

Universal and Maternal Mediation of Mary

Introduction

The foundation of Christianity, under the Catholic doctrine, heavily derives from the selfless love that Mary, the mother of Jesus, exhibited by acceding to the spiritual call to bear the baby-Jesus. “Be it done unto me according to your word” (Lk. 1:38). These words of ultimate trust marked the beginning of the *New Testament* between humankind and God, as Mary accepted her participation in the redemptive task. The Catholic clergy, led by the Pope, together with the pastoral committees, in the year 2001 convened an extraordinary consistory to declare that Mary was the mother of all Peoples. The first ever living human being to receive the message about the redemption was Mary, a virgin from Nazareth. In the year 2012, the Pope Benedict XVI underscored the study of Mary (Mariology) as one seminal aspect in the Study of Truth (*via veritus*). It is through this study of truth that we get the revelation about the path of beauty (*via pulchritudinis*) and the path of love (*via amoris*). Hence, in studying the Christ himself, we must be in a position to understand the unique role of the person who brought the message to the universe. The glorification of Mary as a Co-Redemptrix is a way of personalizing the church so that the church assumes the characteristics of human beings, but not merely the buildings. The dogmatic constitution of the Vatican (Lumen Gentium) is, however, categorical in explicating that the Co-Redemptrix role of Mary must not overshadow the presence of Christ himself. Hence, the church moderates between the minimalists and the maximalists extremes in this matter.

Methodology

This is a qualitative research paper, which entails a review of some thoughtful literature as written by different scholars and churches. The dogmatic Vatican constitution provides adequate knowledge about Mariology and the future of studying Mary as the Co-Redemptrix. The papal office, together with the Catholic community, expresses its opinions in different conferences as regarding the idea of declaring Mary as a co-redeemer of the universe. Mariology, according to the Roman Catholic dogma is a systematic study that immortalizes Mary as the bearer of the new message of salvation (Flanagan, 1998). The Catholic Church's theology respects the place of Mary in the beginning of salvation, and thus she is treated with dignity, taking into consideration the fact that she was the mother of redemption. In this discourse, the literature will revisit the Papal Apostolic Letters and other teachings that relate to Mariology in Catholic literature and teachings.

The literature review shall include different ecclesiastical readings together with scholarly articles defining the Catholic concept of Mary. The evangelical guidelines by the Catholic cardinals and other pious souls, direct the attention of the world towards the conception of Mary as a co-redeemer, as seen in the recent conferences where the clergy asserted that the Pope declares her a Co-Redemptrix officially. The interpretive message in this discourse shall happen entirely in the context of Catholic faith (*Novo Millennio Ineunte*) and the guidelines provided by the clergy. The assertion here is that Mary was the first ever to meet the Christ or rather hear the Good News of Christ. Hence, Mary situated the foundation of the redemption. This unique role is not derogative to any other question in the Catholic piety and is seen in the

current curriculum on Mariology. The Catholics today invoke the blessings of Mary in their prayers as a way of appreciating the fact that she was as significant, but not equal to Jesus himself.

Theoretical framework

This is a pure religious study with all the concepts derived from the doctrines of the Roman Catholic guidelines. The Catholic Church foundation sets the principles from which the theological studies must take place, and as such, the study is constrained to them. The Biblical allusion shall form a greater part of this research, with special interest in Gospel Books according to St. Luke. Other Epistle readings confirming the free will of Mary into the call to salvation shall also accompany the Gospel allusions. The Catholic deity, at the pinnacle of the top most authority, stresses on the ecumenical imperative that resonates around the recognition of Mary as a Co-redeemer of the world. Through her experience in the pilgrimage of faith, Mary demonstrated a special preservation and commitment to unity with Christ, even during the time of His death. The Way of the Cross is a Catholic ideology, defining the path that Jesus followed until His Crucifixion. In this journey, Mary was always by His side, agreeing to the immolation of the innocent victim that was her very son.

The magisterial Marian foundation as a Co-Redemptrix is hence the most important in the study of Mary according to the Catholic Church. However, in the recent context, there has been contention from different groups questioning how Biblical is that act of glorifying Mary to the level of a co-redeemer. This is one instance of criticism that can serve to elaborate further on the matter at hand. Different social science perspectives like feminism and patriarchy shall be

part of the discussion, especially when it comes to the critic of Mariology by some psychologists and sociologists, be acknowledged.

Literature review

Foundation of Mary as a Co-Redemptrix

The realization of Mary as a Co-Redemptrix in the Catholic Church began following the many instances of papal teachings about the same. Pope John Paul II, more than any other Pontiff in the Catholic Church, is regarded as the main proponent that brought awareness to the Church, about the idea of Mary as a Co-Redemptrix (Calkins, 1996). This doctrine intertwines with the mystery of the Rosary, reawakening the suffering of Mary alongside Jesus.’ The sufferings of Mary from the birth of Christ to His Crucifixion are enough testimonies that Mary did not only agree to bear Jesus, but to walk with him until His last days on the earth, sharing in each portion of His suffering. It is hence, through the suffering of Mary that salvation comes to the full completion according to the Gospel according to Luke. “Woman, behold your son...son, behold your mother” (Jn.19:26-27). The scripture according to Saint John elaborates that Mary and Jesus were both redeemers.

Other than the Biblical foundation, the development of Mariology stands on four firm facets of Catholic dogma, that is, Mother of God, Perpetual Virginity, Immaculate Conception and other assumptions (Flanagan, 1998). Since its inception that took place as early as 16th Century, the idea has been shaped in several occasions following papal statements, the writings

of the saints and other theological analyses based on the Catholic dogma. Pope Benedict XVI, in many of His summons, had indicated that we cannot understand Jesus devoid of the unique role played by Mary. In following the path of truth, (*via veritas*), we must personalize the church by immortalizing Mary as a Co-Redemptrix. “Upon this rock, I will lay my foundation” (Matthew 16:18). Jesus declares that Peter shall carry the Christian faith to the next generation. The Catholic faith also understands the role of Mary in the foundation of the church, placing her side-by-side with Peter. The objective holiness of the church derives from the dual role played by Mary and St. Peter in founding the same church. We understand the two as exhibiting spiritual soundness and charisma that as carried the church up to the place it is today. Love was the major virtue of the duet, and this love serves to create spiritual soundness in the church today. Hence, in the Catholic teachings, the dual role of St. Peter and Mary are not secondary doctrines but are part and parcels of the Gospel dissemination criteria.

Defining Mary as Co-Redemptrix

Many theologians have raised objections towards the inclusion of such terms in the Vatican Constitution, *Lumen Gentium* (LG). As such, Chapter VIII of the LG avoided the mentioning of such terms pending the settling of the differences. At this time, many issues remained controversial in the Catholic faith, including the naming of Mary as “Mother of God.” However, the clear definition of Immaculate Conception, which was the predeterminant of Co-Redemptrix,

came to be promulgated in the year 1854 under the leadership of Pius IX. This move set the pace for the inclusion of Co-Redemptrix, allowing the theologians and the Council to have a basis for argument.

Mariology as a foundation of the Co-Redemptrix

The teleological steps in defining Mary as a Co-Redemptrix traces from the early movements by the Christians around the First Century, to deliberately reflect upon Mary in their arts, teachings, and writings. Christians around this period had identified the unique role of Mary as a bridge between the past and the new world; the path that would be chat by the salvation. In this regard, the Christians crafted a particular piece of prayer to Mary entitled ‘sub tuum praesidium.’ In other regions like Egypt, many Christians were already venerating Mary as early as the Third Century. This is also the same period that the venerable Catholic term ‘Theotokos’ came into inception (Miravalle 2013). The term describes the concept that Mary bore ‘God’ and hence was worth the adoration. The mushrooming Christian Churches across the world assumed a personal outlook that identified them with the coronation of Mary. A pilgrimage to Rome reveals Santa Maria Maggiore as one church whose antiquity exemplifies the ideal place of Mary in the Catholic faith. Constructed as early as Fifth Century, the church still stands defiantly, and its magnanimous shape forms the template for the Christians Catholic churches established across the universe today.

As time grew, Mariology spread like a wildfire across the universe, while many more prayers to Mary were coming into place. “Ave Maria”, “Ave Maris Stella” and “Salve Regina” are some of the songs that extolled Mary (Miravalle 2013). At the same time, the

THE UNIVERSAL AND MATERNAL MEDIATION OF MARY
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immortalization of Mary was witnessed in many aspects of art and masterpieces in the Christian faith. Leonardo Da Vinci, Botticelli and Raphael were among the first people to present the concept of Mary in painting. These were just, but the first steps in explaining Mary's role in the salvation journey.

In the modern art movement, the veneration of Mary was revived through the deliberate act of the Catholic pope, Pope John Paul II in his writing "Redemptoris Mater." In this writing, the pope was forthcoming and intentional to mention that Mary enjoined in the misery and the suffering of Jesus, and hence, Mariology should note, with greater concern, that Mary herself was a redeemer. The papal office and the Vatican Council are some of the top most authorities that influence the conceptualization of Mary as a Co-Redemptrix. Through the long process of Catholic theology, the deacons, and the theologians' highlight on the seminal role that Mary played, not only in the birth of Jesus, but also the step of faith that Mary took in response to the redemption call. Early saints and Christians reflected in the nexus between the doctrine of Mariology and the study of Christianity, with many of them asserting that the two are inseparable. 'Compendium Mariologiae' is a study book established in the year 1964 by Gabriel Roschini. In this religious book, Gabriel insists that the significance of Mary in the Christian church is not only limited to her role in bearing Jesus, but also encompasses the spiritual union that Mary got into with Jesus throughout His entire journey. Later, Pope Pius X came to echo this voice during the 'Ad Diem', stating that Mary is the only sure road to the unification of the Christian church today. Hence, another rejoinder, Raymond Cardinal Burke also mentioned that it is the duty of Christians today to affirm this faith through the coronation of Mary as a Co-Redemptrix.

Titling Mary as a Co-Redemptrix

About fifty fathers at the Second Vatican Council voted for entitling Mary as a Co-Redemptrix in a bid to strengthen the Catholic faith in Christ. This was the first step towards incorporating the idea in the Vatican constitution *Legum Gentium* (LG). According to (LG, n. 57), Mary walked with Christ from the time of His vigil conception up to His last moments on earth. As such, the only way to appreciate such a kind spirit of cooperation is through elevating her to the level of a Co-redeemer, in what came to be called Co-Redemption. The general feeling was that the title “Co-Redemptrix” in the Catholic doctrine was not derogative to any approval, just like it was the case with the title “Mediatrix” available in (LG, n. 62). The title was accepted unanimously, even though some members of the council raised questions citing the ambiguity in the title and that of Jesus. However, it became apparent that the title Co-Redemptrix posed no difficulty in relating the role of Mary and that of Christ. Formerly, there had been many contentions around other titles like “Salvatrrix” and “Redemptrix,” with some people arguing that the Virgin herself cautioned against elating her to this level, since it would create confusion between her role and that of God or Christ himself.

In the 15th Century the term, Co-Redemptrix, first appeared in a hymn, signaling the fact the term ‘Redemptrix’ had evolved to ‘Co-Redemptrix.’ The conceptualization of this term as a mother of Redeemer then began to become apparent, showing progress in its full use among the Catholics. In the hymn, the term was specific in its relating of Mary as “she who shared in the suffering of Jesus”. Mary was then an invincible woman who had a special position in the church, as a woman who gave birth to a redeemer, hence the title ‘mother of salvation.’ More

doctrinal issues began resonating around this idea of passionate suffering with Christ. This title should not be construed as a challenge to the supremacy of Christ by the Catholic dogma. It merely associates Mary with the redemptive work of Christ. The Catholic Church is not claiming any equality between Christ Jesus and Mary, His mother. Christ is the Redeemer, while Mary is an associate in the redemption task.

The collaboration of Mary as a mother offers her a unique position in the discourses regarding the redemptive task of Christ. Saint Paul affirms the participation of human beings in the salvation journey of Jesus Christ in a number of scriptures he writes after the death. In his letter to the Romans, Paul stressed that we were buried together with Jesus and hence will resurrect together with him. (Romans. 6:4). In this respect, the first human being to remember in the death and suffering of Jesus is none, other than the mother, Mary. Paul carries the same message to Ephesus where he writes “God made us alive together with Christ ... and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:5-6). As much as the salvation task was the idea of the Father, there is an equal call to task among the human beings who receive the very salvation. Legend has it that many died in Ephesus.

The message of the apostle Paul was crystal clear. His message was specifically concerned with divine transcendence, and we shouldn't view it as precipitating competition with God. If anything, we must perceive this activity as directly emanating from the spiritual guidance. Paul was one of the Apostles who regarded Jesus as the 'Lord', acknowledging that Jesus was the supreme master of the church. Sincere cooperation between human beings and Jesus is not evil in any way, and as such, the Pauline expression of 'Co-Redemptrix' is a mere extension of the relationship. The privileges assigned to Mary by the Catholic Church are not a

rift between the church members and Christ, as some critics may put it. They are privileges that come as a package with the redemption work of Jesus Christ and follow the path defined by the Holy Spirit. Much more, what we should be most concerned with is the challenge that Mary's Co-Redemptrix role poses to us as the ardent followers of Christ. In this endeavor, we must bear in mind that the Catholic faith does not superimpose Mary as Jesus' equal. As much as the Christians may be described as redeemers, it is still justified to consider Mary a co-redeemer. Mary is one normal human being that stands as the umbrella to all the faithful who consider themselves as redeemers. This is because just like the redemption, the Co-Redemption also has its unique position in the lives of Christians and the apostles today. The tenant of this reasoning is that each Christian has a duty to ensure the continuity of the work that was started by Jesus.

Scriptural Foundations of the aspect of Marian Mediation

The truth of our faith originates from the Divine Revelation, which is based on the Sacred Scripture and Tradition. The Magisterium of the Church, which is mandated with the role of guarding faith and confirming the faithful based on the word of God, recommends the two references. A complete understanding of Mary and her role in salvation is only possible after a full understanding of the scripture and how it portrays her. We can only achieve this by carefully studying the two main covenants between God and His people; the New and the Old Testaments. Mary is considered the bridge between these two covenants (Rossier, 2001). They offer basic knowledge about the divine plan of salvation and the role of Mary in this salvation history. This organic synthesis of theology of Marian Mediation, will only analyze the elements of available in the Bible to understand Mary as the Co-Redemptrix of humanity.

According to the scriptures, the Marian mediation is not only evident from her unique participation in the birth and education of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Even after incarnation, Mary continued with her role of mediation in the Gospels, which is considered her intercession of mankind. John's gospel usually minimizes the significance of Mary but her presence comes at the crucial moments of the gospel. These moments represent the beginning and the end of the ministry of Christ. There were other intercessors in the salvation history before Mary in the Old Covenant. Intercession prayer is considered one of the most efficacious forms of mediation that a person can make with God. However, the theme of intercession has not been addressed by many Biblical scholars.

We can describe Marian mediation in three different aspects that are intertwined. These aspects are the 'Mediatrice of redemption or the Co-Redemptrice of mankind,' 'Mediatrice of all graces (Dispensatrice of every grace),' and the 'Mediatrice of defense and comfort (Advocate, or protectress of the children of God).' (Lumen Gentium, 62). Understanding these aspects enables us to grasp the concept of the mystery of Marian mediation. Jesus accomplished the salvation of mankind through His death on the Cross. But the initial plan of God, was to ensure that the mission is accomplished by collaboration of a woman, still honoring her free will. Galatians 4:4 expresses this concept, '*When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman.*'

Co-Redemptrice aspect in the scripture

The Scripture shows that God's plan for salvation of mankind would involve two parties, one human, and one divine. This is described first in Genesis where God says '*I will put enmity*

between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed: she shall crush your head...' (Gen. 3:15). The 'woman' and the 'seed' refer to the two persons who must collaborate to bring salvation to the world. This scripture foreshadows the prophecy of Mary and Jesus, her divine son, in the victory over evil, the serpent. It also shows the will of God to the two parties will have similar 'enmity' of ultimate opposition between them and the serpent. This is a foreshadowing of the divine work of redemption by Jesus in collaboration with his Mother Mary. The church calls this collaboration between Mary and Jesus, the 'Marian Co-Redemption' which suggests that Mary is the 'Co-Redemptrix with Redeemer.' Her role here is purely secondary and subordinate to Jesus Christ, which means that they don't share equality or glory. God intended to let human beings contribute in His works. The sharing doesn't reduce the glory of God because He is infinite, but it allows the glory of God to shine even further (Rossier, 2001).

The New Testament, again describes the divine redemption during the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38). The Scripture also describes the cooperation of the two parties. The Virgin Mary is called and asked to accept to carry the Savior of the world in her womb. The story also reveals God's respect of Mary's free will; he doesn't force her to take the responsibility. She wasn't ordered, but after the angel delivered the message to her, she received an active role and God waited for her to give her consent. Through her free will to collaborate in the divine plan to redeem the human race, she became the Co-Redemptrix. However, her role in redemption is unique and comprehensive, as Simeon prophesies to her that *'a sword will pierce through your own soul also'* (Luke 2:25). This prophecy prepares her of the impending pain and suffering she would undergo in the mission of salvation.

After Jesus' crucifixion, Mary shared in the pain that Jesus experienced. She lies at the bottom of the cross, consoles her child, and goes through the same agony of death of Christ. This reveals that Mary too participated in the mission of her son to save the world, making her the Co-Redemptrix. This shows that the initial plan of God was not only to redeem the world through the crucifixion of the Messiah, but for mankind to share in the entire mission of Jesus Christ. Even so, the sharing doesn't make Jesus less of a Redeemer. Mary is the Co-Redemptrix because she shared with Christ, the mission of redemption, whose climax was the Calvary. Her suffering with the Savior during His crucifixion makes her the 'mother of all peoples.'

Mediatrix aspect in the Sacred Scripture

Apart from being a collaborator in redemption, Mary is also considered a 'Mediatrix of all graces.' The word Mediatrix can either refer to the objective redemption, which is the overall title to grace for all, or the subjective redemption, which is the sharing of this grace with individual subjects, or both. In the scripture 1 Timothy 2:5, Jesus is 'the sole mediator between God and His people,' but all believers are called to take part in the mediation of Jesus. When we pray for one another, we fulfill this calling as well as through our evangelism and charity work. God asked Mary to take part in the mediation mission of Christ, in a unique way.

Therefore, the title 'Mediatrix of all graces' is justified because Mary gave birth to the Messiah. By carrying out this role, she mediated Jesus (the author of all graces) to the world and became the 'God-bearer.' The Annunciation, revealed at the annunciation, which signifies the mediation of Mary, reveals her mediation role when she is put in the 'middle' (between God and man). She freely accepts to take this unique responsibility. When Mary visits Elizabeth in Luke

1:41, her physical appearance mediates grace to John the Baptist while he is still in His mother's womb. Mary presents to John the sanctity of the unborn Messiah, leading to the sanctification of John the Baptist. This story shows that the 'Mediatrice of all graces' title suits Mary.

At the wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11), even though Jesus knew that the new couple didn't have enough wine to serve the guests, she talked to Jesus to help them out. She placed herself between her son and the troubled couple. She interceded for them to Jesus, revealing her mediation as well as the role of this intercession when John says, *'This, the first of His signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested His glory; and his disciples believed in him'* (John 2:11).

Before Jesus died on the cross, he looked at His grieving mother and said, *'Woman, behold, your son...Son, Behold, your mother!'* (John 19:26). In doing so, Jesus gave Mary the new role of the mother of the church and is called to exercise her divine duty of as a spiritual mother of all peoples. Her task would be to nourish her children, the Christians, by mediating the graces of salvation of Christ to man. This means that she is the 'Mediatrice of all graces.'

Advocate aspect

In the Scriptures, the term 'advocate' just means 'called in to help.' Jesus and the Holy Spirit are advocates with God in the divine plan of redemption. Jesus Christ is our Redeemer and the Holy Spirit cleanses us. We call Mary an advocate because she intercedes for us to her Son. The Bible describes Mary's role as an advocate for our needs. She became our advocate when she consented to give birth to the Messiah at the Annunciation. She also demonstrated her advocacy

during the wedding at Cana by interceding for the guests at the event. Through her intercession, she obtained the needs of the people from Jesus (John 2:8-10).

Through prayer, Mary intercedes for us at Pentecost for the descending of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:14). This shows that her advocacy made everyone receive one of the divine advocates of the Holy Trinity. In the gospel of John 19:26, Mary is given to the mankind as a mother. She becomes the advocate for all believers even after her assumption into heaven. Vatican II quotes, *“By her maternal charity, she cares for the brethren of her Son, who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led into their blessed home”* (Lumen Gentium, n. 62.) Therefore, Mary is an advocate for the people, the ‘Mediatrice of defense and comfort.’

Magisterial Foundations of the respective aspect of Marian Mediation

For over two hundred years, the papal Magisterium provides clearer indications about Mary’s intimate collaboration in the redemptive mission of Christ. The pope’s address on 25th October 1995, he gave his important contribution to this essential part of the catholic teachings by saying, *“the Virgin Mary ... is acknowledged and honored as being truly the Mother of God and of the Redeemer”* (LG, 53). Vatican II Council applied this reference to link Mary's motherhood to Redemption. After Mary became the Mother of the Messiah and therefore the Mother of God, the church and theologians explained her cooperative nature in redemption. This was a gradual process that took a long period of time because the early ecumenical councils abandoned other dogmas and concentrated on unfolding the truth on Christ’s identity in all its richness.

Throughout history, Mariology takes the direction of Christology. At the council of Ephesus, the

divine motherhood of Mary was acknowledged to affirm the oneness of Christ's identity.

Furthermore, the church acquired a deeper understanding of Mary's presence in the redemptive journey of the Savior.

Towards the end second century, St. Irenaeus identified Our Lady's contribution in salvation. He acknowledged Mary's consent during the Annunciation and recognized that Her obedience to and the belief in the divine message was contrary to Eve's disobedience and disbelief. The responses from the two women influenced the destiny of humanity. Eve's response brought death, while that of Mary brought salvation. The fathers of the Church didn't develop this affirmation in a consistent manner until the 10th century. They affirmed that Mary maintained the unity between her and Jesus Christ, both in 'attitude and wish.' St. Bernard's disciple elaborated further on the offering at Calvary. He identified '*two altars: one in Mary's heart, the other in Christ's body. Christ sacrificed His flesh, Mary her soul.*' This meant that Mary sacrificed herself spiritually in communion with Jesus, and ensured redemption of mankind. He says, "*What the mother asks, the Son approves and the Father grants*" (De septem verbis Domini in cruce, 3: PL 189, 1694). After pondering over this mystery, the church began teaching about Mary's collaboration in the redemption work.

From the 20th century, many authors have used the Co-Redemptrix and Mediatrix roles of Mary as one, with 'mediation' as the general term for both. Some scholars argue that Mariologists use the role of 'Mediatrix' to refer to the second phase of Mary's mediation, which is the cooperation of Mary in the distribution of grace. Co-Redemptrix role is reserved for the initial phase, where Mary consented to the Immaculate Conception. The two roles are considered the two major divisions of the broader category of 'Marian mediation.'

Co-Redemptrix

The dogmatic constitution of Vatican, Lumen Gentium chapter 8, gives an analysis of the five Marian doctrines. The chapter also legitimizes the use of the word Co-Redemptrix to describe Virgin Mary, but stopped using it to avoid conflict with the Protestant counterparts. In other words, the second Vatican council agreed to the cooperative role of Mary in redemption, but avoided the use of the term Co-Redemptrix. The council consents that Mary's role as the 'mother of God' (*Theotokos*) that she chose to take from the Annunciation, has earned her the rightful title 'mother in the order of grace' or 'spiritual mother' in her mediation of grace to mankind. The council gives us further understanding about the role of Mary as Mediatrix. As discussed above, Mary's Co-Redemption involves her role in collaboration with her son in His redemptive mission. Mary is Co-Redemptrix with Christ but not equal to the Redeemer. Her only responsibility is to contribute or rather participate in accomplishment of the mission. According to Gherardini, Co-Redemptive doctrine is 'Mary's proximate, immediate, objective, active and universal cooperation' with Jesus.

The magisterial aspect of Marian Co-Redemption describes Mary as the 'mother of the church' and advocate. The goal of redemption is accomplished in her. The Catholic doctrine argues that by the merits of Jesus, Mary is incomparably holy. This gives her the unique capability to cooperate actively with Christ, the divine mediator between God and man. She becomes our Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate (Lumen Gentium, 56-58, 60-62). Her mediation is the divine plan by which humanity gets right with Christ, and enjoys God's blessings that Jesus acquired for us in His redemptive mission that was completed at Calvary.

Mary's mediation is the final step when the love of the Trinity, through the Holy Spirit, enters God's creation, a point that brings to pass the incarnation and redemption. Mary's active role of intercession with Jesus is referred to as the 'ascending mediation' while her direct active role of mediation of graces is called the 'descending mediation.' Both roles constitute her Co-Redemption in the sacrifice at the cross, which constitutes the mystery of the Eucharist (descending mediation).

In the 20th century, Pope Saint John Paul II, proclaimed the Fifth Marian dogma that gave Mary the three roles 'Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix of All Graces, and Advocate for the People of God.' By 1998, the Vatican had received over four million petitions from 157 nations appealing for a papal presentation of the new dogma. Since then, there have been numerous debates between the Marian maximalists, who seek the elevation of Mary and the Marian minimalists, who disagree with such proposals. Between the definition of the Immaculate Conception dogma (1854) and the definition of the Assumption (1950), there were intense Marian studies and devotion. More attention was paid to the role of Mary in the salvation of man, especially on the topics of Co-Redemption and mediation. The council concluded that the cooperation of Mary showed her complete loyalty to God's work of redemption. The grace of God made this possible and her active and free participation was out of her faith and obedience as the chapter says, '*this union of the mother with the son in the work of salvation is made manifest from the time of Christ's virginal conception up to his death.*' (Lumen Gentium 57). The consent of Mary is consummated at the cross. She was candid enough to watch her son suffer and persevere in faith, believing in the redemptive plan, associated herself with her child's persecution and agreed to all of it (LG 61). These words prove the Catholic faith on the cooperation of Mary with Jesus' work

of redemption. Even though the council didn't use the term Co-Redemptrix, it is still justified because it is still embraced as a theological term. Pope John Paul II has also used the term Co-Redemptrix for at least six times between 1982 and 1991 (Calkins, 1996).

Mary acts as the role model of the church, and she shows us the way. Through her maternal compassion, Mary shared in the suffering of the Savior of the world. We are also called to connect our sufferings with Christ so that our experiences will also become 'redemptive' and our lives will acquire a new meaning. Many saints and martyrs have also identified with the Crucifixion of our Lord through their personal suffering. This implies that the church and all partakers of the body are Co-Redeemers with Jesus, bearing a subordinate role and relying on the maternal mediation by 'the mother of the church.'

The Mediatrix

The term Mediatrix refers to the feminist role of a 'mediator.' A mediator is a person who intervenes between two parties with the intention of restoring peace and friendship. Mary's title Mediatrix originated from the East in the Fourth Century and later in the Ninth Century in the West. The Catholic Church and the magisterium adopted this term in the 17th century, commonly known as 'the Mediatrix of all graces.' Hence, Mary obtains graces on our behalf. Before Mary, people lived by the graces of her future merits, while people after her Assumption, obtain all graces through her mediation. This is because Mary became the 'handmaid' (Leo VIII, *Adiutricem Populi* 1895) after her assent at the Annunciation and an associate of the savior in the obtaining of grace. This made her the collaborator of the divine mediator in the distribution of grace to all human races (Anderson, Stafford, & Burgess, 1992).

According to Pius X, *Ad Diem illum* (1904), the union of Mary with the suffering of Christ made her the most appropriate restorer of the lost people, and consequently ‘the distributor of all gifts.’ This suggests that the redemptive work of Jesus makes Mary a worthy distributor of grace that restores people’s friendship with God.

Pope Benedict XV, *inter sodalicia* (1918), argues that the role of Mary as the Co-Redemptrix makes her the distributor of graces of redemption. The dogmatic constitution, Eight Chapter, contains a very significant reference to the Mediatrix. The Second Vatican Council had requested the definition of the mediation of Mary. The first draft described her as the ‘minister and dispenser of heavenly gifts.’ The later draft described her as the ‘Mediatrix of all graces’ since cooperated with Jesus to acquire the graces. She is invoked by the believers as the advocate because she is the associate of Christ; she is the intercessor of the people through Christ. Therefore, the Lumen Gentium Article 62, gives Mary the titles used by the church; the advocate, helper, benefactress and the Mediatrix. However, these titles don’t reduce or add anything to the efficacy and dignity of Christ the one divine Mediator.

In conclusion, the Second Vatican Council used words that provide doctrinal support to the teaching of the church on Mariology. These doctrinal descriptions of the Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix, and Advocate are very deep. Regardless of the council not using the term Co-Redemptrix to avoid confusion, and using the terms Mediatrix and advocate sparingly, the doctrinal definitions provided are still adequate. These doctrines form the basis of catechism (Miegge, 1955). The teachings also have a deep traditional usage in the papal magisterium of the 19th and the 20th centuries. They also consists a unique contribution by the current papal magisterium of Pope Saint John Paul II. Vatican II teachings do not prevent the definition of the

maternal mediation but seek a better theological contribution and completion of the Marian teachings (Calkins 1996).

Mother the Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix, and Advocate are portrayed in the Sacred Scriptural revelation through the historical collaboration in the redemption of the world in 'actu primo' that was consummated at the cross and given the responsibility of acquiring the graces that redeem the world. Through her Mediatrix of grace, she helps her children to protect the salvation of those who are redeemed.

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THE UNIVERSAL AND MATERNAL MEDIATION OF MARY
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