who is totally pure. The *Immaculata* is part of the supernatural world of Our Lady.

## *A. Understanding Mary through the Knowledge of Faith*

Our knowledge [of Mary] must be a knowledge of faith.

### *1. More than Just the Knowledge of the Senses*

We distinguish between three levels of knowledge: *cognitio sensitiva, intellectiva, fidei* [knowledge of the senses, of the intellect, and of faith].

In this case only the knowledge of faith comes in play. Let us first cast a brief glance into the Protestant camp. In the whole world we find that Mary is vilified. Harnack [10](#) places Mary in the same category as the goddess mothers of the mystery religions. He claims that the [early] Christians [used Mary] to absorb the idea [of goddess mothers] into the Christian religion. But I ask, “Was Mary never real?” We admit that Christianity adapted to the world it lived in. It adopted some things from the pagan religions, but {5} gave them new meaning, infusing them with Christian spirit and thereby overcoming paganism. Remember, for Harnack there is no Christ either; Christ is only human. And so he has no room for Mary as Mother of God or God-bearer.

For us it is different. The Son protects the Mother and the Mother protects the Son. The revolution [11](#) delivered a hard blow to Protestantism. It lost its state protection and its interior unity was shattered.

Many voices are being raised: We Protestants [12](#) have a soul but no body; let us reclaim it from the Catholic Church – [by refocusing on] hierarchy and liturgy. But liturgy brings them face to face with Mary again. While the Protestants show interest in bringing Mary back into today’s church, how will they know her? Their only sources are the knowledge of the senses and of the intellect. That leaves Mary only a



beautiful woman who attracts and uplifts. But the formation of the *Marian person* will be lacking.

The Protestant Jungnickel writes, “We must bring new warmth into our churches. How? With beautiful music, such as by Bach? No, we must bring Mother Mary back. Luther himself wrote a study on the Magnificat [13](#). He would protect our undertaking if he were alive today.

A pale, blond, glorious girl with the big blue eyes of a child, a Mary with ears of wheat in her hand, or a daisy. Bach, etc. are said to have sung and dedicated their most beautiful hymns to her. Let us sing the old familiar hymns in her honor and do everything else befitting devotion. We want to let her gentle heavenly purity flow into the catechism. We must reclaim the German Mother Mary!” [German] Protestants see Mary as the one enthroned above the altar as a young German woman. But they are only looking at Mary with the knowledge of the senses.

We, too, look with wonder upon the loveliness of Mary, but the knowledge of the senses is not our source of knowledge. Alban Stolz once said, “Children often follow their grandparents.” The “grandparents” of today’s Protestants were Catholic. Today’s Protestants are following them again. But for the most part their source of knowledge is deficient. Our source of knowledge is the light of faith.

### ***Third Conference***

Let me start by saying that we should not take all that we hear at this workshop and immediately put it into action without any discernment.

That would only provoke feelings of aversion in our souls. For the moment, let each one maintain his current level of growth [1](#), but give the thoughts a chance to work on you. Then, later, you can translate them into your practical life.

## 2. *Supported by Scripture*

For us Catholics, only the *cognitio fidei* , the knowledge of faith can suffice [in laying the foundations for the Marian person]. We not only see Mary with our bodily eyes, but also in transfigured supernatural light.

The Marian person is enlightened by two sources: *Sacred Scripture and Tradition* . At first glance, Sacred Scripture does not seem to say much about the Our Lady. But it holds a great deal about our Mother. In his own tender love of Mary, our venerable founder [2](#) was especially fond of the Old Testament types [of Mary]. Open the Scriptures in this light [and look at] Judith, Esther, Ruth, Susanna, the Song of Songs, and the Psalms singing of the beauty of the king's daughter [3](#).

In the New Testament, too, we find little and yet so very much about Mary. The Blessed Mother appears to us with

the *Ave* in her ear,

the *Magnificat* on her lips,

the Child in her arms,

the seven-fold sword in her heart, and

the tongues of fire over her head [4](#).

Or, taking a look at the Old Testament, we see Mary enveloped by the sun, the moon at her feet, and clothed with the radiant garment of her virtues (cf. Song 6,4 as above).

The New Testament holds a great and powerful word spoken by Mary herself: *Ecce [enim ex hoc] beatam me dicent omnes generationes* – See, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed! (Lk 1,48). [This is found in] the word of God! Christ once said, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away” (Mt 24,35). This is the dogmatic [image of the] Mother of God, which has so very much to say to our souls. Or [turn to] the image of the Mother of God in the Book of Revelation: the image of Mary’s virtues (cf. Rev 12,1). [The native virtue of] the natural world comes first [in time], but it is followed by words which resound through the centuries like a fanfare blast: *Ecce enim ex hoc...* – See, from henceforth...! We know it still today. We proclaim these living words in our time. Centuries have strived to fulfill these words [5](#). We, too, do our part.

With that I have made the connection between Church history and individual history. The Marian person catches this. He is alert to everything concerning the Beloved of his heart.

But in Sacred Scripture we also find her contradicted. “Woman, what does this concern of yours have to do with me?” (Jn 2,4). “Who are my mother and my brothers? Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is brother and sisters and mother to me” (Mk 12,48.50). Bible scholars {6} offer a clear response to these difficulties and the Marian person knows how to respond [6](#). We want to have a healthy basis for our Marian devotion. Be sure to talk about this in your communities.

### *3. Supported by Tradition*

I now move on to *Tradition*. I am reminded of the creeds [7](#), the council decrees, the writings of the fathers [8](#). Whoever is interested in Mary should research what the centuries have said about her. The Marian person gladly studies everything in the light of faith. The light of faith is not miserly. It does not ask: What defined dogmas do I *have* to believe? There was a time when we Catholics only valued dogma. Dogma was what everyone wanted; [it was considered] the essence of religion. Whatever did not belong to the essence was cut away. It was like trimming a tree until one had “just the essence” – but in the end all that was left was the naked trunk. Thanks be to God that this is no longer the case.

For us there is not only dogma, but also Catholic truth. The Marian person has firm faith in the Catholic truths. The Marian person has, to use an expression of St. Clement M. Hofbauer, a “Catholic nose.” He knows how to cherish the truths which give full harmony to the Catholic life of faith. He knows and loves even the truths not binding on him by “*Anathema* [9](#).” Likewise with Marian devotion. The Marian person knows how to distinguish between dogma, *sententia communis* [10](#), etc., but he also knows how to assent to the truths not formally defined as dogma. St. John Berchmans [11](#) signed with his blood the truth of Mary’s Immaculate Conception. He was a Marian person. He possessed a Catholic nose. As a Marian person I must possess a delicate sensitivity for all things related to Mary.

Today there is a lot of talk, especially in Bavaria, about the dogma of Mary as Mediatrix of all graces. At the last workshop someone asked, “Why [so much ado about] this dogma?” Well, if Mary’s universal mediation would be formally defined as dogma, God and Mary would receive more honor than before. In recent years scientists have discovered basic laws of physics; more are being discovered all the time. There are also basic laws of religion. It is our task to get to know them.

Is not Mary's universal mediation one such basic law? Before me is the biography of Fr. Doyle, SJ [12](#). He also had a deep devotion to Mary. He signed his love with the blood of his heart in a long martyrdom for Mary, in order to gain the help of Mary's grace for his undertaking. Yes, such men are driven by the spirit of faith.

### *B. Understanding Mary's Role in the Work of Redemption*

The Marian person tries to understand, in the spirit and light of faith, Mary's role in the work of redemption. We understand Mary as one of the redeemed and as Coredemptrix. I will consider the two points:

1. Mary in the plan of redemption as one of the redeemed.
2. Mary in the plan of redemption as Coredemptrix

#### *1. Mary as One of the Redeemed: The Immaculate Conception*

Let me begin with the Immaculate Conception.

*“Maria Immaculata, benedicta es tu Virgo Maria, a Domino Deo excelso prae omnibus mulieribus super terram. Tu gloria Jerusalem, tu laetitia Israel, tu honorificentia populi nostri. Tota pulchra es, Maria, et macula originalis non est in te”* [13](#).

With these words the Church rejoices on the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The liturgy of this feast deserves special attention. The solemn definition (see *Ineffabilis Deus*, December 8, 1854 [14](#)) says she was free from sin from the very first moment of her existence. Nor was her soul ever darkened by even the slightest shadow of sin. By the redeeming grace of Jesus Christ she was already preserved her from

every stain of original sin. Although Mary was subject to the law of sin, she was not subject to sin [15](#).

### *a. Development of the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception*

How does the Church justify this dogma? It is not explicitly found in Sacred Scripture. It can only be proven through Tradition. The doctrine of the Mother of God and her immaculate purity is one of the blossoms of the original Church. But we know by divine promise [16](#) that the Church is infallible in teachings of faith and morals, and this includes the teaching of Mary's Immaculate Conception.

The scriptural witnesses to the teaching of the Immaculate Conception are 1) the Protogospel [17](#) and 2) story of the birth and life of Jesus. The apocryphal works, especially the Protogospel of James [18](#), reach far back into the 2nd century. Images in the catacombs attest to the profound Marian devotion of the early Christians [19](#). Various fathers of the Church wrote about Mary: Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Clement of Alexandria, Ephrem. The Blessed Mother is portrayed as the *inviolata* and *integra* [completely free from sin], the Queen of all, the hope of the despairing. Epiphanius, Gregory Nazianzen... The Council of Ephesus [20](#) brings into clear focus what the Church teaches about Mary. In the foreground is Mary as the Mother of God, [a title] which was hotly debated as part of the Christological controversies of that time.

The [teaching of the] Immaculate Conception is still obscure and controversial. Augustine said in his treatise *De natura et gratia*: “*Excepta itaque Sancta Maria*” [“Except for Holy Mary”] [21](#). Augustine was addressing Mary's purity {7} from the standpoint of actual sin. The feast of the Immaculate Conception begins to be celebrated in the East in the 5th century [22](#). This causes scholars in the West to examine the

meaning of the feastday [23](#). English theologians assume it must be about [Mary's sinlessness], for it is not about the physical conception, but the Immaculate Conception [24](#).

St. Bernard [says,] “Mary could not be sanctified before she existed. Therefore the sanctification could only happen after she had been conceived [25](#).” This is also the view of the Scholastics. Thomas wavers [26](#). It is Scotus [27](#) who deserves the credit for bringing the needed clarity. He teaches that Mary's redemption consists in preservation, not liberation from original sin. On this basis he teaches that Mary was preserved in advance. God applied the redeeming merits of Christ to Mary in anticipation of the Redeeming Deed. Mary was a daughter of Adam according to her origin but not *secundum naturam* [28](#).

In her nature the Mother is like the Son, of the same constitution as the new Adam. The two, Jesus and Mary, are truly of one flesh. Jesus forms her to take his humanity from her. He forms her [into the Mother] he wants and needs. *Omnis arbor ex fructu conoscitur* [You shall tell every tree by its fruit (Lk 6,44)]. Mary is the Mother of God, her fruit is the Son of God. The great dignity of her maternity necessarily includes all the lesser gifts. Among these is the gift of the Immaculate Conception.

Scotus only presented his teaching as probable. It was hotly debated. The matter was not finally resolved until the [dogmatization of the] Immaculate Conception [in 1854]. According to this, Mary is not an exception to the reality of redemption and the need to be redeemed. Mary was simply preserved by the redeeming merits of Jesus Christ, while we were liberated by his Redeeming Deed. Mary could call to her Son: “My Son, in holiness I was conceived and in justice I was born.”

## *Fourth Conference*

The main reason we came here was not to hear talks, but to pray and sing. Through prayer and song we should find our way into a genuinely warm and tender Marian spirit. In my mind's eye I see an image of our heavenly Mother. She stands before us with the Ave in her ear, the Magnificat on her lips, the Divine Child in her arms, the sevenfold sword in her heart, and on her head the radiant crown of virtue.

### *b. Mary as Christ-bearer in all Ages*

Our Lady carries Our Lord in her arms. Mary stands before us as the Christ-bearer. What does this mean? Mary's mission is to bring Christ to earth again. In churches one often sees a statue of the Blessed Mother on one side and her Son on the other side. The image of Madonna and Child is still better. Mother and Child must not be separated. There is a wonderful image somewhere in Tirol. It portrays Mary as a monstrance carrying the Most Blessed Sacrament. Yes, Mary is the Christ-bearer [1](#).

She was the Christ-bearer already in her youth, as a child, as a child of God. Then as Christ-bearer who was the dwelling place of Our Lord, she became the official Christ-bearer.

It is her task to carry Christ once more into the hearts of men. This is in keeping with a supernatural law. As Christ-bearer she came to Elizabeth (cf. Lk 1, 39-56). John leapt in his mother's womb, since Mary brought the Savior to him. He was sanctified and with him Zachariah's whole house. Mary was the Christ-bearer when she brought her Son to the temple (cf. Lk 2,22-40). From her arms Simon and Anna received great blessings. Mary is the Christ-bearer in the poor stable in



Bethlehem. The shepherds found Christ with Mary, the Christ-bearer. Mary is the Christ-bearer when the wise men come from the East, bringing their adoration to the Savior in the name of the whole world. Mary is the Christ-bearer on the strenuous and difficult way to Egypt, and in the carpenter shop in Nazareth. She shares joy and suffering with him for 30 years. Mary is also with Jesus at the moment when he consummates the Redeeming Deed on the cross.

Is it not a supernatural law that Mary must always be with Jesus? The facts really seem to bear this out. Is not the law also universal in scope, embracing all times and places? When Mary's place is secure, Jesus' place is also secure. "*Soli Deo*" ["to God alone"] is what the Protestants once said. [They wanted to focus all worship on God alone, removing all "distractions."] But it did not last long until they also removed Christ. I only need to remind you of Harnack who denies the divinity [of Christ]. By saying "*Soli Dei*," one wanted to render service "to God alone," but by now it has become "*soli deo*," that is, giving worship "to the sun god." One has gone so far with the "*Soli Deo*" that now only the sun is left. Is that only a coincidence? {8} The Protestants separated themselves from the Christ-bearer and passed from Christ to the sun [2](#).

The Orthodox Churches give us a counterexample. They have kept the Christ-bearer; their faith is firm and Christ remains firm. When Our Lady is seen in the light of faith, the divinity of Christ is most secure. The ordinary faithful cling to Mary. In the 4th century the theologians fought over the divinity of Christ. But the ordinary faithful remained true to Mary. They brought their loving prayers to their Mother and when the Council of Ephesus finally concluded, solemnly declaring that Christ was true God and Mary was truly the Christ-bearer, then the faithful rejoiced without end. Mary had saved Christ.

In the Middle Ages the Cathar sect [3](#) spread like wildfire. Kings fought to destroy it. It was overcome by the Rosary. At the center of the Rosary is the Christ-bearer.

The strongest weapon of the Counter-reformation was forged in Our Lady's workshop: the Marian Sodality [4](#). Do we not owe to the Sodality, and therefore to the Blessed Mother, the fact that Bavaria is mostly Catholic today?

When we consider these facts, do we not discover that Mary is the official Christ-bearer? This is a theme which the Popes discuss in their encyclicals. Pope Pius IX did not save the world through his syllabus [5](#), but through the dogmatization of the Immaculate Conception. And Mary showed her gratitude for this. Mary's answer was the dogmatization of the infallibility of the Pope [6](#). Those who entrust themselves to the Blessed Mother are led by her to Christ.

### *c. Per Mariam ad Jesum – The Christ-bearer Leads us to Christ*

If we apply this to life, then new perspectives open up to us, and it means for us to go the way of *Per Mariam ad Jesum – From Mary to Jesus*. There are some who think that this is a detour. Some want to go the way to Christ through mortification, humility, etc. These ways are good, but difficult. And how easily one loses the right path and becomes discouraged. Others throw themselves straight into the arms of Christ.

But they soon notice the tremendous gap – on the one hand the infinite perfection of God, on the other how full of sins and failings we miserable human beings are. How can we bridge the gap? There are some who never overcome this difficulty and abandon the spiritual life they once bravely began. We turn to Mary. Because she is human like us, she completely knows our weakness and misery. We let her, our

Mother, take us by the hand to her Son, the Divine Savior. Mary is the official Christ-bearer. She will also bear Christ into our hearts. She is the best and surest way to Christ.

Is there a “Marian asceticism [7](#)” as the Bavarian pastors fear? There is no such thing as Marian asceticism if one means “Mary only.” In our sense of the word, Marian asceticism is a true Christ-centered asceticism. If Mary fills my whole heart then I can be certain that I will come to Christ. Mother and Child cannot be separated. And because it is Mary’s office to be Christ-bearer, she must lead to Christ. The opposite is also true. If I am inwardly totally on fire for Christ, then the normal development of my spiritual life will soon lead me to Mary. If I receive Our Lord in Holy Communion and see Christ in the light of faith, then I will eventually ask myself: Where did this food come from; who gave it to me? And then Mary is not far away.

Mary is the Christ-bearer and the easiest way to Christ. We recognize more and more that the entire supernatural world is a great organism through which we must pass. Therefore Marian devotion must be an essential element to members of the Federation. One of the fruits of this workshop should be the resolution: In the future I will try to acquire a still deeper Marian devotion. Marian devotion must be the formal principle [8](#) of our Federation. It follows that there is no contradiction between love of Mary and love of Jesus. True Catholic love of Mary leads to love of Christ and vice versa.

#### *d. As Christ-bearer, Mary is Patroness of the Church*

Because Mary is the official Christ-bearer, she is also the patroness of the Church. Mary brings us the new life we have in Christ. We became members of Christ through Mary.

Our Lord was poor and weak. Mary clothed and nourished him. The first Adam was so vibrant, while the second is poor and weak. Our Lord is an image of fallen man. Is it not at least probable that Mary cares for each Christian exactly as she cared for her beloved Son Jesus? Of course, the deepest reason is:

1. We are members of the mystical body of Christ.
2. Mary is the Mother of Christ, also of his mystical body.
3. She is therefore our Mother, too, and patroness of the Church.

When the most recent popes present Our Lady as the patroness of the Church, they are saying that Mary is the patroness of the Church as the Mother of God.

But if Mary is the patroness of the {9} whole Church, [is she not] also [patroness] of each member and therefore my patroness, too? Does it not follow that Mary is the easiest and surest way to Christ? After all, that is her task as patroness. Does this not urge us to regive the world to Mary, so that she can lead everyone to Christ again?

This was the spirit which inspired us back when our sodalists went out into the barracks and battlefields to spread our Marian spirit. It is mirrored again in the letters and expressed in the prayer we had printed on our stationary:

“Mother Thrice Admirable, Mother of Grace,  
Teach us your enemies bravely to face,  
Never regarding their number and might,  
Spreading your love over the earth’s dark night,

So that the world through you made new

Pay to your Son His homage due [9](#).”

Our soul longs for Christ. The MTA intensifies this longing. Many of us already have a personal relationship with Christ, but the longing to love Christ must also increase the intensity of our longing for Mary.

### ***Fifth Conference***

We want to try to set the right fundamental tone [1](#) that helps us grow in unity. Before proceeding, let me address a few odds and ends.

Someone asked: Is it not one-sided to do a whole workshop on the *Marian* person? Wouldn't it be better to talk about the *Catholic* person?

This question is justified. But let me say that while every Catholic is devoted to Mary, not every Catholic is a Marian person. Whatever a Marian person does must be thoroughly Catholic, but it is not required of every Catholic to be as Marian as we should and must be. It is not one-sided because hidden threads connect the Blessed Mother to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These hidden threads reach into every circumstance of life and into the world. This is something a Marian person must know.

There are many saints in the Church, but few are Marian saints *per eminentiam* [2](#). To conduct a whole workshop on Mary is not one-sided because someone who is Marian to such a high degree will be interiorly connected to the [whole] supernatural world.

*e. Forming the Marian person; Popular Piety*

The object of our workshop is not so much to get to know the Marian person as to *form* the Marian person.

The thoughts from last night were meant to retune the out-of-tune instruments. I remind you of the meeting of sodality directors where the difficulty was raised: “How shall we love Mary since we don’t know Christ totally yet? On earth we shall never attain this, not even in heaven. After all, Mary is only one way to Christ.” The Franciscan priest was indignant about the excesses of Marian devotion. But as long as we are Catholic, in tune with the teachings of the Church, then excesses are not possible. *De Maria numquam satis!* [Of Mary never enough!] [3](#) It is a master stroke of God’s educational skill that he gives the Catholic faithful such a great love of Mary. God makes use of the need for a mother so that through Mary we are drawn closer to Christ.

We must not cut down the Marian devotion of the people, otherwise we will end up with only a naked trunk like in post-Reformation Protestantism, or in the time of Josephinism [4](#). If we are unhappy that so many devotional objects have found their way into the Marian devotion of our people, then we must remember that this is an expression of the interior attitude of the popular soul. People need the impulses which come from outward expressions. We should not cut them down as some priests do (to their own harm!), but use them to inspire a tender Marian devotion. Let us learn this from the greatest educator of all, God himself.

To profoundly grasp this truth – that Mary is the Christ-bearer – we must tackle the resistance in ourselves and others. Both core ideas – Mary as Christ-bearer and Mary as patroness of the Church – were topics in the first years of the *MTA* [Magazine] [5](#). As we came to understand [these things] we overcame the difficulties and were led, totally unconsciously, to Christ.

The ascetical masters say that if I want to come to Christ, I must practice self-denial, humility, love of neighbor, etc. All of this is fine, but the Marian person says: If I want to come to Christ, I must go to Mary. What God has joined together, let no man rend asunder (cf Mt 19,6). Therefore, you will not find Christ anywhere except near Mary, in Mary, with Mary.

This was the way which the first [Schoenstatt] sodalists took (see Volume 1 of the *MTA*). The Marian person tries to grasp how the supernatural world is interiorly connected. He sees in Mariology the compendium of all doctrine.

He also sees that there are many ways to Christ, but that the way through Mary is the easiest and {10} surest. He understands when Pope Pius X writes: “There is no easier means to uniting the world to Christ than Mary 6.” Therefore the Marian person not only does apostolate in the spirit of Mary, but also does apostolate that *promotes Marian devotion*. If Marian devotion is the best means for me to reach Christ, then it is to also the best means to joining the world to Christ. “Mother Thrice Admirable, Mother of grace...” This prayer contains our whole spirit and our whole program.

What conclusions should we draw? Does this mean we should race blindly into Marian devotion? No, ease your way into it. If Marian devotion is the formal principle for the Marian person, then it is the formal principle for every stage of development.

## *2. Mary as Coredemptrix*

Back to the Marian person. The Marian person is a person who understands the role of Mary in the work of redemption as deeply as

possible in the spirit of faith. At this point we want to move more deeply into understanding the Marian person.

*a. Mediatrix: A High Resolution Understanding of Mary*

The Marian person understands Mary's role in the work and plan of redemption. He contemplates her as one of the redeemed and as Coredemptrix. Today I will present the "high resolution" form [7](#) of Marian understanding and Marian living.

The "high resolution" form of Marian understanding is: Mary is the Mediatrix of all Graces. The "high resolution" form of Marian living is the DeMontfort act [8](#).

*b. Dogmatic Foundations for Mary as Mediatrix*

Our topic is the "high resolution" form of Marian understanding. What do we mean when we say Mary is Mediatrix of all Graces? I will proceed in two steps:

- i. Mary cooperates to some degree in the work of redemption.
- ii. To what degree does she cooperate?

*i. The Fact of Mary's Cooperation*

We conduct this proof with the help of the Protogospel:

"Because you (the devil) have done this (seduced the woman and thereby plunged all mankind into perdition), I will put enmity between



you and the woman, between her offspring and hers. She will crush your head while you strike her heel” (Gen 3,15).

In its context it means, as the early fathers point out [9](#): Because you have caused man and woman to sin, I will strike you with the same weapon which you used. A woman will come and next to the woman will appear a man. Both will lead the world back to God. These are the weapons which will humiliate the devil and reclaim the prize of victory. It follows that man and woman must be a team for the duration of the battle. This battle has three phases:

(1) The Incarnation.

(2) The Redeeming Deed of the cross.

(3) Individual Redemption, that is, the communication of the fruit of redemption to the individual.

If this is true, then it necessarily follows that the Blessed Mother must accompany Our Lord in this battle. In fact, she must accompany him for the duration of the battle: at the Incarnation, at the Redeeming Deed of the cross, and in the bestowal of redemption on each individual.

Pope Pius X expressed it this way: From the first moment there existed an intimate connection of life – and suffering – between Jesus and Mary [10](#). In other words, Our Lady will accompany Christ as long as the battle lasts. This includes the cross. I must not see Mary’s role as concentrated only on the first moment, on the Incarnation. Ancient Christian thought also saw Mary as assisting at the cross. The Vulgate translates *ipsa* : “ *she* will crush your head” (Gen 3,15). In other words, Mary also had a share in the Redeeming Deed. However, this truth was not further explored in antiquity. But Mary’s cooperation in the

Incarnation gives the foundation for her cooperation in Redemption. I need to demonstrate this, at least briefly.

The Gospels paint this image of Mary for us: The *Ave* in her ear, the *Magnificat* on her lips, the Divine Child in her arms, the tongues of the Spirit over her head. This is how Mary stands before us. When the *Ave* reached the ear of our Mother it had a unique sound. The ancient fathers have so many beautiful things to say about this! And we find it reflected in dogmatic theology. See how the angel works to give Mary the command that she shall be the Mother of God. He wishes to gain the Virgin's free consent. He gives her reasons and tries to dispel her misgivings. The angel points out the Child's task: he shall redeem the people. The fathers point out three moments:

*(1) First Phase: The Incarnation*

Our Lord not only wanted to become man, but wanted the conscious consent of his Mother. The fathers say: If Mary had not given her consent, {11} the world would not have been redeemed. This goes quite far, but we can see that the fathers wanted to stress the consent of our Mother. In fact, they also stressed [that her *fiat* was] a yes to the work of redemption. For the angel said to her: This Child will be the Redeemer. When she consents, Mary is also consenting to the suffering of her Son. In every joy and sorrow, Mary gave her consent with a simple *fiat*. She gave her consent out of love for us and for our redemption. The angel is extremely clear that the Child will be the redeemer of the world. The Blessed Mother gave her *fiat* : I give my yes, gladly and joyfully, to be the Mother of God.

This is, briefly, the opinion of antiquity. How emphatically did the fathers proclaim this truth to the people, and how gladly the people

accepted it! God spoke the first *fiat*, Mary the second. The result of the first *fiat* was the natural world. The result of the second was the supernatural world. Does not this increase still more the awe and reverence we have in our hearts for Mary? In any case it is clear that Mary cooperated in the first stage of the battle. Pope Leo XIII calls this opinion *sententia verissima* [11](#).

### *(2) Second Phase: The Redeeming Work of the Cross*

This conviction of the fathers contains the seed for the insight regarding Mary's cooperation in the sacrifice of the cross [12](#). What God begins, he continues in keeping with the axiom: *Sine poenitentia sunt opera Dei* [13](#).

Since he began the work of redemption with Mary, one can reasonably suppose that Mary will have a cooperative role in the Redeeming Deed of the cross. The interpretation of the Protogospel supports this assumption. Pius X, the great Eucharistic and Marian Pope, said: Our Lady was not at his side as a spectator, but as a spiritual helpmate. In this way she earned the title Restorer of the World [14](#).

### *(3) Third Phase: Individual Redemption*

We have tried to prove that the Blessed Mother must have and indeed does have a share in the work of redemption.

Does it not necessarily follow that Our Lady must also have a share in the redemption of each individual (subjective redemption)?

#### *ii. The Degree of Mary's Cooperation*

Our second question is: What is her role in redemption? First, what is it not?

1. Mary cannot be the Redeemer, because she herself was redeemed. *Nemo est causa sui ipsius* [No one can be his own cause].

2. She cannot be Coredemptrix as an equal to Christ.

3. Nor is any cooperative action of hers the direct cause.

So how is Mary's role as Coredemptrix to be understood? There are two opinions.

(1) *Billot's Position* [15](#)

Mary's *fiat* made redemption possible. Because she stood at the foot of the cross and offered up the God-man, she earned the right to be Mediatrix of all graces. But how is this possible? Redemption was wrought by Christ, but the distribution of the graces of redemption is made easier through Mary because she participated in the Redeeming Deed. Mary is accordingly the easiest way to Christ.

(2) *Scheeben's position* [16](#)

Scheeben goes further. Our Mother's cooperation at the foot of the cross moved God to more joyfully accept the redeeming merits of our Savior. She cooperated by emotionally surrendering her Son, over whom she disposed as her possession, to his redeeming death; indeed she made the sacrifice with full consent and thus fully participated in Christ's sufferings. Even here it is the blood of the Savior which is the

sole cause of redemption. One does not need to go so far [as to minimize in any way Christ's role as sole mediator].

### *(3) Fr. Kentenich's synthesis*

In my view, this teaching is theologically certain. But what is the significance of Mary's universal mediation for the ascetical life and for our pastoral work? [If we take this teaching seriously, Mary will assume a more prominent role. Our trust in her will grow. I remind you of the successes of such Marian priests as Hofbauer and Vincent Pallotti. How my reverence grows, my trust, my love for Mary, if I am firmly convinced of [her universal mediation]!

A pastor worried [that the teaching of Mary's universal mediation would diminish] the Holy Spirit's mediation of grace. How silly! {12} Our heavenly Mother can only mediate graces through the power of her intercession. Nor does this teaching claim that grace is accessible to us if one turns to her in prayer. A mother also gives when she is not asked. However, if I know the principle that she implores all graces, then I will give myself entirely to the Blessed Mother, and I receive all the more graces.

I recommend the book: *The Soul of the Apostolate* by Chautard [17](#). It discusses things just as we do in our Federation. The author shows how the interior life is joined to the apostolate, and he underscores the role of Our Lady in a most beautiful manner. Chautard also accepts Mary's mediation of graces.

### *Sixth Conference*

\*\*\* What is the Marian person? We are still discussing the essential definition. The Marian person is the person who, in the light and spirit of faith, understands as completely as possible the position of Our Lady in the work of redemption and – constantly and to the last consequence – translates it into practical life, in order to become a Marian apostle.

## *Part II: With an Impact on My Practical Life*

The second part of the definition says: Marian devotion must encompass one's entire practical life. We now want to take a moment to contemplate the life of the Marian person which he forms in keeping with his understanding. Thus far we have talked about a twofold understanding of Mary: We have gotten to know her as one of the redeemed and as Corredemptrix. The Marian person takes seriously to the last consequence the role of the Blessed Mother as one of the redeemed and, most especially, as Corredemptrix.

### *A. The Marian person and Mary's role as Corredemptrix*

Our entire confidence in our Blessed Mother rests in the fact that she is Corredemptrix. We hear the invocation "*Ora pro nobis*" ["Pray for us"] in churches everywhere. But just as the life of the Marian person is deeper and broader, so too is his act of confidence. He has an unconditional, almost blind trust in Mary. "I even entrust to you the stockings which are hanging out on the line to dry. And so far not a single one has been misplaced." This was a true Marian person.

Everyone who is even a little Catholic trusts in Mary, but the act of confidence of the Marian person is much deeper, broader, and more radical.

Whoever trusts in Mary in even such small matters, will also have spoken with her about the greater ones. Recall, for instance, the discernment of one's vocation, which some of you are still doing. Let us go to Mary, casting ourselves totally into her arms and expecting all things from her. The *Ave Maris Stella* [1](#) puts it so beautifully when it says, “*Vitam praesta puram*” [2](#). I know that when I receive graces, they come to me through Mary. The Blessed Mother will implore for us the pure life. And is not the pure life the necessary prerequisite for every vocation? Let us turn to Mary with complete trust, and we see which grace attracts us. We are so unhappy because we follow so little our God-willed vocation. But if I do not lead a pure life, then God will not cooperate. *Vitam praesta puram*. Let us teach others to pray this too.

There are some seminarians who are not able to muster a firm faith in their vocation to the priesthood. They are plagued by great difficulties before ordination to the subdiaconate [3](#): will I be able to persevere in the sacrifice of celibacy? We then pray to Mary: *Vitam praesta puram!* I know, if I receive grace, it is through Mary. So, go to her, so that I may preserve my purity or reconquer it. Priesthood and virginal purity cannot be separated. And this requires a constant struggle, also later as a priest. Holy purity is of such importance in keeping our spirit fresh and supple, especially in the years of preparation [for ordination]. The pure life is the best foundation for successful studies.

When, some day, we become teachers or educators in a boarding school, and see how the productivity of the one or the other falters, we should not always suppose that the reason is laziness as much as it could be difficulties in the area of holy purity. *Vitam praesta puram!* How necessary it is to lead young people to [holy purity], especially today! If I want to form a holy clergy, then I must especially see to it that the youth preserves their holy purity.

Mary even helps in one's studies. Of the manuscripts of St. Thomas [Aquinas] one says that on almost every page is found the words *Ave Maria* . Did not Mary help him because he thought of her so much?

Suarez <sup>4</sup> was so dumb as a boy but later became the greatest theologian of his time (indeed, he always said this came about because of the Mother of God)? Why should Mary not help us? Why should she not also enlighten our minds? In this regard we students of theology {13} are somewhat touched by Protestantism.

“ *Iter para tutum!* ” <sup>5</sup> We expect Mary's help in discerning our vocation.

Verse 6:

Vitam praesta puram,  
iter para tutum:  
ut videntes Iesum  
semper collaetemur.

Keep our life all spotless,  
make our way secure  
till we find in Jesus,



joy for evermore.

*Part III:*

***Tenth (Concluding) Conference***

(...)

{19} I can detect a misgiving in the hearts of some of you present. [You say:] “I have already been here many times but I do not find my ideal image of the Mother of God. For me she is the woman with the crown on her head, floating on the clouds.” [My answer:] We do not require that everyone have the same image of Our Lady. Everyone has a different image of Mary. “An image is written in my heart...” [poem].

Let us keep this image of Mary. But can we not also find our image of Mary [such as the one] from our childhood contained in our picture of the MTA? Does not our Blessed Mother sit upon the clouds? Does she not let us place the crown on her head? Or if you like the image of Mary as the “*Orante*” [6](#), can you not also picture this in our [MTA] picture?

The MTA can pray for us by interceding to Christ for us. And much depends on finding the great spirit of unity embodied in our picture. Every title finds its resonance in the MTA.

**FOOTNOTES**

1:

It is curious that two essentially identical transcripts of this workshop have different dates: April 13-16 and April 22-26, 1924. We know that the workshop was held more than once, but whether the two sets of dates are separate courses, or a transcription error, is unclear.

2:

This mimeograph was the property of Fr. Otto Boenki (1900-1969), a member of Schoenstatt's founding generation who came to the USA in 1924 and remained in contact with the developments in Schoenstatt, Germany.

1:

See Fr. Jonathan Niehaus, *New Vision and Life: The Founding of Schoenstatt* (2nd edition: Waukesha, 2004), p. 121f.

2:

The members of the *Colloquium Marianum* or Marian Colloquium, the core group at the Jesuit School in Ingolstadt which cultivated a vibrant and apostolic-minded love of Mary. Regarding the Marian Colloquium and how it became a model for Schoenstatt, see *New Vision and Life* , p. 121f.

3:

The "External Organization" of Schoenstatt's founding era, consisting of the students from Schoenstatt serving in the military during World War I, and the other soldiers who were won over to the same love of Mary. See *New Vision and Life* , p. 140-146.

[4:](#)

Also quoted by Fr. Kantenich in the talk he gave at Schoenstatt's founding on October 18, 1914. See *New Vision and Life* , p. 101.

[5:](#)

St. Alphonsus Rodriguez, SJ (1532-1617), Spanish Jesuit lay-brother.

[6:](#)

St. Clement Maria Hofbauer, CSsR (1751-1820), hermit, priest, and patron of Vienna. He is considered the second founder of the Redemptorists.

[7:](#)

The story of Fr. Jacob Rem, SJ (1546-1618). See *New Vision and Life* , p. 121f and M. Kley *United with Her* (Constantia, 1977), p. 17f.

[8:](#)

The vision mentioned here took place on April 6, 1604.

[9:](#)

German *wunderbar* (for the Latin adjective *admirabilis* ). The German means more than just “someone we admire,” including the meaning of someone truly wonderful, remarkable, amazing, able to accomplish great deeds.

[10:](#)

The different levels of life: plant (vegetative), animal (sentient, that is, the life of the senses), mind or spirit (intellectual), and divine (the life of grace).

[11:](#)

St. Vincent Pallotti (1795-1850), Roman native and visionary priest. He was the founder of the Pallottines, to whom Fr. Kentenich and many of the early Schoenstatt priests and seminarians belonged.

[12:](#)

Fr. Alban Stolz (1808-1883), German theologian and author.

[13:](#)

Namely, the “little exorcism” which any Christian can pray to ward off the power of Satan. Fr. Kentenich’s favorite form of this (“Arise, O Lord, that your enemies may be scattered and those who hate you may flee before you...”) is found in *Heavenwards* (Waukesha, 1992), p. 176.

[14:](#)

St. Vincent Pallotti.

[1:](#)

God, man, and the Devil.

[2:](#)

This list of Catholics with difficulties with Marian devotion is an early example of Fr. Kentenich observing the struggle of the modern critical spirit with the exuberance of popular piety. In just a few years he would begin to identify the underlying difficulty as “mechanistic thinking.” For a more thorough discussion see J. Niehaus, *The 31st of May* (Waukesha, 1995), p. 21-23, 107-130.

[3:](#)

Compare this with similar examples mentioned by Fr. Kentenich in the 1950s: *The 31st of May*, p. 119-121.

[4:](#)

That is, Mary and her role are real, not merely the product of theological speculation or popular enthusiasm.

[5:](#)

See the development of phenomenology (Husserl, etc.) and existentialism (Jasper, Heidegger, Marcel) in the 1920s.

[6:](#)

Known as the discipline of epistemology.

[7:](#)

Fr. Kentenich grew up in an era when faith was primarily understood as an exercise of the intellect and will, and only less so as an outflow of one's personal love for God. See *The 31st of May*, p. 7-8, 14-18.

[8:](#)

Conrad of Saxon (d. 1279), *Speculum B. Mariae V.*, tenth reading; long attributed to Bonaventure. See J. Kentenich, *Mary, Our Mother and Educator* (Waukesha, 1987), p. 140.

[9:](#)

St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430), *De Genesi contra Manichaeos libri duo*, book two, no. 24, where he draws a parallel between Genesis 2,6 (“But a spring welled up out of the earth and watered all the face of the earth.”) and the action of the Holy Spirit at the Incarnation, whereby Mary is the parallel to “the face of the earth” watered and made fertile by the Spirit. There he interprets “the face of the earth” to mean “the dignity of the earth,” which is most rightly equated with Mary.

[10:](#)

Adolf Harnack (1851-1930), German Protestant theologian.

[11:](#)

The overthrow of the Prussian state immediately after World War I (just five years before this workshop took place).

[12:](#)

The comments on the Protestant situation in this and the following paragraphs relate to the Lutheran church in Germany in the 1920s.

[13:](#)

Martin Luther (1483-1546), *Explanation of the Magnificat* , 1521.

[1:](#)

German: *Materialstufe* .

[2:](#)

St. Vincent Pallotti.

[3:](#)

See Psalm 45. The discussion of the types (or figures or prefigurements) of Mary in the Old Testament is a long-standing theme in Mariology. See Catholic Book Publishers, *Dictionary of Mary* (2nd edition: New Jersey, 1997), “Old Testament,” p. 356-359.

[4:](#)

A recurring theme in Fr. Kentenich’s Mariology is what he called the “biblical image of Mary.” To the list used here, he would later add “the dragon under her feet” and “radiant with light” to include the imagery of Revelation 12. See Sermon at St. Michael’s Church, Milwaukee, January 10, 1965 in *Aus dem Glauben leben* , Vol. 16 (Vallendar-Schoenstatt, 1991), p. 71-86. English translation: J. Kentenich, *With Mary into the New Millennium* (Waukesha, 2001), p. 36-44.

[5:](#)

See the discussion of Mary as the *negotium saeculorum* (the object of the study of all the ages), a term coined by St. Bernard. See for instance *Mary, our Mother and Educator* , p. 53f.

[6:](#)

Clues into Fr. Kentenich's reading of these passages can be found in *Mary, Our Mother and Educator* . There (p. 111-115) he interprets the moments when Christ dealt harshly with his Mother as integral to her education as his disciple, preparing her to stand at the foot of the Cross and to be our educator, so that she in turn can educate us to be disciples of Christ. He also stresses (p. 82-84) that her physical motherhood, while wondrous, does not exhaust God's plan for her motherhood – she is meant to serve as mother of the Mystical Body of Christ (her spiritual motherhood). Seen this way, Christ's seeming reproach (“Who are my Mother and brothers?”) indicates to her – and us – that the fullness of her motherhood is rooted in her hearing and doing God's will.

[7:](#)

Especially the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed.

[8:](#)

An outstanding overview of Catholic teaching in the patristic era is Luigi Gambero's definitive work: *Mary and the Fathers of the Church: The Blessed Virgin Mary in Patristic Thought* (San Francisco, 1999).

[9:](#)



The Greek word for excluded. In many of the Church councils, formal doctrine was defined by declaring anyone who denied it as *anathema* , that is, excluded or excommunicated from the true faith.

10:

The common understanding of the faithful.

11:

St. John Berchmans (1599-1621), Dutch Jesuit seminarian; patron saint of altar servers. He confessed his faith in the teaching of the Immaculate Conception long before it was made a formal dogma in 1854.

12:

Perhaps Fr. William Doyle, SJ (1873-1917), an Irish Jesuit who distinguished himself as a courageous military chaplain in World War I.

13:

“Immaculate Mary. Virgin Mary, you are blessed by the Most High Lord God before all women over the earth. You are the glory of Jerusalem, you are the joy of Israel, you are the highest honor of our people. You are all fair, Mary, and original sin is not in you” (Liturgy of the Immaculate Conception).

14:

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception was formally proclaimed by Bl. Pope Pius IX in the bull *Ineffabilis Deus* , December 8, 1854.

[15:](#)

In other words, as a daughter of Eve and a member of the human race she is not outside the order of salvation; her freedom from sin had to be won through Christ's saving grace.

But at the same time God foresaw her unique role in the work of redemption and therefore applied Christ's grace to her in such a way that she was never subject to the power of sin.

[16:](#)

Mt 16,18f: the power to loose and bind entrusted to St. Peter. See also the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 553.

[17:](#)

Genesis 3,15 is often called the Protogospel, that is, the very earliest good news of the coming redeemer. Pope John Paul II once commented on this passage this way: "Among the biblical accounts which foretold the Mother of the Redeemer, (...) [is the one] in which God revealed his plan of salvation after the fall of Adam and Eve. The Lord says to the serpent, the personification of the spirit of evil: 'I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel' (Gn 3,15).

"These statements, called the *Protogospel* (the first Good News) by Christian tradition since the 16th century, enable us to see God's saving will from the very origins of humanity. Indeed according to the sacred author's narrative, the Lord's first reaction to sin was not to punish the guilty but to offer them the hope of salvation and to involve them actively in the work of redemption, showing his great generosity even to those who had offended him.

"The Protogospel's words also reveal the unique destiny of the woman who, although yielding to the serpent's temptation before the man did, in virtue of the divine plan later

becomes God's first ally. Eve was the serpent's accomplice in enticing man to sin. Overturning this situation, God declares that he will make the woman the serpent's enemy.

“Bible scholars now agree in recognizing that the text of Genesis, according to the original Hebrew, does not attribute the action against the serpent directly to the woman, but to her offspring. Nevertheless, the text gives great prominence to the role she will play in the struggle against the tempter: in fact the one who defeats the serpent will be her offspring.

“Who is this woman? The biblical text does not mention her personal name but allows us to glimpse a new woman, desired by God to atone for Eve's fall; in fact, she is called to restore woman's role and dignity, and to contribute to changing humanity's destiny, co-operating through her maternal mission in God's victory over Satan. In the light of the New Testament and the Church's tradition, we know that the new woman announced by the Protogospel is Mary, and in 'her seed' we recognize her Son, Jesus, who triumphed over Satan's power in the paschal mystery.

“We also observe that in Mary the enmity God put between the serpent and the woman is fulfilled in two ways. God's perfect ally and the devil's enemy, she was completely removed from Satan's domination in the Immaculate Conception, when she was fashioned in grace by the Holy Spirit and preserved from every stain of sin. In addition, associated with her Son's saving work, Mary was fully involved in the fight against the spirit of evil.

Thus the titles 'Immaculate Conception' and 'Co-operator of the Redeemer,' attributed by the Church's faith to Mary, in order to proclaim her spiritual beauty and her intimate participation in the wonderful work of Redemption, show the lasting antagonism between the serpent and the New Eve.” (General audience of January 24, 1996).

[18:](#)

Here “Protogospel” (or Protoevangelium) indicates an elaboration on the very earliest events of the life of Christ and Mary. The Protogospel of James describes in great detail the story of Mary's conception, birth, childhood, marriage to Joseph, and the birth and

childhood of Jesus. While never considered canonical (part of Scripture), it is a very ancient Christian text and has enjoyed great popularity through the centuries.

[19:](#)

Cf. *Dictionary of Mary* , p. 40-41 (Archeology): “Inscriptions and graffiti under St. Peter’s Basilica stemming back to the 2nd or 3rd century portray Mary as a Protectrix for the Christian departed and their Mediatrix with Christ. In the *Catacombs of Saint Priscilla* , there are frescoes with the same theme.”

[20:](#)

In discussing the nature of Christ, the Council of Ephesus (431) also had to discern whether Mary could rightfully be called “Mother of God” or merely “Mother of Christ.” The Council clearly endorsed the title “Mother of God” (Greek: *Theotokos* ), stressing that the humanity and divinity of Christ cannot be separated. If Mary is the Mother of Christ, she is not only mother of the “human Christ,” but of his whole person, and hence Mother of God. See Gambero, p. 233-240.

[21:](#)

St. Augustine: “*Excepta itaque Sancta Virgine Maria, de qua, propter honorem Domini, nullam prorsus cum de peccatis agitur habere volo quæstionem: Unde enim scimus, quid ei plus gratiæ collatum fuerit ad vincendum omni ex parte peccatum, quæ concipere ac parere meruit eum quem constat nullum habuisse peccatum.*” “With the exception of the holy Virgin Mary, in whose case, out of respect for the Lord, I do not wish there to be any further question as far as sin is concerned, since how can we know what great abundance of grace was conferred on her to conquer sin in every way, seeing that she merited to conceive and bear him who certainly had no sin at all?”( *De natura et gratia*, c. 36, n. 42; PL 44, 267. English translation as in: Gambero, p. 226. See also *Dictionary of Mary* , p. 191.)

[22:](#)

According to the *Dictionary of Mary* , the feast of the Conception of Mary was celebrated in the East as early as the 7th century (p. 191), or perhaps the 6th century (p. 542).

[23:](#)

See *Dictionary of Mary* (Immaculate Conception), p. 191: “For the Greeks, initiators of the Feast, the expression ‘Immaculate Conception’ meant that Mary, from the first moment of her life, was preserved from sin.” The spread of the liturgical feast into the West led to hard questioning of what it really meant. As the discussion of original sin became more prominent in the West, the question had to be formulated this way: Was Mary preserved even from original sin?

[24:](#)

St. Anselm of Canturbury (c. 1033-1109) saw Mary as free from personal sin, but not original sin. Eadmer (1060/64-1124/44), Anselm’s secretary, lent firm support to her freedom even from original sin in his pioneering work *Tractatus de conceptione Sanctae Mariae* .

[25:](#)

St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), devoutly Marian, had reservations about the spread of the liturgical feast of the Immaculate Conception in his time and said so in a letter to the canons of Lyon (1138-1139). See J. Leclercq, H. Rochais (ed.), *S. Bernardi Opera* , Vol. 7 (Rome, 1974), p. 388-392.

[26:](#)

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) worried that such a doctrine might conflict with the universality of the redemption won by Christ. See *Dictionary of Mary*, p. 191f: “ Saint Thomas hesitated and, in the end, felt constrained to deny Mary a privilege that would, as he thought, be a ‘derogation of the dignity of Christ as Savior of all’ ( *Summa theologica* III, q. 27, art. 2, ad 2) For him, as for his contemporary Saint Bonaventure, Mary inherited the legacy of Adam and contracted original sin. But she was sanctified in her mother's womb.”

[27:](#)

Bl. John Duns Scotus (1265/66-1308) . See *Dictionary of Mary* (Immaculate Conception), p. 192: Holstein: “The Franciscan theologian Duns Scotus had struck an original position, defending Mary’s privilege in its fullness from the beginning of her life. He pointed out that rather than detracting from the Redemption, the privilege of a total immunization, preserving Mary from all sin, even original, would represent the most glorious result of Christ’s work. A modern theologian summarizes the argument of Scotus as follows:

‘There are two kinds of ransom: one is ransom paid for an individual already prisoner, redemption by *liberation* ; the other is ransom paid even before the acquired right of servitude is exercised, redemption by *preservation* . In making to His Mother an anticipated application of His merits to preserve her from the taint of original sin, which as a daughter of Adam she had naturally to incur, Jesus Christ became more fully her Redeemer. Far from being diminished, the excellence of Redemption is enhanced by Mary's privilege’ (X. Le Bachelet).”

[28:](#)

That is, in the nature of her being she did not share the punishment of original sin.

1:

Here Christ-bearer is not a sub-term of *Theotokos* (God-bearer vs. Christ-bearer, as was debated at the Council of Ephesus, 431), but a description of her office to bear Christ in her womb and in her arms, and as a disciple to carry him in her heart – and, as entrusted to her on Calvary, to bear Christ into the whole world and into all times. Regarding this formula's role in the development of Fr. Kentenich's mariology, see Fr. Paul Vautier, *Maria, die Erzieherin* (Vallendar-Schoenstatt, 1981), p. 244f.

2:

The word play on “Soli Deo” was a frequent staple of Fr. Kentenich's reflection on the importance of secondary causes. For instance, in 1966 he said:

“There is a word which we probably all know: *Soli Deo* – to God alone! (...) *Soli Deo!* What does that ‘To God alone’ mean? The saints are not God, so away with the saints! Mary is not God, so away with Mary! The God-Man also has a human nature, so away with that! *Soli Deo!* Naked mankind stands before the naked personal God, especially the Triune God of Revelation.

“*Soli Deo!* When we ask how it is that today's world has become so godless, we must truly say: because it has ignored and severed and divorced the natural order from its relationship with the living God. In the end, *Soli Deo* becomes: To whom do we give ourselves? To the sun god! (...)

“From here it is not at all hard to see how this sun-god, this nature-god takes on a whole new meaning. It can be the whims of the masses, can be the *Führer* leading his people. And now the word ‘God’ is emptied of all meaning. Why? Because the lower order has been pushed aside in our relationship with the eternal God.” (Talk, September 11, 1966, in *Propheta locutus est*, Vol. 10, p. 128f.)

3:

The Albigensian heresy centered in Southern France in the early 1200s.

[4:](#)

The Marian Sodality was founded in 1563 in Rome by Father John Leunis, SJ, and became an important part of the spiritual revival of the Catholic Church after the Council of Trent. See *New Vision and Life* (2004), p. 68-70.

[5:](#)

Bl. Pope Pius IX, Syllabus of Modern Errors, December 8, 1864.

[6:](#)

Which took place in 1870 at Vatican Council I. See Pope St. Pius X on this in his encyclical *Ad diem illum laetissimum*, February 2, 1904; Benedictine Monks of Solemnes (ed.), *Papal Teachings: Our Lady* (Boston, 1961), No. 222.

[7:](#)

That is, a Marian discipline or spirituality.

[8:](#)

In other words, the “soul.” See Fr. Kentenich’s comments of January 10, 1963: “I think we must say that Marian devotion [is] the *formal* principle of our entire movement (...). *Form* principle or formative principle means a thought, a truth that wants to form practical life. (...) *Formal* principle – and there may be more than one – means *tota in toto* [totally in every part]. Exactly [like the question] “Where is my soul?” The entire soul is in every part totally and totally in every part. (...) Applied to us: Marian devotion is at work in some way or another everywhere, in all our actions.” [emphasis modified]



9:

Prayer written by Fr. Kentenich in 1916. See *Heavenwards* (Waukesha, 1992), p. 172f.

1:

German: *Grundstimmung* , literally “fundamental mood.” It is the atmosphere generated by sharing the same ideals and the conviction of experience.

2:

In the original transcript, Fr. Kentenich uses the Greek term *katexochen* , meaning: at its sharpest and most definite, the ultimate.

3:

Attributed to St. Bernard of Clairvaux. See *Mary, Our Mother and Educator* , p. 175.

4:

Church policies of Catholic Emperor Joseph II (reigned 1765-90) in Austria-Hungary. Josephinism insisted on state supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs, and excluded devotions from the life of the Church.

5:

The MTA Magazine of the Schoenstatt Sodality. Referred to are the issues of the 1916, 1917, 1918, and 1919. Publication began in March 1916. See *New Vision and Life* , p. 146-148.

[6:](#)

Pope St. Pius X, encyclical *Ad diem illum laetissimum* , February 2, 1904; in: *Papal Teachings: Our Lady* (Boston, 1961), No. 224, see also Nos. 227, 234.

[7:](#)

German: *Radikalismus* , literally: radicalism.

[8:](#)

That is, the Marian consecration promoted by St. Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort.

[9:](#)

See the Eve-Mary parallel of St. Justin Martyr (see Gambero, p. 46-48), St. Irenaeus of Lyons (p. 53-58), Tertullian (p. 66), St. Athanasius (p. 107), St. Ephrem (p. 116f), St. Epiphanius (p. 124f, 128-130), St. Cyril of Jerusalem (p. 135, 139), etc.

[10:](#)

Pope St. Pius X, encyclical *Ad diem illum laetissimum* , February 2, 1904; in: *Papal Teachings: Our Lady* , No. 227: “Who more than His Mother could have a far-reaching knowledge of the admirable mysteries of the birth and childhood of Christ, and above all the mystery of the Incarnation, which is the beginning and foundation of faith? She not only ‘kept in her heart’ (Lk 2,19-51) the events of Bethlehem and what took place in Jerusalem in the Temple of the Lord, but sharing as she did the thoughts and secret wishes of Christ, she may be said to have lived the very life of her Son. Hence nobody ever knew Christ so profoundly as she did, and nobody can ever be more competent as a guide and teacher of the knowledge of Christ.”

[11:](#)

A most true position. See for instance Pope Leo XIII, encyclical *Octobri mense* , September 22, 1891 ( *Papal Teachings: Our Lady* , No. 113) and encyclical *Fidentem Piumque* , September 20, 1896 (No. 194).

[12:](#)

Seminal insights include those of St. Ambrose (see Gambero, p. 202f) and St. John Damascene (p. 405f).

[13:](#)

God's works are without repentance, that is, if he begins a work he does not relent until it is accomplished in a way consistent with its beginning.

[14:](#)

See Pope St. Pius X, encyclical *Ad diem illum laetissimum* , February 2, 1904; in: *Papal Teachings: Our Lady* , especially No. 231-233: "Moreover, it was not only the glory of the Mother of God to have presented to God the Only-Begotten (...) the material by which he was prepared as a Victim for the salvation of mankind, but hers also was the office of tending and nourishing that Victim, and at the appointed time of offering Him at the altar. (...)

"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 has been possible 'she would have gladly borne all the torments that her Son underwent' (St. Bonaventure).

“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. Mariae* , c. 9) and dispensatrix of all the gifts that our Savior purchased for us by His death and by His blood.”

[15:](#)

Cardinal Louis Billot, SJ (1846-1931), French theologian at the Gregorian University in Rome, elevated to Cardinal in 1911.

[16:](#)

Fr. Matthias Joseph Scheeben (1835-1888), prominent German theologian and mariologist.

[17:](#)

Fr. Jean-Baptiste Chautard, OCSO (1858-1935), Cistercian (Trappist) abbot of Sept-Fons in France. *The Soul of the Apostolate* (a favorite book of Pope St. Pius X and others) shows how prayer must be the soul of every apostolic work.

[1:](#)

*Hail, Star of the Sea* , traditional Latin hymn to Mary. The hymn, dating back to at least the 9th century, has 7 four-line verses.

[2:](#)

Verse 6, line 1: “Keep our life pure.”

[3:](#)

At that time the first of the major orders was ordination as a subdeacon (followed by ordination as a deacon and then as a priest). Hence the crucial nature of reaching clarity about one's vocation before the subdiaconate.

[4:](#)

Fr. Francisco Suarez, SJ (1548-1617), Spanish Jesuit and leading theologian of the Counter-reformation.

[5:](#)

*Ave Maris Stella* , verse 6, line 2: "Make our paths sure."

[6:](#)

Mary praying with her arms outstretched, a popular image of Mary in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s (including in the liturgical movement).