

## **Theological Reflections on Marian Coredemption and the Work of the International Marian Association**

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### **Introduction: Mary's role in salvation history: her joint predestination with Christ.**

In his Jan. 1 2015 homily for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, Pope Francis taught:

The Blessed Virgin is the woman of faith who made room for God in her heart and in her plans; she is the believer capable of perceiving in the gift of her Son the coming of that “fullness of time” (*Gal 4:4*) in which God, by choosing the humble path of human existence, entered personally into the history of salvation. That is why Jesus cannot be understood without his Mother.

In a homily given April 24, 1970 at the Marian shrine of Our Lady of Bonaria in Cagliari, Sardinia, Pope Paul VI remarked. “If we want to be Christian, we must also be Marian; that is we must recognize the essential, vital, providential bond which unites Our Lady with Jesus and which opens to us the way that leads us to him.” (AAS 62 ([970] 300-301).

In discussing the Catholic dogmas about Mary, we must always keep in mind this “providential bond” which links our Lord, Jesus, to his Mother. St. Paul, in *Gal 4:4* writes that, “when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of woman, born under the law” (NAB). This means that a woman named Mary, the Mother of the Incarnate Word of God, is at the very center of salvation history. Thus, we can never confine Mary to a marginal role in God's providential plan. Paul VI had it right: “If we want to be Christian, we must also be Marian.” St. Teresa of Calcutta put it even more simply: “No Mary, no Jesus.”

According to St. Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274), it was not absolutely necessary for God to become man in order to redeem the human race, “for God, in His omnipotent power, could have restored human nature in many other ways” (ST III, q. 30. a. 2). It was necessary, however, in a secondary sense, because the Incarnation was the most fitting and most meaningful way for God to redeem the human race and manifest his love (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 457-460). If, though, God freely chose to redeem us by “being born of a woman” (*Gal 4:4*), then it necessarily follows that this woman is central to his plan of salvation.

God's plan to include Mary in the work of redemption was predestined by that same decree of divine providence that predestined the Incarnation. This is what Blessed Pius IX taught in his Dec. 8, 1854 constitution, *Ineffabilis Deus*, which proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception:

God Ineffable -- whose ways are mercy and truth, whose will is omnipotence itself, and whose wisdom "reaches from end to end mightily, and orders all things sweetly" -- having foreseen from all eternity the lamentable wretchedness of the entire human race which would result from the sin of Adam, decreed, by a plan hidden from the centuries, to complete the first work of his goodness by a mystery yet more wondrously sublime through the Incarnation of the Word. This he decreed in order that man who, contrary to the plan of Divine Mercy had been led into sin by the cunning malice of Satan, should not perish; and in order that what had been lost in the first Adam would be gloriously restored in the Second Adam. From the very beginning, and before time began, the eternal Father chose and prepared for his only-begotten Son a Mother in whom the Son of God would become incarnate and from whom, in the blessed fullness of time, he would be born into this world (*Ineffabilis Deus*, n. 1).

The Second Vatican Council, in *Lumen Gentium*, 61, also teaches Mary's joint predestination with her divine Son, Jesus. The Council links this predestination with Mary's unique and surpassing cooperation with the work of redemption:

Predestined from eternity by that decree of divine providence which determined the incarnation of the Word to be the Mother of God, the Blessed Virgin was on this earth the virgin Mother of the Redeemer, and above all others and in a singular way the generous associate and humble handmaid of the Lord. She conceived, brought forth and nourished Christ. She presented Him to the Father in the temple, and was united with Him by compassion as He died on the Cross. In this singular way she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in the work of the Savior in giving back supernatural life to souls. Wherefore she is our mother in the order of grace (n. 61).

The Incarnation took place through Mary's free cooperation with God's providential plan, which is why Mary is united to Christ "by a close and indissoluble bond" (LG, 53). In his treatise on *True Devotion to Mary*, St. Louis de Montfort (1673–1716) exclaims: "Lord, you are always with Mary, and Mary is always with you" (n. 63). This close and indissoluble bond between Mary and Jesus is unique because only Mary can be honored with the title *Theotokos*— God-bearer or Mother of God. The word *Theotokos* literally means "one bearing God to give birth" or "one pregnant with God." No one except Mary can claim to be the Mother of Jesus, the Incarnate Word of God. All of us, however, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, can become, like St.

Ignatius of Antioch, a *Theophoros*, a “God-bearer” in the sense of bearing God in our hearts through grace and faith.

### **The three key moments of Mary’s coredemptive role**

According to the great Franciscan theologian, St. Bonaventure (c. 1221-1274), there were three key moments of Marian mediation and coredemption.<sup>1</sup> The first was when Mary said yes to the invitation of the angel at the Annunciation. Her free assent enables her to conceive and beget Christ, who paid the price of redemption for the human race (Lk 1:26–2:7). According to St. Thomas Aquinas, Mary gave her consent “in the name of the whole human race.”<sup>2</sup> Speaking of the Annunciation, Pope Leo XIII states that “no single individual can even be imagined who has ever contributed or ever will contribute so much toward reconciling man with God. She offered to mankind, hastening toward eternal ruin, a Savior.”<sup>3</sup>

For St. Bonaventure, the second key moment of Marian coredemption takes place at Calvary when Mary unites her sufferings to the those of her divine Son (Jn 19:25–27). In his 1904 encyclical, *Ad Diem Illum*, St. Pius X teaches that Mary merited in a fitting manner (*de congruo*) the salvation that Christ merited in an absolute manner (*de condigno*).<sup>4</sup>

Finally, St. Bonaventure sees the third moment of Marian coredemption in her distribution of the fruits of Christ’s redemption during the time of the Church: “For as through her, God came down to us, so it is right that through her we should ascend to God” (St. Bonaventure, *De Nativit.* III).

### **The other two moments of Marian coredemption: her predestination and her Immaculate Conception**

In the apparitions given to Ida Peerdeman (1905–1996) at Amsterdam, all three key moments of Marian coredemption taught by St. Bonaventure are affirmed. Mary’s role as Coredemptrix is linked to the Annunciation in the 37<sup>th</sup> message of Nov. 15, 1951 when she tells Ida that she was

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<sup>1</sup> See St. Bonaventure, *Collations on the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, Collation 6:14.

<sup>2</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* q. 30, a. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Leo XIII, encyclical, *Fidentem piumque* (Sept. 20, 1896); Denzinger-Hünermann 43<sup>rd</sup> ed. [D-H] (2010), 3321.

<sup>4</sup> D-H, 3370.

“already Coredemptrix at the Annunciation.” Mary’s role as Coredemptrix under the Cross is affirmed in the 30<sup>th</sup> message of April 1, 1951 and the 41<sup>st</sup> message of April 6, 1951. In the 30<sup>th</sup> message, Mary tells Ida that under the Cross she suffered with her Son both spiritually and bodily.

St. Bonaventure’s third key moment of Marian coredemption is affirmed in many of the messages to Ida at Amsterdam. Mary’s role as Our Lady of All Nations is during the age of the Church. In the 43<sup>rd</sup> message of Oct 5, 1952, Mary’s coredemptive role is linked to her role as Mediatrix and Advocate. Mary tells Ida that she comes “as a good mother to warn the apostles of the Church about false prophets, about the wrong spirit.”

The messages at Amsterdam, therefore, affirm all three key moments of Marian coredemption and mediation taught by St. Bonaventure. There are, however, two other key moments of Marian coredemption in the Amsterdam messages that harmonize with doctrinal teachings of the Church since the time of St. Bonaventure. These two other moments are Mary’s divine election “from the beginning” and her Immaculate Conception. In the 43<sup>rd</sup> message of Oct. 5, 1952, Mary tells Ida that she was Coredemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate “at the beginning” when she was chosen by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This corresponds to Bl. Pius IX’s 1854 affirmation of Mary’s election by the Holy Trinity “from the beginning and before the ages” (*ab initio et ante saecula*).<sup>5</sup> In the 49<sup>th</sup> message of April 4, 1954, Mary tells Ida that she is Coredemptrix, Mediatrix, and Advocate not only because she is the Mother of the Lord but also because she is the Immaculate Conception.

Theologically, Mary’s Immaculate Conception is directly linked to her role as the Mother of the Incarnate Word who is the Savior of the human race. In his Christological Tome of A.D. 449, Pope St. Leo I taught that, “from the Mother of the Lord, nature, not guilt was assumed.”<sup>6</sup> Mary had to be preserved from original sin because the sinless Word of God would assume his human nature from her. As the Immaculate Conception, Mary is also the “new Eve” who was chosen to be the all-holy Mother of the Savior. In his Dec. 8, 1854 bull defining the Immaculate Conception, Bl. Pius IX writes:

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<sup>5</sup> D-H, 2800.

<sup>6</sup> D-H, 294.

And, indeed, it was altogether fitting that so venerable a mother, aglow with radiance, ever adorned with the splendors of a most perfect holiness and entirely immune from the stain of original sin, should have the most complete triumph over the ancient serpent. It was she to whom the Father willed to give his only Son, generated from his heart and equal to himself and whom he loves as himself. And he wished to give him in such a way that he would be, by nature, one and the same common Son of God the Father and the Virgin. And as the Son himself actually chose her to be his mother, just so the Holy Spirit willed and ordained that she should conceive and give birth to the one from whom he himself proceeds.<sup>7</sup>

The messages of Mary to Ida Peerdeman, therefore, harmonize with Mary's predestination and Immaculate Conception, which were taught so clearly by Bl. Pius IX in 1854. Mary's divine election and preservation from original sin are completely in service to her role as the Mother of the Redeemer and Coredeematrix.

As is well-known, the Blessed Mother tells Ida that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit wish her to be known as Coredeematrix and Advocate (31<sup>st</sup> message of April 15, 1951). The title "Coredeematrix," however, has been a source of controversy. In what follows, I will try to answer some basic questions surrounding this title.

### **What does the title "Coredeematrix" mean?**

Basically, it means that, by the will of God, Mary cooperated in a unique and singular manner in the work of redemption, with and under her divine Son. *Lumen Gentium*, 56, citing St. Irenaeus, notes that Mary, by her obedience to God's plan "became the cause of salvation (*causa salutis*) for herself and for the whole human race." Moreover, at the foot of the cross, suffering in a profound way with her only-begotten Son, Mary "associated herself with a mother's heart with his sacrifice," and lovingly consented "to the immolation of this victim which she herself had brought forth" (*Lumen Gentium*, 58). Thus, although Christ is the one savior of the human race, Mary, by God's will, associated herself with his sacrificial offering in a unique and singular way. Thus, Pope Benedict XV, in his 1918 letter, *Inter Sodalica*, writes that Mary, renounced her maternal rights and, "as far as it depended on her, offered her Son to placate divine justice; so we may well say that she with Christ redeemed mankind" (AAS 10 [1919] p. 318).

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<sup>7</sup> D-H, 2801.

This, of course, does not mean that Christ, as the divine Savior, needed Mary's offering in any absolute sense. Many saints and popes, however, have taught that God *freely chose* to associate Mary in the work of redemption in a way beyond his free decision to associate all the faithful in the ongoing work of redemption and grace (cf. Col 1:24, 2 Cor 4: 9-12 and *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2008).

Some Christians, however, mistakenly believe that the term "Co-redemptrix" implies equivalence between Jesus and Mary in the work of redemption. Nothing, though, could be further from the truth. Jesus is never spoken of as the "Co-redeemer" with Mary, but only as "the Redeemer." The prefix "co" comes from the Latin, "*cum*" (with) and, in this context, it does not suggest equivalence. Parents are called "co-creators" with God, but their cooperation in bringing forth new life does not make them "creators" equal to God. In a similar way, St. Paul says that we are God's "co-workers" in 1 Cor 3:9, but this does not mean we are equal to God.

### **When was the title of Mary as Coredemptrix first used?**

In the 10<sup>th</sup> century, some litanies refer to Mary as the *Redemptrix* alongside her Son, the Redeemer. This was a development of Mary as the "New Eve," a title that goes back to the second century. By the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the prefix "co" began to be added to make it clear that Mary was not the Redeemer but the one who uniquely cooperates with her divine Son in the work of redemption. St. Bridget of Sweden (1303–1373) refers to Mary as the Co-redemptrix as does the Salzburg Hymn, which goes back to the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Jesuit, Alfonso Salmeron (1515–1585), speaks of Mary as Co-redemptrix and by the 17<sup>th</sup> century the term is used with greater frequency in works of piety and theology. The first magisterial reference to Mary as Co-redemptrix was in 1908 by the Sacred Congregation for Rites in a decree elevating the rank of the Feast of the Seven Sorrows of Mary. This decree refers to Mary as "the merciful Coredemptrix of the human race" (*misericordem humani generis Conredemptricem: Acta Sanctae Sedis* 41 [1908], p. 409). In 1913, the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office approved a prayer invoking the Blessed Mary as "our Coredemptrix" (*corredemptricis nostrae: Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 5 [1913], p. 364), and in 1914, the Holy Office

approved a prayer with an indulgence attached invoking Mary as “the Coredemptrix of the human race” (*corredentrica del genere umano:Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 6 [1914], p. 108).

### **Is there any magisterial support for Mary as Coredemptrix?**

Yes. The Holy Office in 1914, under St. Pius X, approved an indulgenced prayer invoking Mary as “Coredemptrix of the human race” (AAS 6 [1914], p. 108). Although most popes since Pius X have preferred to speak of Mary as Christ’ associate” or “partner” in the work of redemption, two popes—Pope Pius XI (r. 1922–1939) and St. John Paul II (r. 1978–2005)—have explicitly referred to Mary as “Coredemptrix.” Pius XI used the title in public three times, and St. John Paul II, at least six times. Msgr. Arthur B. Calkins, S.T.D. in his article, “The Mystery of Mary Coredemptrix in the Papal Magisterium” (<http://www.christendom-awake.org/pages/calkins/pontmag1.htm>) supplies the texts of all these papal uses of Mary Coredemptrix.

Because of the papal use of the term, it would be rash for Catholics to deny its propriety. Fr. J. A. De Aldama, S.J. writing in the well-respected volume, *Sacrae Theologiae Summa* (Madrid, 1950) was aware of Pius XI’s use of the term. This is why he writes: “It is certain that the title, Coredemptrix, may be correctly used; and it is not permitted to doubt its appropriateness” (“*Quod titulus Corredemptricis recte usurpetur, est certum; nec licet dubitare de eius opportunitate;*” (*Sacrae Theologiae Summa*, Vol III, Tract. II, p. 372).

### **Why did Vatican II not call Mary Coredemptrix?**

An early draft of what would become *Lumen Gentium*, chapter eight, did use this title, and some 250-500 bishops at Vatican II wanted the Council to solemnly define Mary as Co-Redemptrix and/or Mediatrix of all graces. Following the mind of Paul VI and the Council’s theological commission, it was decided that there should not be any new dogmatic definitions about Mary. As for Mary as “Co-redemptrix,” the council fathers referred to it as one of those words and expressions which, although “absolutely true in themselves (*in se verissima*) ... may only be understood with difficulty by separated brethren (in this case Protestants” (*Acta Synodalia Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani Secundi*, Vol. I. Pars IV, 99).

The council fathers, therefore, accepted the *truth* of Mary as Co-redemptrix but realized that this term might create ecumenical difficulties due to misunderstandings. A number of theologians, including Georges Cottier, the former theologian of the papal household, and Jean Galot, S.J. also believe that Vatican II's *Lumen Gentium*, without referring to Mary as Co-redemptrix, nevertheless affirms the essence of the doctrine (cf. article by Galot in *L'Osservatore Romano*, Sept. 15, 1997 and that of Cottier, June 4, 2002). Other theologians, such as R. Laurentin and Msgr. B. Gherardini argue that, although the doctrine of Marian Coredemption has not been defined by the Church, it nevertheless would be "gravely temerarious to attack its legitimacy" because the papal Magisterium has affirmed the doctrine as a truth "close to the faith" [*proxima fidei*] (cf. "Mary, Blessed Virgin" in *New Catholic Encyclopedia, Supplement 2010*, p. 750).

**Are there any approved religious communities that use the term, Coredemptrix in reference to Mary?**

Yes, there are a number of approved religious communities, associations, and centers that use the term, Coredemptrix, in reference to Mary. Some of these were founded before Vatican II and others after the Council. These communities show that that it was not the mind of the Council to suppress the use of the term. Below is a listing of some of these communities dedicated to Mary under the title of Coredemptrix:

1. Congregation of Mother Coredemptrix/ *Congregation de Mère Corrédemprice*, a Vietnamese religious community approved by the Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith in 1953 (see F. Rizzoli, "Madre Corredentrice," in *Dizionario degli Istituti di Perfezione* Vo. 5 [Roma: Edizione Paoline, 1973, p. 817). This congregation has a community in Carthage, MO.
2. *Centro María Corredentora*, founded in Madrid, Spain in 1953; run by the Sisters of Our Lady of Compassion.
3. *Congregazione Figlie Maria SS. Corredentrice*: founded in Catania, Italy in 1953; approved in 1964.
4. *Pia Associazione di Maria SS. Corredentrice*: approved by the Archbishop of Reggio Calabria, Italy, in 1984.
5. *Hijas de Maria Immaculada y Corredentora* (Lima, Peru): founded in 1978, approved in 1980.
6. *Instituto de Misioneras de Maria Corredentora* (Ecuador): founded in 1964, approved in 1969.



7. *Asociación de Fieles al Servicio de María Corredentora, Reina de la Paz*, Barquisimeto, (Venezuela): founded in 1992 and approved then by the Archbishop of Barquisimeto, Venezuela.

### **Is there not now a petition to have the Pope define Mary as Coredeptrix?**

The petition of the International Marian Association reflects a more modest goal than a dogmatic definition. The petition reads:

Therefore, we, as members of the Theological Commission of the International Marian Association, and in full obedience and fidelity to our Holy Father, Pope Francis, humbly request that during this 2017 Fatima centenary, and in continuity with the papal precedents of Pope Pius XI and Pope St. John Paul II, Pope Francis would kindly grant public recognition and honor to the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary for her unique human cooperation with the one divine Redeemer in the work of Redemption as “Co-redemptrix with Jesus the Redeemer.”

Public recognition of Mary as “Co-redemptrix with Jesus the Redeemer” would not necessarily be the equivalent of a dogmatic definition. It would, though, be an authoritative approval by the Holy Father of the value and appropriateness of the title in much the same way as Bl. Paul VI gave papal approval to the title of Mary as “Mother of the Church” in his Nov. 21, 1964 allocution at the closing of the third session of Vatican II.

### **What is the precedent for documents such as this one? When was the last time the Pope was asked to declare a new Marian dogma?**

Before the definitions of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 and the Assumption in 1950 there were many petitions for a papal definition of these dogmas. In her book, *The Virgin Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace* (Academy of the Immaculate, 2012), Dr. Gloria Falcão Dodd documents multiple petitions, both informal and formal, between 1906 and 1959 asking the pope for a definition of Mary, Mediatrix of all graces. According to Fr. G. Besutti, O.S.M., there were about 500 bishops at the start of Vatican II who were asking for a dogmatic definition on Mary as Co-redemptrix (*Lo schema mariano al Concilio Vaticano II* [Rome, 1966], 17). Fr. Michael O’Carroll, C.S.Sp. however, believes that only 54 bishops wanted a pronouncement of Mary as Co-redemptrix at Vatican II, but 382 wanted a definition on Mary as Mediatrix of grace (M. O’Carroll, *Theotokos* [Eugene, OR, 2000], 242, 308). In the 1990s an organization called *Vox*

*Populi Mariae Mediatrix* (Voice of the People for Mary Mediatrix), under the leadership of Dr. Mark Miravalle of the Franciscan University of Steubenville, petitioned the Pope to proclaim the dogma of Mary as Co-redemptrix, Mediatrix of All Graces and Advocate. By 1997, 45 cardinals, 500 bishops and 4.5 million other members of the faithful had endorsed this petition. In 2005, six Cardinals sponsored an International Symposium on Marian Coredemption at Fatima. In 2006, five of the Cardinals (five because of the death of Cardinal Edouard Gagnon) sent a formal petition to Pope Benedict XVI requesting a solemn definition concerning Mary's "unique cooperation in the work of redemption and her subsequent roles in the distribution of grace and intercession for the human family."

### **What is the ultimate benefit if this would be named as a new Marian dogma?**

A formal papal affirmation of Mary as Co-redemptrix would increase the love and devotion of the faithful to Mary as "our Mother in the order of grace" (*Lumen Gentium*, 61). When a title is given formal papal recognition it deepens the theological understanding of the faithful. When Bl. Paul VI proclaimed Mary as "Mother of the Church" in 1964 it helped us recognize how important Mary is in the ongoing life of the Church. Marian titles help to guide the faithful in understanding the mysteries of the faith. The invocation of Mary under various titles like "Mother of God" and "Help of Christians" reinforces Mary's role in the mystery of salvation. Numerous popes and one ecumenical council (Vatican II) have already affirmed Mary's unique but subordinate role in the work of redemption and the mediation of grace. Unfortunately, many Catholics today are unfamiliar with this teaching. Some are even under the impression that we are not allowed to call Mary "Co-redemptrix"—even though two popes, namely Pius XI (3 times) and St. John Paul II (at least 6 times), have publicly referred to Mary as "Co-redemptrix." A formal papal statement would also serve the cause of ecumenism because it would help other Christians know that the Catholic Church clearly distinguishes between the saving work of Christ as the one Savior and Mediator (cf. 1 Tim 2: 5–6) and the Blessed Mother's secondary, dependent but utterly unique cooperation with Christ in the work of redemption and the mediation of grace. A formal papal statement would also serve the cause of the new evangelization. As the late Cardinal Luis Aponte Martinez of San Juan, Puerto Rico put it: "To solemnly proclaim Mary as the spiritual mother of all peoples is to fully and officially recognize

her titles, and consequently to activate, to bring to new life the spiritual, intercessory functions they offer the Church for the new evangelization, and for humanity in our serious present world situation.”

**Mary has so many titles - how many of them have this level of approval that the Association is seeking?**

I don't know if anyone has ever counted up how many Marian titles have received formal papal approval. Certainly all the titles affirmed in the Litany of Loreto have been approved going back to Pope Sixtus V's 1587 approval and the subsequent papal additions to the Litany. Papal approval is certainly present with regard to any Marian titles associated with approved feast days such as Our Lady of Sorrows (Sept. 15) or Mary, Mediatrix of All Graces (approved in 1921 by Benedict XVI for all of Belgium and other places requesting the feast). Sometimes the approval comes about more implicitly by papal usage (as with Co-redemptrix) or the approval of Marian associations or congregations using a particular Marian title (at present there are at least seven approved Marian associations or congregations with Co-redemptrix in their titles). Because some bishops had resisted calling Mary “Mother of the Church” at Vatican II, Paul VI decided to give formal public recognition to the title in his Nov. 21, 1964 allocution. This affirmation of a Marian title by Bl. Paul VI provides an exemplar of the type of affirmation the International Marian Association is hoping for from Pope Francis with regard to Mary as Co-redemptrix. The International Marian Association is only making a petition or a request. The members of Association realize that it's up to the Holy Spirit to guide the Holy Father with regard to this petition. In this regard, prayer and trust are essential. We trust in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Father, and the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is our spiritual Mother. May God's will be done.

**Appendix:**

PRESS RELEASE: On January 1, 2017, the Theological Commission of the International Marian Association, an association of over 100 theologians, bishops, priests, religious, and lay leaders from over 20 countries dedicated to the full truth and love of Mary, Mother of Jesus, has released a 10 page document entitled, *The Role of Mary in Redemption: A Document of the Theological Commission of the International Marian Association*, which respectfully requests that Pope Francis publicly acknowledge and honor Mary, the Mother of Jesus, as the “Co-

redemptrix with Jesus the Redeemer” during the 2017 centenary anniversary of the Marian Apparitions at Fatima, Portugal.

A summary of the major points of the document produced by the 33 member Theological Commission is as follows:

1. Mary’s free consent to bring Jesus the Redeemer into the world (Lk. 1:38) began her unique participation with and under Jesus, in the mission of human Redemption.
2. Mary’s unique participation with Jesus in the work of Redemption is entirely dependent upon his infinite merits as the only divine Redeemer. Her sharing in his redemptive work of Jesus in no way obscures or diminishes his redemptive victory, but rather manifests its power and fruitfulness.
3. Mary’s participation in the Redemption is foreshadowed in the “woman” of Genesis 3:15 and her “seed” of victory, who will be victorious over Satan and his seed of sin and death. Mary’s Immaculate Conception prepares her to be the perfect human partner with Jesus the Redeemer.
4. Mary’s ongoing mission with her Redeeming Son is given testimony at the Presentation (cf. Luke 2:35) and culminates at Calvary (cf. Jn. 19:25-27) where Mary shares in the intensity of Jesus’ suffering in her heart and consents to the “immolation of the victim born of her” (cf. Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, n. 58, 61).
5. The development of the doctrine of Mary’s Coredemption with Jesus within Tradition begins with the early Church concept of the “New Eve”; Mary’s united suffering with Jesus at Calvary and the “redemptrix” title (10th century); Mary’s compassion and being “co-crucified” with Jesus (12th century); the “co-redemptrix” title (15th century); the golden age of Co-redemptrix (17th century), leading to its 19th century official teaching by the papal magisterium and the repeated use of the Co-redemptrix title by Pope Pius XI and Pope St. John Paul II.
6. The Latin prefix “co” signifies “with” and not equal. The Co-redemptrix title never places Mary on a level of equality with Jesus Christ, the only divine Redeemer, as to do so would constitute both heresy and blasphemy. The Co-redemptrix title is meaningless without Jesus the Redeemer, and in itself focuses upon the Cross of Jesus Christ. Mary Co-redemptrix proclaims to the world that suffering is redemptive when united to the sufferings of Christ.
7. The year 2017 commemorates the centenary anniversary of the historic apparitions of Our Lady of the Rosary at Fatima, which is in itself constitutes a powerful manifestation of Our Lady’s Coredemption in action...

The document concludes: We, as members of the Theological Commission of the International Marian Association, therefore humbly request that during this 2017 Fatima centenary year, and in continuity with the papal precedents of Pope Pius XI and Pope St. John Paul II, that our Holy Father, Pope Francis, would grant public recognition and honor to the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary as “Co-redemptrix with Jesus the Redeemer.” We believe that a public acknowledgement of Mary’s true and continuous role with Jesus in the saving work of Redemption would justly celebrate the marvels of God’s saving plan; foster greater devotion to the Mother of God; inspire the imitation of Mary as the perfect disciple of Jesus by the People of God; and lead to the release of historic graces through an even more powerful exercise of Our Lady’s maternal roles of intercession for the Church and for all humanity today.