

2003

The Mariology of Cardinal Journet (1891-1975) and its Influence on Some Marian Magisterial Statement

Thomas Buffer

Follow this and additional works at: http://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_studies



Part of the [Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Buffer, Thomas (2003) "The Mariology of Cardinal Journet (1891-1975) and its Influence on Some Marian Magisterial Statement," *Marian Studies*: Vol. 54, Article 5.

Available at: http://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_studies/vol54/iss1/5

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marian Library Publications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Marian Studies by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact frice1@udayton.edu, mschlangen1@udayton.edu.

THE MARIOLOGY OF CARDINAL JOURNET (1891–1975) AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SOME MARIAN MAGISTERIAL STATEMENTS

*Thomas Buffer, S.T.D.**

Charles Journet was born in 1891, just outside of Geneva. He died in 1975, having taught fifty-six years at the Grande Séminaire in Fribourg. During that time he co-founded the journal *Nova et Vetera*,¹ became a personal friend of Jacques Maritain,² and gained fame as a theologian of the Church. In 1965, in recognition of his theological achievements, Pope Paul VI named him cardinal.³

As a theologian of the Church, Journet is best known for his monumental *L'Église du Verbe Incarné (The Church of the Word Incarnate; hereafter EVD)*,⁴ which Congar called the most profound ecclesiological work of the first half of the twentieth

*Father Thomas Buffer is a member of the faculty of the Pontifical College Josephinum (7625 N. High St./ Columbus, OH 43235 / tbuffer@pcj.edu).

¹Originally a French-language journal, *Nova et Vetera* is now published in distinct French, Italian, and English versions (beginning Spring 2003).

²The Journet-Maritain correspondence is being published under the direction of Bishop Pierre Mamie and Father Georges Cottier, O.P. To date three volumes have appeared, covering the years 1920-1949 and totaling almost three thousand pages. *Journet-Maritain: Correspondence* (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires; Paris: Éditions Saint-Paul, 1996-); volume 3, under the same title, was published in 1998 by Éditions Saint-Augustin.

³For Journet's life and work, see Pierre-Marie Emonet, *Le Cardinal Charles Journet* (Chambray: C.L.D., 1983); Lucien Méroz, *Le Cardinal Journet, ou la sainte théologie* (Lausanne: L'Age du Homme, 1981).

⁴The *Fondation du Cardinal Journet* has published a revised edition of EVD work in a series that will comprise the complete works of Journet. The original three volumes now appear as four, while additional, previously unpublished, material has been gathered together under the title *L'Église sainte, mais non sans pécheurs. Compléments inédits de l'Église du verbe incarné* (Éditions Saint-Augustin, 1999). In this article I give the volume numbers and pagination of the second edition (1961).

century.⁵ Journet's most important writing about the Virgin Mary is to be found within the second volume of this work, in the section entitled "The Virgin Is at the Heart of the Church" (EVI, 2, chap. 3). He firmly held that Mariology was part of ecclesiology, and indeed a privileged part.

Journet's Mariology has not been widely studied, particularly in English-speaking countries,⁶ partly because only the first volume of EVI has been translated into English, and partly because his ecclesiology is seen by some as representative of the kind of neo-Scholastic thinking that is best left behind.⁷ Ironically, during his lifetime, both his ecclesiology and Mariology were considered suspect for their novelty—his ecclesiology, for departing from the approach of Bellarmine,⁸ and his Mariology, for its basis in ecclesiocentric rather than Christocentric principles.⁹

This article is intended as step toward making up for this large neglect. First, I will offer a summary account of Journet's Mariology.¹⁰ Second, I will consider some major Mariological

⁵*L'Église de Saint Augustin à l'époque moderne* (Paris: Cerf, 1970), 464.

⁶Readers wishing a fuller exposition of Journet's Marian thought may wish to consult my 1998 S.T.L. thesis on Journet's Mariology (The International Marian Research Institute, University of Dayton). This article draws upon that thesis and later research.

⁷See, e.g., the very critical and not very discerning article of Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P., "The Teaching Office of Bishops in the Ecclesiology of Charles Journet," *The Jurist* 49 (1989): 23–47.

⁸See Joseph Clifford Fenton, "Father Journet's Concept of the Church," *American Ecclesiastical Review* 127 (November 1952): 370–380.

⁹For example, Cyril Vollert, S.J., writes, "[Mary] stands close to the Church, but closer to Christ, for the mystery of Mary finds its explanation in Christ Himself, the Incarnate Word, rather than in the Church, Christ's mystical body . . . Therefore, C. Journet proposes an unacceptable theory when he writes, 'Mariology is a part of ecclesiology . . .' Mariology is not a part of ecclesiology, but a distinct part of theology in its own right. Moreover, although Mariology is, indeed, connected with ecclesiology, it is far more closely connected with the theology of the Incarnate Word." *Text in Mariology*, ed. J. B. Carol (3 vols.; Milwaukee: Bruce, 1957), 2:27.

¹⁰This article's focus on dogmatic concerns has necessitated passing over Journet's Marian spirituality; the reader who wishes to fill in this gap may profitably consult the following: Charles Journet, *Notre-Dame des sept douleurs* (St.-Maurice: L'Oeuvre St.-Augustin, 1955); Eng. trans. *Our Lady of Sorrows* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1938); Raimondo Spazzi, O.P., "Il Card. Charles Journet teologo della chiesa, discepolo di San

moments of the Church's magisterium during the second half of the twentieth century, pointing out convergences with Journet's thought.

PART ONE: JOURNET'S MARIOLOGY

Journet found what would become the core concept of both his ecclesiology and his Mariology while still a seminarian. At that time, the students were forbidden to read the works of mystics. Undeterred, Journet clandestinely picked up the *Dialogue* of St. Catherine of Siena and read,

... this is how I want you to act toward those of my ministers who are ... covered with the filth of sin and ragged from their abuse of charity when they bring you the ... sacraments ... For it is not my will that they should administer the Sun to you out of their darknessness.¹¹

Reflecting on the problem of how sinful priests could be ministers of grace, Journet came up with a fundamental principle: The Church is sinless, though she contains sinners. His entire theological work would serve this initial vision, as he sought to make known precisely and scientifically what St. Catherine knew through intuition.¹²

While he drew his initial inspiration from St. Catherine, his master in theology was St. Thomas Aquinas. His approach was also shaped by the writings of Francisco Marin-Sola, Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, and Jacques Maritain, all of whom he knew personally.¹³ From this one might conclude that Journet's ecclesiology was like that of most other neo-Scholastic theologians; however, as Dennis Doyle notes with some penetration,

Tommaso e 'amico di Dio,'" *Doctor Communis* 26 (1976): 273-290; Marie-Joseph Nicolas, O.P., "Comme une flèche de feu. La doctrine spirituelle du Cardinal Journet," *Nova et Vetera* (1991/4):159-171; Georges M.-M. Cottier, O.P., "Comme une chartreux dans le monde," in *Charles Journet (1891-1975), Un théologien en son siècle. Actes du Colloque de Genève 1991*, ed. Philippe Chenaux and Guy Bedouelle (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires, 1992).

¹¹*Catherine of Siena: The Dialogue* (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 230.

¹²EVI, 1: xviii. See also Emonet, *Le Cardinal Charles Journet*, 13-15.

¹³Emmanuel Lemièrre, "Itinéraire intellectuel et spirituel d'un théologien de l'Église: Charles Journet (1891-1975)," *Nova et Vetera* 69 (1994): 55.

“Journet did make use of neo-Scholastic terms and concepts, but he used them to break open the neo-Scholastic model from within.”¹⁴ In contrast to the neo-Scholastic manuals that defined the Church formally as a hierarchical institution, with the result that ecclesiology seemed to turn into hierarchology, Journet strove to present the Church in her inner constitution, as a mystery, a paradox that can be properly viewed only with the eyes of faith.

For Journet, the mystery of the Church’s holiness is the most striking manifestation of her paradoxical nature. As Latourelle correctly states, in order to maintain the essential sinlessness of the Church, Journet must introduce a distinction into the Church:

. . . [Journet] distinguishes in the Church a sociological aspect and a theological aspect, only the latter having the value of a formal element and composing the soul and the body of the Church. The soul of the Church is both uncreated (the Holy Spirit) and created (charity). The Holy Spirit is the supreme cause of the Church’s activities, and it is to him that we must attribute the preservation of her unity and charity (EVI, 2:472-474, 534-536). Charity, or the created soul of the Church, resides chiefly in the upright. In the sinful, it acts “instrumentally and by extension,” in giving them the power to perform certain actions through which spiritual life is expressed . . . , just as corporal life allows even paralyzed members of the body to execute certain movements (2:577, 694, 702). The body of the Church is not so much the material congregation of Christians as the spatio-temporal sphere of the Church’s activity (2:873). The purpose of the body, that is, is to make visible in time and space . . . the uncreated soul and the created soul of the Church (2:871). The body, consequently, “is not made up of all the activity of baptized human beings, but of that part of their exterior activity which is informed by the created soul of the Church (charity), and aims immediately at the spiritual ends of the Church” (2:873).

Hence . . . Journet defends intransigently the idea of a pure and holy Church without spot or wrinkle; for since sin is an act which is not animated by charity, it is foreign to both the soul and body of the Church. His fundamental thesis is expressed thus: “The Church theologically

¹⁴Dennis Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology: Visions and Versions* (New York: Orbis Books, 2000), 40.

considered is without sin" (2:904). The Church is not without sinners," but "she is without sin" (2:904-905). As such, she has, formally, no need of purification: she is immaculate. . . . The total Christ, Head and Body, is holy in all his members, both righteous and sinful, drawing to himself all holiness, even in his sinful members, and rejecting every impurity, even in the just" (2:915).¹⁵

Journet's basic doctrine of the Church's holiness is illustrated in his explanation of Mary "Prototype of the Church." He is not merely saying that Mary resembles the Church at prayer, or that she is the model of discipleship for members of the Church. No, she *is* the Church, and indeed, the highest realization of what it means to be the Church. His is not typology of resemblance or comparison, but rather an essential or ontological typology. The bases for this statement, as well as its implications, are clearly seen in his two fundamental Mariological principles.

The first principle is: Mary is the Worthy Mother of a Savior God. It is not enough to call Mary "Mother of God," for this title does not acknowledge the redemptive purpose of the incarnation.¹⁶ The word "worthy" acknowledges that the Divine Maternity has made Mary full of grace.

The second principle is: Salvation has two realizations—one collective, in Church; the other personal, in the Virgin. This second principle is a consequence of the first. Because Mary has been made full of grace, she is a personal realization of the Church, the bride of Christ. To be the Bride means to be the recipient of the grace of Christ the Bridegroom, which Journet calls "Christoconforming grace," that is, grace that makes the recipient like Christ. Above all else, this means to be made exempt from sin, "without spot or wrinkle."

¹⁵René Latourelle, *Christ and the Church* (Staten Island: Alba House, 1972), 229-231.

¹⁶Journet always considers the incarnation as a redemptive incarnation. "Ce que Dieu a voulu de toute éternité, c'est l'Incarnation du Verbe en tant que rédemptrice, en tant qu'apte à racheter le monde. Si nous parlons d'Incarnation rédemptrice, c'est pour unir les deux moments d'un acte unique par lequel le Verbe sauve le monde." *Nova et Vetera* 48 (1973): 83.

Grace is communicated to the human race in different ways during different periods of history. Indeed, for Journet, "salvation history" is the history of grace. He divides salvation history into three periods, three "times of the Church."¹⁷ The age of the Father is the prelapsarian age of innocence; it ends with the Fall. The age of the Son lasts from Adam's fall until the Ascension. It is divided into two periods: the time of waiting for Christ, and the time of His incarnate presence. The third age, the time of the Holy Spirit, begins at Pentecost.

During the age of the Father, the grace of innocence came entirely from the Trinity, without the mediation of any incarnated divine Person or any intermediate hierarchy.¹⁸ Throughout the age of the Son, grace is *christic* (truly the divine grace of Christ), given through the mediation of the Incarnate Word, because of the foreseen passion of Christ.¹⁹ During the period of the Son of God's incarnate presence, grace comes through sensible contact with Jesus Christ, for example, through touching the hem of his garment. During the time of the Holy Spirit, the graces formerly available only through immediate contact with the incarnate Christ are now extended to men and women of all places and times through the Eucharist and the sacramental powers of the hierarchy.²⁰

How does Mary fit into this scheme of salvation history? Chronologically, the Virgin appears before Christ and is present after his Ascension. Qualitatively, however, she belongs only to the age of Christ's presence. This is her privilege; an entire age of the Church is condensed in her.²¹ What is distinctive and unique about the distribution of grace in the case of the Virgin? Because she belongs totally to the age of Christ's presence, she receives the divine grace of Christ by immediate contact, not through the sacramental powers of the hierarchy.

¹⁷Journet took the idea of the three ages of the Church from Martin Grabmann's study, *Die Lehre des heiligen Thomas von Aquin von der Kirche als Gotteswerk* (Regensburg : 1903). Grabmann refers the idea back to Rupert of Deutz.

¹⁸EVI, 2:280.

¹⁹EVI, 2:281.

²⁰EVI, 2:303.

²¹EVI, 2:440.

Even though Mary receives grace in an exceptional way, the grace she receives is the same grace received by the Church as a whole. The Church is the collective realization of "the Bride," while Mary is the personal realization. To understand Mary, then, is to understand the Church. Thus, Ecclesiology and Mariology have parallel destinies. It is remarkable that Journet established this over a decade before the Second Vatican Council decided to place its discussion of Mary within its treatment of the mystery of the Church.

The implications of calling Mary "Prototype of the Church" unfold under three different headings: Mary's Immaculate Conception, her Assumption, and her co-redemptive mediation.

The Immaculate Conception

In the second volume of *EVI*, the very first topic covered under the heading "The Virgin Prototype of the Church" is sinlessness—the exemption from sin of Christians, of the Church, and of the Virgin.²² In the case of individual Christians other than Mary, the grace of Christ takes away both original and actual sin, and makes them members of the Church. Some will lose this grace through mortal sin; the rest will not be able to avoid all sins throughout their lives. Consequently, individual members of the Church will never be always and entirely in grace. By contrast, the Church herself is always and totally "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing . . . holy and without blemish." This effect of christic grace is called the "law of total purity."

The Church would like each of her members to be entirely and always without sin. As a collective whole, she tends toward this point asymptotically, but never reaches the limit of total purity during this life. The Virgin is the only member of the Church who reaches this limit during this life. She alone will be as personally pure as the Church is collectively pure. She reaches this point already in her Immaculate Conception: the grace of the Cross, which takes away the sin of the world,

²²*EVI*, 2:393-436.

and purifies those who have contracted sin, extends to the Virgin to prevent her from contracting it. In the Virgin's case, the "law of total purity" also demands freedom from personal sin. When speaking of the Assumption, the Catechism of the Catholic Church calls Mary "eschatological icon of the Church."²³ While Journet does not use this term, in his view, Mary could be considered the eschatological icon of the Church already in her Immaculate Conception.²⁴

The Assumption

As was the case with the Immaculate Conception, Mary personifies the Church in her Assumption. There are two realizations of the Bride of Christ: a collective realization in the Church and a personal realization in the Virgin. Just as there were two realizations of the "law of total purity," so there will be two realizations of the "law of co-resurrection and glorification with Christ:" one collective, in the Church, and one personal, in the Virgin. The scriptural expression of this law is I Cor 15:22-23: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his proper order. . . ." The mystery of the Resurrection and Ascension is first and primarily realized in Christ the Bridegroom; then, in a subordinate way, in the Bride. After Christ rises and ascends to heaven, the Bride must rise with him and ascend with him to heaven. This first happens in the Assumption of Mary, the personal realization of the Bride.

Journet holds, with the majority of theologians, that Mary did in fact die, but not out of necessity, since she did not contract original sin. "If she died in order to follow, as coredeematrix, the path Jesus walked as Redeemer, her death was not only a free and loving sacrifice; it was also an effect of her love. Also, death has no rights over her, as it has over us. . . ."²⁵

²³This title is found in the section heading immediately preceding paragraph 972.

²⁴This harmonizes with the view of Louis Bouyer, who calls the liturgical celebration of Mary's Immaculate Conception "perhaps . . . the most eschatological of all feasts." See his *Liturgical Piety* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1955), 226-227.

²⁵EVI, 2:47.

"Each in his proper order . . ." Mary, the first to be redeemed by Christ, the personification of the Bride, will be the first to rise with Christ. She anticipates the collective rhythm of the Bride/Church. She already experiences the glory that the Church, as a collective, will experience at the end of time.

Her destiny stands in contrast, not only to that of the Church as a collective whole, but to that of individual Christians. While the Bride of Christ, the Church, is without spot or wrinkle, the individual members of the Church are touched by sin. For this reason, in their case, the law of co-resurrection with Christ is impeded, and will not be realized until the end of the world. Because the Virgin is completely sinless, the law of co-resurrection finds no impediment, and is applied immediately. "This is why her resurrection and assumption can happen in anticipation of the collective rhythm of the rest of the Church, and assume the personal rhythm of the destiny of Christ."²⁶

The meaning of Mary's assumption for the Church on earth is further elucidated by Journet's interpretation of Revelations 12. Journet draws two meanings from the scene. First, it encapsulates the three stages of salvation history, the three "times of the Church." Second, this scene represents the struggle between good and evil that goes on until the end of the world. The woman clothed with the sun is the Church waiting for the coming of Christ. Then, when she gives birth, she is the Church at the supreme moment of her existence, when she gives birth to Christ, the very Son of God. At that moment, the Church is represented or *condensed* entirely in the Virgin Mary. This is also the moment when the struggle between good and evil reaches its greatest intensity, the time of Christ's incarnate presence. The Woman gives birth to a male child, and the Child is taken away to God and to His throne. In other words, Mary gives her Child to the world; he passes thirty-three years in our midst, and after experiencing death and resurrection, he ascends into heaven.²⁷

²⁶EVI, 2:450.

²⁷Conférences données par le Cardinal Journet à Genève au Centre Universitaire Catholique du 16 octobre 1971 au 18 mars 1972 sur *L'Apocalypse de Saint Jean* (Fribourg: Association des Amis du Cardinal Journet, 1986), 130.

From this moment, the Woman is the Church who has entered the "final hour" (cf. I Jn 2:18), the struggle that will last until the end of the world, the age of the Holy Spirit. And here Journet finds the deepest reason why the definition of Mary's Assumption was opportune, why the Church needed it. The Church will combat Antichrist effectively to the extent that she is fully herself, and to be fully herself, she has to know, not only how horrible her adversary is, but how great her destiny is. Mary exemplifies this greatness in her glorious personal destiny.

Co-redemptive Mediation

As was the case with the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption, Journet explains Mary's co-redemptive mediation as another consequence of the fact that she is the personal realization of what the Church *is* as a collective whole. In assuming human sorrow, Christ illuminates it. In his passion, human suffering is redemptive. Thus, all human suffering may be co-redemptive in and through Christ, in the case of those who suffer-with and die-with him. This principle is expressed in Colossians 1:24: ". . . in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the Church." Journet follows St. Thomas's interpretation of this text: it would be wrong to say that the sufferings of Christ are insufficient, so that the sufferings of the saints make up the deficit. Rather, "Christ and the Church are a single, mystical person, of which Christ is the head, and the body is all the just. . . . The merits of Christ, the head, are infinite; each saint, however, must merit *according to his measure*."²⁸ The grace Christ merited for all men transforms the activity of the individual Christian, giving it a value of supplication called "merit." Being totally dependent on the unique merit of Christ, it is really "co-merit" (the prefix "co-" denotes subordination).²⁹ Thus,

²⁸The relevant text from the *Commentary on Colossians* is found in *St. Thomas Aquinas, Opera Omnia* (25 vols.; New York: Musurgia, 1948-50), 13:538-539. See EVI, 2:401.

²⁹Only the mediation of Christ is both redemptive and meritorious *de condigno*. The mediation of Christians and the Church can only be co-redemptive and co-meritorious *de congruo*. See EVI, 2:405.

the individual members of Christ's body can merit on behalf of others, and this co-redemptive mediation varies in value.

Journet distinguishes the co-redemptive mediation of individual Christians, of the Church, and of the Virgin. In each case co-redemptive mediation is a participation in the redemption won by Christ. Anyone who is a member of Christ (and thus of the Church) is called to be a co-redeemer by interceding on behalf of others. This is called the individual co-redemptive mediation of Christians. It is measured by the intensity of each individual's fervor, or willingness to suffer with Christ.³⁰ The collective co-redemptive mediation of the Church is also measured by its fervor, which varies, but is always greater than that of each of its members; moreover, its scope is also greater. However, it is limited. The Church's collective co-redemptive mediation (1) is not fully valid until the Church is fully formed, that is, from Pentecost onward; (2) obtains only a part of the graces given to men from Pentecost until the Parousia.³¹

While the Church's co-redemptive mediation is universal only in a relative sense (because of the two qualifications noted above), that of the Virgin is absolutely universal, because (1) it extends to all people of all times; (2) it obtains for them all the graces which derive from the redemption of Christ; (3) it precedes the co-redemptive mediation of the Church and contains it.³²

The absolutely universal character of Mary's co-redemptive mediation, as distinguished from that of the Church and of individual Christians, is due to the privilege of the Immaculate Conception. In general, every co-redeemer must be among the redeemed. The more intense the grace of redemption in him, the more it becomes co-redemptive grace. Had Mary been redeemed in the same manner as the rest of men, she would have

³⁰EVI, 2:406-407. Hans Urs von Balthasar, in giving his own explanation of the coredeemption exercised by individual Christians, echoes this point: "... the one Redeemer takes up the 'body' of the Church into his redemptive activity, and this becomes yet more fruitful the more a member conforms himself to the selflessness that is Christ's disposition, and the less he exercises reserve in putting his existence at the service of universal redemption." See his *Glory of the Lord* (7 vols.; San Francisco: Ignatius, 1991), 7:465. In a footnote, von Balthasar refers the reader to EVI, 2:406, 418ff.

³¹EVI, 2:408.

³²EVI, 2:409.

been a co-redeemer in the same manner they are. But she was redeemed in a unique way, superior to all others, namely, by preservative redemption. She is the first to be redeemed, so that the intensity of the grace of redemption is supreme in her, making her the first, unique, and supreme co-redeemer.

Once again we see the Virgin as the ultimate realization of the Church, so that even the title *Mediatrix omnium gratiarum* is ultimately a title of the Church:

The mediation of the Virgin is . . . the point toward which the Church's mediation tends without ever reaching it, as a curve tends toward its asymptote . . . It is only in the Virgin that the Church can become mediatrix . . . of all graces, *mediatrix omnium gratiarum*.³³

In Mary, the Church reaches the point toward which it tends without being able to reach it . . . In Mary, the Church becomes co-redemptrix in Christ . . . of all men . . . from the beginning of the world . . . to the end.³⁴

It is while treating Mary's co-redemptive mediation that Journet brings up the Patristic image of Mary as the New Eve. He has his own version of the classic Eve-Mary parallel. The Fathers contrasted Eve's disobedience in the Garden with Mary's obedience at the Annunciation, an obedience offered in service to the Incarnation. For Journet, there was another great moment of obedience for Mary: the Cross, where she offered her obedience in service to the Redemption. But since the Incarnation and Redemption are two successive moments of a single mystery—namely, the redemptive incarnation, the Patristic teaching on the new Eve truly contains the germ of the doctrine of Mary's co-redemption.³⁵ Both at the Annunciation and at the foot of the Cross, Mary cooperates with the redemption on behalf of the whole human race.

³³EVI, 2:409.

³⁴EVI, 2:411.

³⁵EVI, 2:415, note 1. Journet supports his position with a quotation from Merkelbach: "Mary consents to these two things: to become the mother of God, and to become the associate of the Redeemer, but she consents in a single movement. The two things are not disassociated in the Angel's message; she accepts to be mother of the God-Redeemer, as such." Benedictus Henricus Merkelbach, *Mariologia* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1939), 91.

The second Eve, primarily, is Mary. She comes entirely from Christ on the Cross . . . it is the passion of Christ which provokes in her that unimaginable compassion which . . . will merit in fittingness, what the passion itself merits in condignity, namely the universal salvation of the human race. The merit in fittingness . . . reaches its supreme intensity in Mary, so that Jesus gives her to us to be our Mother.

Just as Mary is the personification of "the Bride," and the Church its collective realization, so Mary is the primary realization of the new Eve, and the Church is the secondary realization:

Secondarily, the second Eve is the rest of the Church. She is born from the side of Christ, where blood and water flow out, symbolizing baptism and Eucharist, . . . the sacraments which . . . establish the Church . . . In resemblance to the Virgin, she too is com-patient, although her compassion is less intense and less vast.³⁶

Mary in the Time of the Church

We now return to Journet's teaching on Mary's role in salvation history and the reason for stating that Mary alone is privileged to belong solely to the age of Christ's incarnate presence, and not to the age of the Holy Spirit, the time of the Church. Two matters draw our attention in this section: Mary and the sacraments, and Mary and the hierarchy.

After the Ascension, the age of the Holy Spirit begins, when christic grace is distributed through the sacraments, thanks to the instrumentality of the hierarchy. Mary remains on earth a little while during this age, "exiled," as it were. Could she have received any of the sacraments? Since she is sinless, we can rule out Penance, Extreme Unction, and Baptism. To answer the question whether Mary received Confirmation, Journet considers the event of Pentecost.

Because Mary belongs to the age of Christ's presence, while the Apostles belong to the age of the Holy Spirit, the significance of the day of Pentecost is not the same for her as for them. While she receives the same visible gift as the Apostles,

³⁶EVI, 2:417-418.

she does not receive the same mission to witness to the ends of the earth, to found the universal Church. While, for the Apostles, Pentecost is a beginning of their real mission, for Mary, it marks the end of her earthly mission. It is a signal that her departure from this earth is drawing near.³⁷ Thus, she did not need to receive the sacrament of Confirmation after the day of Pentecost, since she had already received the Holy Spirit and had already completed her mission.³⁸

Journet further defines the contrast between Mary and the Apostles when explaining why Mary could not have received the sacrament of Holy Orders. He excludes Mary from the ministerial priesthood, not only because of her sex, but because of her place in salvation history.³⁹ She belongs totally to the age of Christ's presence, when the grandeurs of hierarchy are totally contained within Christ.⁴⁰ Mary belongs totally to the grandeurs of holiness, rather than to the grandeurs of hierarchy. Holiness precedes hierarchy in two ways: temporally, because Mary received grace before the Apostles and their successors did, and qualitatively, because she received grace by direct contact with Christ and not through the instrumentality of the hierarchy.

When discussing Mary and the sacrament of Marriage, Journet is not talking about Mary's marriage to Joseph, but about her role as the instrument of the Incarnation and Prototype of the Church, the Bride of Christ:

She enters into Marriage the day of the Incarnation. For her, Marriage is not so much a means of receiving sanctification, as a means of bringing [into the world] the principle of all sanctification.⁴¹

Instead of speaking of a "marriage" of human and divine nature in Christ, Journet prefers to reserve the term for the union

³⁷EVI, 2:441, 442.

³⁸See EVI, 2:441.

³⁹Journet reviews the reasons why the ministerial priesthood is reserved to men in EVI, 1:119-120 (incl. notes).

⁴⁰EVI, 1:120-121 (incl. notes).

⁴¹EVI, 2:441.

of Christ and His Church.⁴² Christ is the Bridegroom, the source of christic grace. The nature of grace is nuptial, and the Church, Christ's Bride, receives this "capital grace" in mutual love.⁴³ It is in this sense that Journet speaks of Mary, the personal realization of the Church-Bride, entering into Marriage on the day of the Incarnation.

This leaves the Eucharist. Obviously, Journet cannot say that Mary needed the Eucharist, since that would mean that she depended on the sacramental powers of the hierarchy to receive it, and this would contradict his thesis that she is the only member of the Church who receives grace immediately from Christ, and not through the sacramental powers of the hierarchy. Nevertheless, he does not want to say that it was impossible for Mary to have received the Eucharist. To explain why Mary could have received the Eucharist, he has recourse to the concept of "exile." Mary, who belongs totally to the age of Christ's incarnate presence, is nevertheless present for a brief time after the Ascension, "exiled" in the age of the Holy Spirit. During that time, "the risen Christ could nevertheless have used [the sacramental] economy to assist His mother, who was still exiled within time, and to give her the Communion of His Body and Blood, as He had previously given it to His apostles."⁴⁴ Journet considers Mary's reception of the Eucharist to be more than a possibility:

She undoubtedly participated in the assemblies wherein the first Christians commemorated the Last Supper, and communed . . . in the Body and Blood of Christ. . . . these communions must have increased her universal desire to save the world which her heart had embraced . . . Nevertheless, she continued to belong to the age of Christ's presence. She does not belong to the age of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁵

We can see that Mary's participation in the Holy Eucharist illustrates her role as universal co-redemptrix.

⁴²EVI, 2:113.

⁴³EVI, 2:334-337.

⁴⁴EVI, 2:442.

⁴⁵EVI, 2:441.

**PART TWO: INFLUENCE AND ECHOES OF JOURNET—
VATICAN II TO THE *CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC
CHURCH***

Journet's Marian doctrine seems to anticipate the teaching of the Second Vatican Council. Did his writings in fact influence Chapter VIII of *Lumen Gentium*? This question has been very carefully studied by Fr. Jean-Pierre Torrell.⁴⁶ While Journet was a member of the Preparatory Commission, he participated in only one meeting, and found his impaired hearing such a hindrance that he went back to Fribourg and did not return to the Council until he was named a cardinal, after which he actively participated in the Third Session as a Council Father. By then it had already been decided to treat the mystery of the Blessed Virgin within the Constitution on the Church. While Journet cannot be given credit for this decision, it is nevertheless possible to see it as a vindication of his ecclesio-centric Mariology. Similarly, *Lumen Gentium* 65 may be read as supporting his central thesis that the Church is totally without sin, while containing sinners: "But while in the most holy Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she is without spot or wrinkle, the followers of Christ still strive to increase in holiness by conquering sin."

Journet did have a measurable influence on the other major Marian magisterial statement pronounced at the Council, that is, Paul VI's proclamation of the Marian title "Mother of the Church." Paul VI, who named Journet a cardinal, highly prized his ecclesiology and other writings.⁴⁷ Before proclaiming Mary "Mother of the Church" at the end of the Council's third session, Paul VI closely consulted EVI.⁴⁸ Journet did not use the

⁴⁶"Présence de Journet à Vatican II," in *Charles Journet, 1891-1975 . . .*, ed. P. Chenu and G. Bedouelle (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires; Paris: Éditions MAME, c1992).

⁴⁷See Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., "Paul VI et le cardinal Journet. Aux sources d'une ecclésiologie," *Nova et Vetera* (1986/4): 161-174. Paul VI personally requested Journet to deliver an intervention on the indissolubility of marriage during the third session of the Council, and asked him to assist in the completion of his post-conciliar Apostolic Constitution on Indulgences, *Indulgentiarum Doctrina*.

⁴⁸As may be seen by his handwritten notes in the file marked "Mary" in the Archives of the Istituto Paolo Sesto in Brescia. Most of the texts favoring the title

title before Paul's proclamation, however. In an article written after the title was proclaimed, Journet explicates the title simply by reprising, without alteration, his own teaching on Mary's co-redemptive mediation, as published already in 1951.⁴⁹ Finally, Paul VI's post-conciliar *Credo of the People of God* closely follows Journet's teaching on the essential holiness of the Church: "The Church is therefore holy, though having sinners in her midst, because she herself has no other life but the life of grace" (*Credo*, 19).

We may also detect the influence of Journet on two major magisterial documents promulgated by Pope John Paul II: the 1992 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) and the 1987 encyclical *Redemptoris Mater* (RM). Cardinal Schönborn, the editor of the CCC, knows the works of Journet and quotes him admiringly. In *From Death to Life*, Schönborn cites three passages in EVI and two articles by Journet from *Nova et Vetera*, as well as Journet's speech on the power of evil delivered during the Second Vatican Council.⁵⁰ He endorses Journet's statement that "From the time of Christ onward, the whole Church has entered the end time; she is eschatological."⁵¹ Indeed, the *Catechism* embraces Journet's idea of the "times of the Church": "By his coming [on the day of Pentecost] . . . the Holy Spirit causes the world to enter into the 'last days,' the time of the Church . . ." (CCC 732).

The *Catechism's* section on the holiness of the Church also echoes Journet's Mariology. That section concludes with a quotation from *Lumen Gentium* 65, to which a few significant words have been added: "But while in the most Blessed Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she

"Mother of the Church" are by Journet, from EVI, along with some by Jean Galot. See "L'azione direttiva di Paolo VI riguardo alla pietà mariana," *Magistero e pietà mariana in Giovanni Battista Montini—Paolo VI* (Brescia: Pubblicazioni dell'Istituto Paolo VI, 1996).

⁴⁹Charles Journet, "Le mystère de l'Église selon le deuxième concile du Vatican," *Revue thomiste* 65 (1965): 5-51.

⁵⁰*From Death to Life: The Christian Journey* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), 76, 83, 120-122.

⁵¹See Schönborn, *From Death to Life*, 76; EVI, 2:997, n. 1; cf. 60-91 and *Nova et Vetera*, 38 (1963): 307-310.

exists without spot or wrinkle, the faithful still strive to conquer sin and increase in holiness. And so they turn their eyes to Mary . . . ”; here the *Catechism* adds a short summary statement: “in her, the Church is already the ‘all-holy’” (par. 829).

With the addition of that last little statement, not found in *Lumen Gentium*, the text immediately recalls Journet’s teaching that Mary is the Prototype of the Church’s essential holiness. However, this does not allow us to conclude to a direct influence of Journet. The added statement may be nothing more than a summary of the first line of *Lumen Gentium* 65.

Drawing partly on John Paul II’s *Mulieris Dignitatem*, the *Catechism* identifies Mary with the spotless Bride of Ephesians 5:27:

[The Church’s] structure is totally ordered to the holiness of Christ’s members. And holiness is measured according to the “great mystery” in which the Bride responds with the gift of love to the gift of the Bridegroom. Mary goes before us all in the holiness that is the Church’s mystery as “the bride without spot or wrinkle.” (par. 773)

This paragraph may be seen as validating Journet’s key principle that Mary is the personal realization and anticipation of what the Church is in her collectivity. It also contains what may be an indication of the influence of Journet’s thought on the writings of Pope John Paul II. There are, in fact, some striking similarities between Journet’s analysis of Pentecost and the section of *Redemptoris Mater* that comments on the same scene. Like Journet, John Paul contrasts the meaning of Pentecost for the Virgin and for the Apostles:

[The] mission of the Apostles began the moment they left the Upper Room in Jerusalem . . . Mary did not directly receive this apostolic mission . . . But she was in the Upper Room, where the Apostles were preparing to take up this mission with the coming of the spirit of Truth, . . . In their midst Mary was “devoted to prayer” as the “mother of Jesus” (cf. Acts 1:13-14), of the Crucified and Risen Christ.⁵²

⁵²RM 26.

Obviously, Journet and Pope John Paul II agree that Mary did not receive the apostolic mission to teach all nations. For Journet, the expansion of the Church is carried out during the age of the Holy Spirit, while Mary belongs entirely to the age of Christ's presence. There is another, less obvious convergence: while the Pope points to Mary's devotion to prayer, Journet notes that even though she did not receive an apostolic mission, she did receive a special visible mission: "to manifest the grandeurs of holiness as they are joined to the grandeurs of hierarchy, for the expansion of the Church, and that is why the visible mission carried out by the Virgin at Pentecost did not differ from that of the apostles and disciples."⁵³ One of the four traits of the Christian hierarchy is its affinity with the grandeurs of holiness, or its connatural relationship with the believing and loving Church.⁵⁴ This is illustrated by the story of Pentecost: Mary and the Apostles are gathered in the same room, together awaiting the same Holy Spirit, yet their missions differ. Mary is not an Apostle, but she is present with them, praying in union with them. Her presence illustrates the basic principle that, in the Church, holiness and hierarchy may be distinguished, but not divided.⁵⁵

The pope states that the early Church "looked at" Jesus through Mary, the better to understand the mystery of Jesus. Compare the words of John Paul with those of Cardinal Journet:

John Paul II:

That first group of those who in faith looked "upon Jesus as the author of salvation" knew that Jesus was the Son of Mary, and that she was his Mother, and . . . a unique witness to the mystery of Jesus. . . . Thus from the very first moment the Church "looked at" Mary through Jesus, just as she "looked at" Jesus through Mary. . . . Mary is a singular witness to the years of Jesus' infancy and hidden life at Nazareth, when she "kept all these things, pondering them in her heart." (RM 26)

⁵³EVI, 2: 456, note 2.

⁵⁴See EVI, 1:643, 666-676, 679-680, 723.

⁵⁵In his introduction to EVI, Journet expressly states his intention to show that the hierarchical Church and the Mystical Body, the institutional Church and the Church of charity, are one and the same. See EVI, 1:xii-xiii.

Cardinal Journet:

... [T]he Church . . . looks at the mysteries of Christian revelation with the eyes of the Virgin. The Church knows that the Virgin has looked at these things before we have. What the Church finds in the mysteries of the Annunciation, of Christmas, of the Redemption on the Cross, of Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost, is the same thing that the Virgin saw. The Virgin's faith forever colors the faith of the Church.⁵⁶

Try to contemplate the mysteries of the Gospel with the Virgin's eyes.⁵⁷

Journet and John Paul II both teach, in different ways, that understanding Mary and understanding the Church go together. The pope cites the Second Vatican Council:

The truth concerning the Blessed Virgin, Mother of Christ, is an effective aid in exploring more deeply the truth concerning the Church . . . Paul VI said, "Knowledge of the true Catholic doctrine regarding the Blessed Virgin Mary will always be a key to the exact understanding of the mystery of Christ and of the Church."⁵⁸ Mary is present in the Church as the Mother of Christ, and at the same time as that Mother whom Christ, in the mystery of the Redemption, gave to humanity in the person of the Apostle John . . . In this sense Mary, Mother of the Church, is also the Church's model. (RM 42)

CONCLUSION

Journet's ecclesiotypical Mariology deserves to be read and appreciated today, not only as a curiosity, an interesting relict, or period piece, but as a still valid reflection on the mystery of the Virgin at the heart of the Church. The central image of Mary, the personification of the Bride, reminds the Church, the collective realization of the Bride, that she utterly depends on the grace of the Bridegroom. Without the Bridegroom she is

⁵⁶EVI, 2:431-432.

⁵⁷Nicolas, "Comme une flèche de feu," 169

⁵⁸Paul VI, Address at the Closing of the Third Session of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council (November 21, 1964), AAS 56 (1964): 1015. This statement, too, strongly resonates with Journet's thought.

nothing, but if she remains faithful to him, his grace will bring her to a glorious destiny. The individual members of the Church, too, should be heartened and inspired by the Bride Christ has made for himself. In this perspective, the Virgin, despite her exceptional privileges, is not set over against the rest of the faithful as an unattainable ideal nor as a reproach, but she is the example of what they may become in her sinlessness, her co-redemptive mediation on behalf of others, and her rising and glorification with Christ. It is notable that he explains Marian dogmas on the basis of scriptural principles and not on "weak arguments from fittingness."

The many convergences of Journet's Marian thought with that of the Second Vatican Council, Paul VI, and John Paul II confirm the lasting value of his own thought. Even if, in some cases, a direct connection cannot be established, the many similarities we have pointed out confirm that Journet was a true Mariological pioneer and a twentieth-century thinker.

Finally, in a time when faith in and respect for religious institutions has reached a low point, Journet's Marian doctrine reminds us of the priority of holiness over hierarchy or, in other terms, of charism over institution. Looking to Mary, we see what God can accomplish in a human life when no obstacle of sin—or sinful structure—impedes it.