

6. It was imperative that the dying and repentant *lapsus* be succored by the priestly *pax*; the obligatory nature of this mediation is inexplicable unless it was viewed as deleting the sin.

7. St. Pacianus lays it down as a general principle that hands must be imposed *after* atonement has been made; the atonement by itself, therefore, did not achieve the pardon sought; the bishop was constrained to intervene and only then was the sinner restored to grace.

If some doubt may be cast upon the validity of one or other of these proofs individually, they do nevertheless, taken jointly, appear to justify the conclusion that Saint Pacianus regarded the episcopal absolution as constituting the very marrow of the sacrament of penance.



# A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE IN MARIOLOGY

WILLIAM J. MCGARRY, S.J.

CAMPION HOUSE  
New York, N. Y.

(in the December issue)

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## III. SUAREZ' USE OF THE PRINCIPLE

UNDOUBTEDLY the theologian who made the widest use of the Anselmian principle, "Decens erat ut ea puritate qua sub Deo major nequit intelligi Virgo illa niteret," was Francis Suarez, S.J. It is emphatically laid down as a fundamental axiom in his Mariology.<sup>32</sup> Later we shall see some fifty statements of Marian theology for which he quotes one or another form of the axiom of Anselm. These theses range from Mary's greatest privileges—for the Immaculate Conception the principle is the fourth argument, or *ratio theologica*, and has twelve sub-divisions—to the Virgin's minor and most disputable privileges, such as, that Christ first appeared to His Mother in His risen form, or that Mary had an occasional vision of the Divine Essence during her life, since Paul and Moses had, or that she had the use of reason at the moment of her Immaculate Conception.

It is well known that Suarez' devotion to our Lady was the principal factor in driving him to conclusions suitable to

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<sup>32</sup>Suarez' treatise on Our Lady is written as a comment on the Third Part of the *Summa* (qu. 27 and following). But beyond commenting on the text of the Angelic Doctor he develops an independent treatise which extends through more than three hundred pages of Volume xix of the Berton (Vivès) edition of his works. The easiest form of reference will be to this volume and edition. Suarez introduces his treatise with the remark that as yet theologians had not dedicated a special treatment to the theology of the Virgin Mother.

piety, even when, as a theologian, he was forced to mark out his inference as only probable or pious. At the early age of twenty-one he defended in a public act of theology the thesis which he incorporated (at forty) in his Mariology, to the effect that "probabiliter credi potest beatam Virginem consecutam esse plures gradus gratiae et charitatis quam sunt in omnibus sanctis hominibus et angelis, *etiam collective sumptis*."<sup>88</sup> This form of the principle marks out the last possible extent to which the axiom can be pushed, provided the consideration is confined to graces actually conferred on creatures; it marks the limit of the older expressions, *similis Christo*, and *propinquissima Deo*.

In passing it is worth noting that to support this extreme thesis Suarez brought in proof Mary's intermediary power as the Second Eve. "Si ergo omnia gratiae dona per Virginem caeteris communicantur, rationi consentaneum est ut in ipsa prius recipiantur. Quod si de gratiis, vel donis, aut virtutibus (ut ita dicam) diversarum rationum, nemo hoc negabit propter dictam causam, . . . videtur sane, neque de gradibus et intensione gratiae id esse negandum, cum ad perfectionem sanctitatis hoc maxime pertineat."<sup>84</sup> This thesis is only an explicit statement of Anselm's "puritas qua major sub Deo intelligi nequit," which lay in the text of Saint Thomas (p. 3, q. 27, a. 1) from which Suarez takes wing for most daring flights.

It may be put down to the praise of Suarez that, impelled by devotion, he carried the principle to reaches beyond those of others filled with the same ardent devotion to the Mother of Christ. But while not complaining, we may at least regret that Suarez did not set aside a section for a theological analysis and an evaluation of the axiom and of its applications. Indeed we might demand such an analysis of a theologian who re-

<sup>88</sup>xix, 292. For an account of the early disputation (noted by Suarez himself in xix, 297), confer *François Suarez*, by R. P. Raoul de Scoraille, S.J., Vol. I, 106-115.

<sup>84</sup>xix, 296. The attempt to establish theses making for the honor of Mary even when only probability may be attained is conformed to the attitude which Suarez expresses in his preface, "Melius est de rebus altioribus vel pauca conjecturare quam inferiores certitudine etiam mathematica cognoscere." (xix, 1)

peatedly used it as an argument and insistently calls it fundamental import to the reader's attention through nearly 400 pages of Marian theology. What analysis he gave us is incidental, and it is only a little more than is found in other writers. His strictures upon the too liberal use of the principle are frequent enough, but it is only in scattered and not always consistent passages that he shows his attitude concerning the assent (of Faith) to be given to the principle or to applications of it. But at least because of his frequent use of it, his expression of the principle supplies a good groundwork for further analysis and discussion.

The following phrasings of the principle are found in Suarez;

1. *Privilegium gratiae et sanctitatis ad majorem puritatem et gratiae excellentiam pertinens quod quibusdam hominibus concessum est, non est negatum Virgini.* (xix, 27)
2. *Nullum beneficium gratiae alicui purae creaturae collatum, Virgini est negatum.* (xix, 44)
3. *Nullum donum gratiae collatum esse purae creaturae, quod simili vel perfectiori modo non fuerit datum Virgini.* (xix, 56)
4. *Quidquid perfectionis in genere gratiae sanctificantis alicui purae creaturae concessum est, non est beatæ Virgini negatum.* (xix, 284)
5. *Quidquid perfectionis gratiae in illo statu (scil. somnii) communicatum est, illi non est negatum.* (xix, 287)
6. *Omnes gratias et virtutes et omnia dona et privilegia inter alios sanctos divisa et distributa, in una Virgine fuisse simul congregata.* (xix, 8, in the place where Suarez is laying down the principle for the first time as the quintessence of Patristic thought; the form is similar to that of Saint Bonaventure.)
7. *Illa testimonia (Fathers' and Theologians') omnia privilegia et dona gratiae complectuntur quae secundum rectam rationem decent matrem Dei.* (xix, 36)
8. *Omne gratiae beneficium aliis collatum, perfectiori modo datum est Virgini.* (xix, 41)
9. *Probabiliter credi potest etc.* (xix, 296)—The form which we have seen above, cf. p. 36.

It will be noticed in the above expressions that Suarez has added *purae*, to *creaturae* which is introducing into the principle what was always implicitly there; it rules out the Sacred Humanity in comparing Mary's exaltation with that of other creatures. Again, occasionally the axiom is applied in certain cases only to Sanctifying Grace. This is a restriction which is due only to the context. Suarez often argues from the principle to the fact that Mary had charismatic graces, e.g., the power to work miracles, which she exercised after Christ's Ascension.<sup>35</sup> Thirdly, in these expressions Suarez takes as a lower limit the amount of grace which was conferred actually on creatures, and thus he is apparently far more restrained than some of the schoolmen who followed the *quidquid conferrri potuit* of Lombard. But it will be seen that the formula thus conceived is not the full expression of Suarez' mind; he too is willing to search the field of the possibles for honors for Mary.

Finally, the explicit expressions of the axiom only hint at a very important reservation to which Suarez held and which he constantly applied in use. For he makes it clear repeatedly in his treatise that he is only talking of those gifts and graces of Mary "quae pertinent ad sanctitatem et munus matris Dei." This brake, as it were, operates always in his writing, both when he is showing the congruity of any given privilege of Mary, or when he is denying that her rôle as Mother of God calls for one.<sup>36</sup> The best expression of this qualifying phrase is as follows: "Dat Deus unicuique gratiam eo tempore, modo, et perfectione quae secundum rectam et prudentem rationem maxime congruat fini, dignitati et officio in quo ab ipso Deo constituitur."

<sup>35</sup>This restriction, due to the subject matter, is found in the form of the principle which Passaglia puts down on the first page of his treatise on the Immaculate Conception, borrowing it from the classical work of Benedict Plazza, S.J. (fl. 1760) *Causa Immaculatae Conceptionis*, "Privilegium sive donum ad gratiam gratum facientem pertinens et ad majorem animae sanctitatem, perfectioremque cum Deo unionem conducens, quod in aliquem servum Dei novimus esse collatum, Dei Genetrici negare non debemus." Cf. Passaglia, I, 15.

<sup>36</sup>Thus Suarez (xix, 306) denies that Mary had "scientias omnes naturales et humanas per accidens infusas," first, because the Doctors and theologians did not mention this privilege, and secondly, because it is not necessary "ad propriam sanctitatem et perfectionem neque ad munus et officium ad quod assumpta est."

(xix, 44) But while the expression "the sanctity and office of the Mother of God," is normative, it still calls for further definition. In Suarez it includes all that Mary ought to be in the ontological order to be Mother of God, this order including both natural and supernatural features, and also all that she ought to be morally so as to be held before Christ's followers as a worthy Mother of God, for one of her offices is to be an exemplar of the faithful. From this office, for instance, Suarez drew one argument for the fact that Mary should be considered to have made a vow of virginity. (xix, 89)

Again, it may be pointed out that, in outlining a restrictive norm for the use of the principle, Suarez, following others, used the expressions "according to right reason," "as was befitting." Neither he nor his forerunners say definitely *whose* right reason, or *whose* prudence is meant. It is God's fundamentally, of course, but in practice it seems to be that of men whose general theological attitude and thought are providentially safeguarded under God and the guidance of the Church. Suarez rightly searches back into tradition for support, though as will be seen, occasionally he argues without it when he opens some new problem. Again, since the "fittingness" of a privilege affects the whole question, some discussion is demanded concerning the relation of the Anselmian principle to the sequence: *Potuit: Decuit: Fecit*. Suarez does not supply it.

These passages of Suarez which tend to restrict the principle in a way conformable to tradition may be contrasted with others in which he seems to have thrown caution to the winds. "Mensura privilegiorum Virginis potentia Dei dicitur, quae parcendo maxime et miserando manifestatur et decuit singulari modo manifestari in matre." (xix, 36) "Ut enim dixit Augustinus (*de Lib. Arbit.* 3, 5) 'quidquid tibi vera ratione melius occurrerit, id scias fecisse Deum,' quod tunc maxime verum est quando contrarium aliquo modo incongruum, aut Deum minime decens apparet." (xix, 43) And after concluding to several points by aid of the axiom, Suarez notes that one may conclude "veluti inductione quadam, mysteria gratiae quae

*Deus in Virgine operatus est, non esse ordinariis legibus metienda, sed divina omnipotentia, supposita rei decentia absque ulla scripturarum contradictione vel repugnantia.*" (xix, 44)

These passages may be accused of a certain hyperbolic bearing, but, as was noted before in the case of the Fathers, they are really a summary of the whole tendency of the tradition of the Church to search out honors and exaltation for the Mother of God. The reader immersed in that tradition is unconsciously carried along in a direction and with a momentum which will draw him effectively to take new positions. Now such a tendency and momentum in tradition are dogmatic facts; they are an attitude deliberately impregnated in tradition by God, and they are facts to be consulted and let have their influence when answers are sought to disputed points in Mariology. Suarez has an extraordinary expression of this attitude in his 13th argument for the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception: if any one of us had it in his power to grant or withhold this privilege, "*concedere non dubitaret,*" and this for the reason that the Church encourages in her children an attitude "*bene et digne sentiendi de puritate et sanctitate Virginis,*" and because "*recta ratio et pietas postulat, ut quam possimus, optimam aestimationem de illa habeamus.*" (xix, 46)

In the expressions in which Suarez seems to keep open an approach to the whole field of the possibles as a treasury in which to find new honors for Mary there is one phrase which deserves remembrance,—"*non ordinariis legibus metienda.*" Now the laws of the distribution of Grace are obscure, and especially the laws of the distribution of charismatic Graces. But Suarez, as conscious of that general truth as others, set Mary in a realm above these laws. And rightly so, for tradition supports the excellence of Mary even over the angels, and in her order Suarez puts any Grace he finds in that of angels and men. Thus, angels exercise a continuous act of love toward God; Suarez deduces that therefore Mary exercised a similar act, even during her sleep; and since for this an ever-active supernatural knowledge is presupposed, he claimed that she had

this gift. (xix, 287) Moreover, an economy of Grace regulated the relations of Adam and Eve before the Fall; the privileges of the first parents are claimed several times for Mary though their state differed from hers. If, therefore, the Virgin lives on a plane of supernatural law which is above all others, at least it has all the privileges of the orders which we know.

If we seek in Suarez to attach a theological note to the principle, we must distinguish between the general truth and specific applications of it. According to Suarez the principle itself is contained in the Fathers and theologians; it is said to be traditional, to be a *ratio theologica*. He thought it fundamental and pervasive in Marian theology and to be the quintessence of the Patristic testimony about the Mother of God. But he does not append a theological note to it.

When Suarez comes to mark down the security of conclusions drawn from the principle, very often we find him using terms which denote his thesis as probable. In general, with Cano's doctrine in the *De Locis*, he holds that reasonings based "vel in ipsa rerum natura et decentia multum ponderis et efficaciam in theologia habent."<sup>37</sup> This probably brought him to consider the Immaculate Conception (not defined in his day) to be *definibilis*; here the principle is the main *ratio theologica*, is developed at length, and is in reality the operative force in the development into explicit form of what is implicitly contained in the Divine Maternity and the plenitude of Grace. Again, in thus arguing, he cautions us not to deny the validity of the specific application of the axiom in this case, lest the validity of the same sort of argument for the Virginity *in partu* and the Assumption be weakened. (xix, 46)

In xix, 304, where Suarez is attempting to prove that Mary had occasionally the vision of the Divine Essence, since Paul and Moses probably enjoyed it, Suarez remarks, "Non enim oportet aliud speciale testimonium vel rationem magis propriam spectare ad credenda hujusmodi privilegia et beneficia divinitus Deiparae esse data. Nam in ipsamet dignitate matris tanquam

<sup>37</sup>Cano, *De locis theolog.*, Suarez, xix, 4.



in radice et fonte omnia continentur (ut supra late), praesertim cum non desint auctores graves et sancti qui ita sentiant." In this paragraph an essential point is touched, namely, the ontological connection, necessary or otherwise, between the dignity of the Divine Motherhood and any particular Grace. Elsewhere Suarez answers: "Comparatur haec dignitas matris ad alias gratias Virginis tanquam prima forma ad suas proprietates, et aliae gratiae ad ipsam sicut dispositiones ad formam." (xix, 9). But this would be difficult to sustain, and the vaguer assertion which soon follows seems truer: "Ratione maternae dignitatis habet jus singulare ad bona filii; ergo hac ratione dignitas matris est quodammodo ratio et principium dignitatis gratiae quam quodammodo eminenter continet, secundum ordinem divinae providentiae." (xix, 10) In the *quodammodo* we note the caution imposed on the theologian because of the uncertainty which attaches to the sequence: *Potuit: Decuit: Fecit.*

Nothing will emphasize so well the importance which Suarez attached to the principle as a list of the statements for which he used it;

1. Mary's general perfections as prefigured in the O.T. (xix, 2)
2. M. is predestined *ante praevisum originale peccatum*. (xix, 11)
3. M. miraculously born of the sterile Anna. (xix, 13)
4. M's birth announced to her parents. (ibid)
5. M's name revealed to her parents. (ibid)
6. M's bodily beauty; it does not stir others' concupiscence. (xix, 14)
7. Sanctification in the womb, Immaculate Conception, repeatedly. (xix, 23-49) especially, 43-49. Suarez approaches the question from several angles; e.g., Adam and Eve were *created* in grace; angels *perpetually* holy; Israel *fully* prepared by God for coming Christ.
8. M's first sanctification above that of any creature. (xix, 56)
9. The same, even when men or angels are consummated in sanctity. (xix, 57)

10. M. had all virtues, *per se infusas*. (xix, 58)
11. M. had all the virtues, *per accidens infusas*. (xix, 58)
12. M. confirmed in grace and given the *Magnum Donum*. (xix, 59)
13. M. exempt from venial sin. (xix, 62)
14. M. exempt from inordinate concupiscential motions. (xix, 66)
15. This exemption was through special internal and external gifts. (xix, 68)
16. M. had the use of reason from the moment of conception. (xix, 70)
17. She had this permanently. (prob.) (xix, 71)
18. and certainly after her Presentation in the Temple at the age of three. (xix, 71)
19. M. merited from the beginning, not Grace, but glory, *de condigno*. (xix, 73)
20. M. was a virgin and had a vow of virginity. (xix, 89-99)
21. M. practiced mortifications, though unnecessary. (xix, 101)
22. M. was miraculously fed while in the Temple. (xix, 113)
23. M. was continuously engaged in love and contemplation of God. (xix, 115)
24. M. was to be and was exemplary wife and virgin. (xix, 115)
25. An angel of outstanding dignity announced the Incarnation. (xix, 129)
26. M. had a mental and a corporeal vision of Gabriel. (xix, 139)
27. M. knew by faith the mystery more perfectly than any other. (xix, 140)
28. M. occasionally intuited the Divine Essence. (xix, 140)
29. M. increased in habitual grace constantly. (xix, 283, 285)
30. M. meditated always, even during sleep, miraculously. (xix, 286)
31. M. was engaged in an act of continuous love of God. (xix, 287, cf. no. 23)

32. M. often had the grace of spending the night in prayer. (xix, 287)
33. M. knew by faith Christ's Divinity at the Anunciation. (xix, 298)
34. M. knew also then the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. (xix, 298)
35. M. knew by faith the mystery of the Incarnation. (xix, 298)
36. M. knew theology better than the Apostles. (xix, 298)
37. M. was privileged to be the *interemprix haereseon*. (xix, 299)
38. M. was instructed in faith by Christ and the Holy Ghost. (xix, 299)
39. M. had from the beginning supernatural infused knowledge. (xix, 302)
40. M. received many special revelations. (xix, 305)
41. M. had the gift of prophecy. (xix, 309)
42. M. had the gift of inspiration. (xix, 310)
43. M. had the gift of interpretation of tongues. (xix, 310)
44. M. had the gift of discretion of spirits. (xix, 310)
45. M. had the gift of miracles, used after the Ascension. (xix, 312)
46. M. was assumed into heaven gloriously. (xix, 317)
47. M's bliss exceeds that of all other creatures. (xix, 319)
48. M. sees in vision all that God sees *in scientia visionis*. (xix, 321)
49. M. has the aureola of Martyrs, Doctors and Virgins. (xix, 322)
50. M. is to receive hyperdulia. (xix, 327)
51. M's intercessory power exceeds that of all the saints. (xix, 332)
52. M. first saw the risen Christ. (xix, 876)

If it is noticed that many of these theses do not appear in our modern treatises on the Mother of God, it is also true that many of the ones which do not appear are those to which Suarez

attached the note of probable. And yet it is to be regretted that certain of them are not sufficiently discussed, especially, I think, those which have to do with the knowledge which Our Lady had.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS AND EVALUATIONS

In the attempt to set down accurately and to qualify the Marian principle, various forms of it may profitably be proposed and commented upon.

1. *Quidquid Virgini conferri potuit, ei collatum est.*

Whatever could be conferred on the Virgin was conferred on her.

This form cannot be maintained. Indeed its full significance was not intended by those who used it, as their qualifications show. It is equivalent to "De Maria numquam satis."<sup>38</sup> However, there is a value in this most general form insofar as it indicates a tendency in Catholic tradition to enhance Mary's honor. Although it suggests hyperbolically that God searched and exhausted the field of the possibles to adorn His Mother, actually it is an expression of the sentiment that in making Mary the Mother of God, God had conferred immeasurably magnificent honors on a woman. In its substantial meaning the phrasing of Saint Anselm is equivalent to this general form, for the *major nequit intelligi* similarly invades the field of the possibles.

2. *Potuit Deus tale vel tale privilegium conferre; decuit Matri conferre. Ergo contulit.*

God could confer a certain privilege; it was fitting that it be conferred on the Mother. Therefore, God conferred it.

This form of the principle is more accurate than the first, for it introduces the notion of fittingness. Yet, apart from the fact that the tendency of tradition is indicated, this form is not very valuable. For if what is fitting in the case of Our Lady is

<sup>38</sup>See *Mariologia*, pp. 72-74, of B. H. Merkelbach, O.P., for a brief but excellent *Monitorium de adagio "De Maria numquam satis."*

deduced on merely theoretical grounds without appeal for support in the sources of revelation, one may be led into useless speculations or even into errors. Thus, one might argue that it were fitting that Mary, from whose flesh and blood the Body and Blood of Christ were sprung, should be given the power to consecrate. But in fact Our Lady did not have this priestly power.

3. *Quidquid gratiae et privilegiorum aliis, vel angelis vel hominibus collatum est, Virgini non est negatum.*

Anything in the way of Grace or privilege granted to others, either angels or men, was not kept from the Virgin.

As it stands the axiom in this form cannot be sustained, although it was used, especially by Suarez, with the note of probability attached to the conclusion. For instance, he uses the principle to prove that Mary had the charismatic grace of inspiration. The conclusion cannot be called even probable. The same argument might be fashioned to prove that Mary had the stigmata or other supernatural privileges; the argument is not trustworthy. At most this form of the axiom can be called a trumpet which sounds the alert, that is, we may rightly be led to investigate whether or not Our Lady has enjoyed specific supernatural privileges of which we have heard. Thus, one might inquire if Mary was given the privilege, granted to certain Saints, of being nurtured only through the receiving of Holy Communion. Such a conclusion has been drawn. Yet theologically it cannot be marked as probable, even though one wishes to think (without theological qualification) that Mary had this privilege.

4. *Quidquid perfectionis gratiae sanctificantis aliis, vel angelis vel hominibus concessum Virgini perfectiori modo collatum est.*

Whatever perfection of Sanctifying Grace was granted others, both angels and men, was granted to the Virgin in a more perfect way.

This form is true. It is even an understatement of what is verified in Catholic tradition. It expresses the content of that tradition concerning the holiness of the Virgin as far as habitual grace is concerned. Again, in this form, the principle includes all that belongs to the perfection of Sanctifying Grace, and all its accompaniments as far as they comport with the sinlessness of Mary. Certain aspects of the infused virtues and acts of them that have to do with actual sin are ruled out. As stated, the axiom says nothing of the actual Graces conferred on Our Lady. However, a similar form may be posited concerning these. It will be differently formulated according to the opinion of theologians on the necessity or importance or actual influx and force of actual Grace required for an increase of habitual sanctity in one who has an immense fund of Sanctifying Grace. Here it ought to be added that tradition has considered that Mary increased in habitual sanctity according to a measure equalled in the case of no created nature, save that of Christ. Even though less has been written concerning the actual Graces conferred on Mary than about her habitual sanctity, tradition is clear enough in portraying her mind and will as being constantly endowed with the largesse of divine Grace.

The *concessum est* in this form of the axiom states less than its users affirm through it. The phrase does not signify the amount of grace conferred up to any given moment of time; they mean to say that Mary's perfection in Grace is greater than that of all angels and men even up to the end of time.

*Aliis, vel angelis vel hominibus* may be understood distributively or collectively. The plain and direct statement of tradition is that the sanctity of Mary is immeasurably above that of the saintliest *pure* creature. Her place in the hierarchy of sanctity is somewhere between that of the holiest creature and the sanctity of the Sacred Humanity. The tendency is to place Mary as near Christ as possible. Hence various means of indicating this propinquity have been offered. The highest form of expression states that the *initial* sanctity of Mary was above the *consummated* sanctity of all angels and men, taken ac-

cumulatively; *her* consummated sanctity, therefore, is immeasurably beyond this starting point, for her holiness increased more frequently and in more abundant measure than that of others, since the increase was always proportioned to the amount of sanctifying Grace in her soul at any given moment. The lowest form of the expression is that Mary's consummated sanctity is greater than the holiness of any individual *pure* creature. Obviously between these two forms of expression, two others may be interjected by introducing the comparison with the initial and consummated holiness of both terms of the simile.

It is *probable* that Mary's *initial* sanctity is greater than the *consummated* sanctity of all others; it is *more probable* that her *consummated* sanctity is greater than the accumulated holiness of all others. The qualification *probable* is used here because of the difficulty of drawing a certain conclusion from the expressions of scripture and tradition. It may also be noted that tradition supplies at its minimum solid arguments for these statements, while for their denial there is not a shred of argument.

When we come to compare the sanctity of Mary with that of even the holiest *pure* creature, we may qualify as *de fide ex juri magisterio* the statement that Mary is above any single creature both in her initial gift of holiness and in her consummated sanctity. Tradition clearly set the Mother of God on a plane of holiness which is above that of other *pure* creatures. There are definite indications that God dealt differently with her from the manner in which he sanctified other creatures. If we consider the axiom in the form: *quidquid perfectionis gratiae sanctificantis aliis, vel angelis vel hominibus concessum, Virgini perfectiori modo collatum est*, it is found to be admitted both by those who were furthering the honors to be conceded to the Mother of God and by those who felt compelled to deny certain claims which appeared to them to be exaggerated. Thus, theologians of divergent views admitted the principle, though

some, for reasons extraneous to the principle, denied specific instances of its application. All conceded that the principle was contained in the doctrine that Mary was Mother of God and had the plenitude of Grace, The principle, therefore, in the form set out above, is *de fide ex jugi magisterio* and *proxime definibilis ut de fide divina et catholica*.

5. Quidquid privilegii supernaturalis vel praeternaturalis aliis concessum, non est negandum Virgini fuisse concessum, sive formaliter, sive eminentiori modo, prouti tale privilegium de Virgine Matre in fontibus doctrinae continetur vel ex iisdem deducitur.

No supernatural or preternatural privilege which was conferred on others, is to be excluded from privileges granted to the Virgin Mother, insofar as such a privilege is contained explicitly or implicitly in the sources of revelation.

By *privilege* is meant any gift conferred on Mary outside and beyond the perfection of Sanctifying Grace, of which mention has already been made in the fourth form of the principle.<sup>39</sup>

The *sive eminentiori modo* is added because in fact a number of privileges given to others have not been conferred on Mary, though a higher gift of a similar kind has been hers. Thus, Mary was not a priest in the strict sense, but her Divine Maternity and her free-offering of Christ on Calvary are analogates of the priestly office and power. Again, Mary did not die the martyr's violent death for her Faith. But indubitably she is Queen of Martyrs and as the Sorrowing Mother, has an aureole more resplendent than that of any martyr. So too she has the aureole of the Doctors.

It is with the privileges which are formally conferred on Our Lady that theology is more interestedly concerned, and at the present time, more especially with the Assumption and the Mediation of Grace. In dealing with these and similar theo-

<sup>39</sup>The definition is given thus to avoid the disputed question, not pertinent here, on the nature of extraordinary gifts. Some call *mystical* certain states which others hold to be in continuity (through ordinarily available Graces) with habitual holiness through sanctifying Grace.



logoumena which are still to be investigated, the words *prouti in fontibus doctrinae continetur vel ex eis deducitur* are of paramount importance.

First, the reference to the sources of revelation prevents exaggerated viewpoints and expressions. Again, the phrase is a warning against a too confident trust in merely aprioristic considerations. We do not know what privileges God gave Mary save through His revelation. Metaphysical considerations are valid when they expose to us what the terms *Mother of God* implies. But they are not successful in determining privileges which do not necessarily flow from the concept of the Divine Maternity. At most, they are only a probable index. Thus, it can be stated only as probable that Mary had the privilege of seeing God in a manner more intimate than Paul or Moses. True, writers may be quoted who claim that Mary saw the Divine Essence intuitively, at least occasionally. But the further support of tradition is needed before a higher theological note than *probable* can be attached to the proposition.

Finally, the phrase referring to the fonts of doctrine is an encouraging one when difficulties are made from aprioristic considerations. For once tradition is found solidly in support of a particular privilege, the task of metaphysics is not to cry out that its own statements are immutable, but rather to stimulate its ingenuity in solving its self-supplied antinomies.

These considerations go to show that, while the fifth form of the principle may be found in tradition, particular inferences from it are true only when tradition supports them specifically. In a word, tradition itself warns us that here we can make no conclusions without finding the specific privilege contained in tradition itself. The *potuit, deuit, contulit* suite is not conclusive, if tradition is silent concerning the privilege.

The words *non est denegandum* are purposely phrased in the periphrastic form in order to indicate a certain pressure which is upon the Catholic theologian when faced with disputed privileges of Mary. The reason for adopting this form is a dogmatic fact. This fact is the whole tendency of tradition to honor the

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Mother of God. The phrase suggests the strength, the momentum and the direction verifiable in this matter in tradition. The Fathers, Scholastics and theologians of the Church have been tendentious very markedly. They have consistently taken the position of enhancing the honor of Mary. This current, detectible in Saint John's Apocalypse and in Saint Ignatius' writings, grows larger and stronger as the centuries pass. This dogmatic fact has never been made the object of an ecclesiastical pronouncement, but it must be held and recognized by Catholics.<sup>40</sup>

The effect which the dogmatic fact will have on theological schools is not measurable. All feel it; all are glad to yield to it; but in some it is felt that in particular cases it may betray the incautious into exaggerations or unsustainable conclusions. This danger is emphasized by those authors who are not convinced that Mary had a part in the Redemption objectively considered. Hence they caution us to heed the warning *prouti in fontibus doctrinae continetur*, when dealing with assertions that Mary is co-redeemer, that she offered with Christ her satisfaction for the sins of men, etc. They warn us to check exactly on the phrases which are found in the writings of the past. And it is precisely here, I think, that the principle with which we are dealing can aid us in evaluating the ancient testimonies.<sup>41</sup>

It remains in conclusion to remark upon what has been emphasized throughout this essay, that is, the dynamic feature

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<sup>40</sup>Theologians generally consider dogmatic facts to be the object of *fides ecclesiastica* and many call them *simpliciter tenenda* in contrast to the *tenenda et credenda* which characterizes truths *de fide divina et catholica*. Marin-Sola (*L'évolution homogène du dogme catholique*, 1924) would use *de fide divina* of dogmatic facts, but theologians in general have not acceded to his views concerning the assent of Faith whereby one accepts them.

<sup>41</sup>Among others H. Lennerz, S.J. has served these warnings in his article, "Considerationes de doctrina B. Virginis Mediatrix," [*Gregorianum*, 19 (Oct. 1938) 3, 419-444]. J. Bittremieux names Lennerz as the principal defender of the thesis that Mary did not participate in the Redemption objectively considered, though she did share in this work subjectively considered; cf. "Il movimento mariologico dell' anno 1938-1939," [*Marianum*, 2 (Jan. 1940) 1, 5-39]. In the *Clergy Review* [17 (Dec. 1939) 499-513, and 18 (Apr. 1940) 371-376], the interpretation of the ancient testimonies is discussed by Father Cabrol, O.F.M., and Very Reverend Doctor Smith. It seems that a much larger place could have been profitably devoted to the Anselmian principle in this discussion.

of the principle of Anselm as it is outlined in the fourth and fifth forms. It is not an expression of thought which ends with the mere understanding of it. Rather, it is a constant spur to the student of Marian theology. The axiom has been an active force which eventually carried the theology of the Church to a position where it became clear that Mary's privilege of being immaculately conceived was contained in the deposit of Faith. Again, in the question of the doctrine of the Assumption, the principle has played its part, is still effective, and if this doctrine is defined in the future, it will have helped in this triumph for Mary. So too, it will have its deserved place and contribute its mighty force in the discussion of the Marian theses which are yet more fully to be worked out—her queenship, her intercession, her place in the Mystical Body of Christ, and the complete theology contained in the Eve-Mary contrast. Nor need theologians fear the heights to which their studies may guide them. In tradition the place of Mary under God is clear; but it remains to investigate fully how near God the Queen of Heaven is. She is on a plane immensely lifted above that of other men—indeed so far above us is Our Lady that our eyes will ever need to look up even when we arrive at the last station to which theological journeying will carry us.

