

Historical Development of the concept of Mary's maternal attitude towards the Church from Reformation up to the Second Vatican Council

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Historický vývoj konceptu Máriinho materinského postoja k Cirkvi od reformácie až po Druhý vatikánsky koncil

Abstract: *This article explores the development of the Marian title “Mother of the Church” from the time of the Reformation up to the beginning of the Second Vatican Council. This study analyzes the historical background and theological moments in which this title appeared in the works of significant theologians, focusing not only on the explicit use of the title but also on the broader understanding of Mary’s maternal attitude toward the Church and its members.*

The work begins with an examination of the three main Reformers – Martin Luther, Huldrych Zwingli, and John Calvin. In Luther, the idea of Mary as the mother of believers appears, though her role is always subordinate to Christ. Zwingli emphasizes her exemplary faith, but the maternal relationship to the Church is absent. Calvin sees the Church as mother; for him, Mary is primarily the mother of Christ and a model of virtue.

In the Catholic tradition, the title “Mother of the Church” gradually develops. Peter Canisius, Francisco Suárez, Robert Bellarmine, and other theologians expand Marian devotion and attribute to Mary a maternal role toward the faithful, sometimes even toward the entire Church. The contributions of popes, especially Leo XIII and Pius X, are also significant, as they emphasize Mary’s spiritual motherhood in relation to the members of the Church.

The document points out that explicit use of the title “Mother of the Church” was rare until the 20th century, even though Mary’s maternal role was often theologically emphasized. The development of the title culminates in 1964, when Pope Paul VI solemnly proclaimed Mary as Mother of the Church, making this title part of the Church’s life.

Thus, the study provides a comprehensive view of the theological, historical, and ecumenical aspects of the Marian title "Mother of the Church" in the period from the Reformation to the Second Vatican Council.

Key words: *Mother of the Church, development of Marian theology, maternal attitude, ecumenism, catholic tradition, reformation.*

Introduction

In 1964 pope Paul VI in at the closing event of the third session of the Second Vatican council solemnly proclaimed Mary, mother of Jesus as the Mother of the Church. In 2018 pope Francis affirmed the title and set it as obligatory memorial next day after the Pentecost. The title has become part of life of the Church.

The study is part of wider research on the Marian title Mother of the Church and examines its historical background in individual moments of history when this title appeared in the works of individual theologians. It is not only the title itself that is being sought but also references of understanding motherly attitude of Mary towards the Church and its individual members.

The boundaries of this study are defined by the time from the Reformation to the beginning of the Second Vatican Council. The circumstances of the Reformation led to the Council of Trent, at which liturgy and theology were defined for a period of four centuries. During the time, an attitude between Catholics and Christians from the Reformation regarding the Mother of God became very different. While on the one hand, veneration grew, flourished and developed, on the other hand, it gradually faded into the background, until it finally disappeared completely. This is not the aim of this work, but it provides a partial context and answer as to why theologians from the Catholic Church mostly appear, while from the group of the others, only representatives from the early days of the Reformation itself are mentioned.

The main line of the research follows the work of Gabrielle Roschini and Raimondo Spiazzi, that is enriched by Hilda's Graef research. Uniqueness of the study is presented by originality of the research in two points. Firstly and globally, it focuses on wider understanding of attitude of the title, not just on its literal appearances in work of theologians. Previous studies done by Roschini and others were involved to find only literal mention of the title in history of the Church theology. Secondly it represents new horizons for local understanding of mother of Jesus with new perspective as the mother of the faithful. A position that is often taken for the granted and was not deeply developed theologically in the context of central Europe and it Marian piety.

Reformers (Martin Luther, Huldrych Zwingli, John Calvin)

The orientation will be on three main reformers. Namely Martin Luther (d. 1546), Huldrych Zwingli¹ (d. 1531) and John Calvin (d. 1564).

¹ In some works, his name is Ulrich. The version used here is the one used by the Group of the Dombes in the work *Mary in the Plan of God and in the Communion of Saints*, (Groupe des Dombes, *Mary in the Plan of God and in the Communion of Saints*, ed. Alain Blancy and Maurice Jourjon (New York: Paulist Press, 2002), 33. (hereafter GdD)).

Martin Luther was a German professor of theology, composer, priest, monk, and a figure of the Reformation. He is author of Ninety-five Theses of 1517 and translator of the Bible into German vernacular. His position to Mary is probably worked out the most of all three Reformers. It could be the result of his own piety coming from the early part of his life. Later the veneration of Mary (and the saints) was still a reality in his life, but it was a secondary matter to him. He kept three major Marian feasts: the Annunciation, the Visitation, and the Purification.² Mary's role was always seen by Luther in the Christological perspective and all concerning her should be subordinated to Christology. Her motherhood of Christ is seen as the greatest praise that could be given to her by the title *Theotokos*. In the context of the ecclesiology, Luther saw an analogy between Mary and the Church, especially in the context referred to as their destiny. Mary is the figure of the church because of motherhood and characteristics of her life. Luther also views her as the mother of each member of the church who has Christ as brother and God as Father: "So great is the comfort and overflowing kindness of God that human beings can, if they believe, take advantage of this great treasure that Mary is their true mother, Christ their brother and God their father."³

Luther considered Mary to be the mother of the faithful. Her maternal role was later extended towards the Church. Group of the Dombes' the document about Mary⁴ translated and quoted passage from Luther's sermon given 8th December 1516: Mary is "mother of the church, of which she is also the most pre-eminent member."⁵ The original text in Latin did not speak about Mary as the *Mater Ecclesiae*. In the quoted passage above (here is original in Latin⁶) Mary is like oil (myrrh, used for preserving dead bodies, one used shortly for Jesus' body and later was brought by women on Easter Sunday), that keeps the body and gives it a good smell. It is put into the context of the quick funeral of Jesus after His death. Her role is considered as the unique one, and still, she is considered a member of the Church, however as the text stated, a very noble member.

Later in the work on Psalm 110 Luther considered her motherhood towards the church as one that is for all times, every age, because she is a mother of all children who are born by the Holy Spirit.⁷

Luther did not consider Mary as equal to Christ but always subordinate to Him and God. He gave her many titles, but always in the Christological view. The significant is his view of maternal relation towards faithful. She is not the mother of the church, but

² Martin Luther, *Martin Luthers Werke*, vol. 26 (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883), 222.25-233.1; In GdD short passages is used in footnote from above passage: "Let pastors not engage in quarreling over these feasts. Let each be free to celebrate those which his parishioners want. Let them honor, above all else, the Sundays, the feast of the Annunciation, the Purification, and the Visitation, the feasts of St. John the Baptist, St. Michael, the apostles, and St. Mary Magdalene." (GdD, 144).

³ Martin Luther, *Martin Luthers Werke*, vol. 10/I, 72.19-73.2. The translation is provided by GdD, 145.

⁴ GdD.

⁵ Martin Luther, *Martin Luthers Werke*, vol. 1, 107.22-25.

⁶ "Ita B. Virgo est non tantum uncta, sed ipsa gutta et amaror efficacissimus et sibi et omnibus: nihil itaque putredinis in illa, quum et ipsa gutta est. Tertio gessit figuram Ecclesiae in suo nomine, quae sicut stilla situlae describitur apud Isaiam, quod ex tote mari electa mundi sursum per fidem pendeat ad verbum Dei, cuius ipsa (Ecclesiae inquam) nobilissimum est membrum."

⁷ Martin Luther, *Martin Luthers Werke*, vol. 4, 234.5-8.

she is a (noble) member of the church. She is not above the Church. The central point of this view is the work of the Holy Spirit in all: in Mary, in the Church, and in all individual Christians.

Huldrych Zwingli was born in the Swiss canton of St. Gall. He became a priest and later an important figure in Reformation in Switzerland. He kept venerating Mary, but not adoration. He kept external forms of the devotion to her: feast of the Annunciation, the Assumption, Candlemas, the Angelus and Hail Mary (biblical part, e.g. first half of the prayer). Zwingli considered Mary more in her receptive position as the house of God, a safe place and chamber of the Holy Spirit.⁸ He accepted also title as Mother of God, Mother of Christ (*Theotokos*) but more as historical fact, not as the dogmatic definition.⁹

Zwingli stress Mary's exemplary faith and obedience. It is because of that we can say she is 'pure' or 'spotless,' that makes her model of a believer. Still, her holiness depends on Christ's, that she could be considered as 'a type of Christ'.¹⁰

We don't find Mary in a relationship with the Church in the work of Zwingli. However, he brought up an interesting view from medieval age and considered her as a model for ecclesial ministry in social tasks and charity.¹¹

In the work of Zwingli is missing the maternal attitude of Mary towards Christians. Meanwhile, on the other hand, the image of her exemplary life is emphasized not only towards the life of the faithful but of the whole community - the Church. This could not be understood fully as her relation as the mother of each believer, but in exemplary consideration as a mother who leads by example.

John Calvin was a French theologian, pastor, reformer in Geneva and the founder of Christian theology later called Calvinism. He had the least interest in Mary among three reformers. He emphasized her historical dimension and considered her more in the action of the Holy Spirit.¹² Calvin made a shift and saw the Church as the mother only.¹³ Mary's motherhood is only towards Christ, but even in it there is a strong accent on divine sonship of Jesus and "by electing and destining Mary to be the mother of his Son, God, gave her the highest honor."¹⁴ Mary is seen as an example for all and as an ethical model. Faithful are called to imitate her by listening, understanding and witness. By imitating virtues, the Church is built up and Mary is the example to it.¹⁵

The image of Mary as the mother of Christians is not considered in the work of Calvin. The strong accent on Mary as an example of the virtues, and encouragement given by Calvin to the faithful to follow them to a build-up of the Church are points that could consider Mary as the mother of the church in the spiritual, exemplary way of her life.

⁸ Huldreich Zwingli, *Huldreich Zwinglis Werke*, vol. 1 (Berlin, C. A. Schwetschke und Sohn, 1905), 412.1-8.

⁹ GdD, 33.

¹⁰ GdD, 34.

¹¹ Huldreich Zwingli, *Huldreich Zwinglis Werke*, vol. 3, 52.14.

¹² GdD, 34.

¹³ Edouard Cunitz (ed.), Johann-Wilhelm Baum (Ed.), Eduard Wilhelm Eugen Reuss (Ed.) *Joannis Calvinii opera quae supersunt omnia*, vol. 46 (Brunsvigae : C.A. Schwetschke, 1863), 111.

¹⁴ Edouard Cunitz (ed.), Johann-Wilhelm Baum (Ed.), Eduard Wilhelm Eugen Reuss (Ed.) *Joannis Calvinii opera quae supersunt omnia*, vol. 45 (Berlin: Braunsschweig, 1891), 348.

¹⁵ GdD, 34-35.

Peter Canisius

Peter Canisius (d. 1597) was a Dutch Jesuit Roman Catholic priest and author of Catechism – *Summa doctrinae Christianae*. He is considered as the second apostle of Germany, after St. Boniface. His work is very much interlinked with Counter-reformation by the Catholic side, and he is still known for his honesty in the communication with Protestants. He preferred not to do theological disputes and try to win over them, but more to exercise charity and the love of Christ in an encounter with them.¹⁶

Canisius emphasized Mary's dignity and depicted her as the Second Eve (parallelism very known) and used images from the Old Testament as prefigured types of her.¹⁷ In the work about Mary, he wrote: "Mary was made not only the Handmaid of God but also the Mother of the Church and that she, alone, gave the world more than all the children could receive well from their parents ..."¹⁸ In the reaction towards the Reformers' opposition in the context of the Mariology and devotion (in the hymn *Salve Regina*) he emphasized, that "Church should not be criticized, for Mary, mother of the Jesus Christ, in some way is saluted as Mother" of the Church.¹⁹ The Church then salutes Mary as her mother.

Francisco Suárez

Francisco Suárez (d. 1617) was a Spanish Jesuit priest, philosopher, and theologian. He is considered a founder of Mariology for his systematic work in this field of theology. He wrote a treatise where he collected and systemized all teaching connected with Mary. The treatise is called *De mysteriis vitae Christi*.²⁰ In the context of the work, its name clearly shows his conviction that Mary's life is deeply interlinked with Christ's.

In his work, he defended the position of the Church to invoke Mary as *matrem misericordiae*. He wrote: "and finally on the rise of the Holy Church, she prays to the Virgin and invokes her as our hope, life, sweet, mother of the mercy, etc...."²¹ In *Disputatio* 22 he stressed Mary's role, her part in Redemption. He argued as Christ is our King because he redeemed us, Mary is also called the Mother of all men because she contributed in a unique way to our salvation, by providing a body for the Incarnation of God, voluntary offering Him for us and her desire for our salvation too.²²

Francisco Suárez gave Mary the title mother of mercy and underlined her maternal role towards faithful. His first treatise and in all his work, Christ is recognized as the only mediator. The point of the departure for Mary is the Incarnation. There he found the importance of Mary and her place in God's plan. This is the approach of the Church Fathers elaborated by Suárez.

¹⁶ <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11756c.htm> (accessed 05.04.2019).

¹⁷ Peter Canisius, *De Maria Virgine Incomparabili* (Inglostad, 1577), 1-3(2-25).

¹⁸ Roschini 321; Petrus Canisius, *De Maria Virgine incomparabili et Dei Genetrice sacrosancta* (Ingolstadii: Excudebat Daud Sartorius, 1577), Librum V, caput 1.

¹⁹ Roschini 321; Petrus Canisius, *De Maria Virgine incomparabili et Dei Genetrice sacrosancta*, Librum V, caput 13.

²⁰ Franciscus Suarez, *De Mysteriis vitae Christi*.

²¹ Roschini 321, Suarez, *De mysteriis vitae Christi*, Diputation 23, n.5.

²² Francisci Suarez, *Opera Omnia* vol. 19 (Parisi: Ludovicum Vivès, 1856), 311.

Robert Bellarmine

A contemporary of the Francisco Suárez is Robert Bellarmine (d. 1621), an Italian Jesuit, cardinal and an important figure in the Counter-Reformation. He is author of the work *Disputationes de controversiis christianae fidei*. In 1931 he was declared a doctor of the Church. We find his Mariology spread in small parts all over his entire work unlike Suárez' approach to put in the one theme.

In work *Conciones Lovanienses* he reacted to Luther's saying that all Christians are holy as Mary. Bellarmine wrote about Mary's position in the Church as the *via media*, not making her goddess neither lowering her to the same level as all other human beings. She is honored in a special way because she is the noblest member of the Church.²³

In the reaction to the Reformers' objections against the *Salve Regina* Bellarmine defended her position as the Queen, because she is mother of the King. She gave birth to Him from whom we have received mercy. We can call her our life, not because she could be the source of it, but through Christ's birth, she is made the mother of all who lives the spiritual life.²⁴

Bellarmino saw her as a member of the Church but still attributed to her a maternal role. Mary is considered Mother of all who lives a spiritual life, but not of the Church.

Cornelius Á Lapidé

Cornelius Á Lapidé (d. 1637) was a Jesuit priest of Flemish origin. He is very much known for his exegetical work, which was not only appreciated by Catholics but also respected by protestants of his time. "Georg Heinrich Goetze (*Goetzius*) in 1699 wrote an academic dissertation, *Exercitatio theologica de Cornelii a Lapide Commentariis in Sacram Scripturam*,²⁵ where he gives respect to Cornelius "as the most important of Catholic Scriptural writers."²⁶ Rev. Thomas W. Moseman, an Anglican clergyman also appreciated Cornelius' work and translated it into English with title *The Great Commentary of Cornelius a Lapide*.²⁷

In the commentary on Song of Songs, chapter 8 verse 1 Cornelius wrote that "...Virgin is the Mother of the Church because she is the mother of Christ, and consequently, all the Christians..."²⁸ Roschini quotes the passage from *Commentarius in S. Scripturas*. In *Canticus Canticum* edition Mediolani from 1859, page 192.²⁹ The same text used by Roschini is a footnote in the book *Scripturae sacrae cursus completus* vol. 17.³⁰ In the *Commentaria Scripturam Sacram* from 1891 on the passage about chapter 8 verse 1, the commentary does not have the same text. The central line mentioned by Roschini is written in the

²³ Graef, 296.

²⁴ Robert Bellarmine, *Opera omnia, De Reparatione Gratiae*, vol. 6 (Paris: Vives, 1870); Graef 297.

²⁵ Georg Heinrich Goetze, *Exercitatio theologica de Cornelii a Lapide Commentariis in Sacram Scripturam*, (Titius, 1699).

²⁶ <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04377a.htm> (accessed 05.04.2019).

²⁷ Thomas W. Moseman, *The great Commentary of Cornelius a Lapide*, 3rd edition (London, 1889).

²⁸ Roschini, 321.

²⁹ Roschini, 321 footnote 45.

³⁰ Digital source: http://cdigital.dgb.uanl.mx/la/1080014741_C/1080014748_T8/1080014748_T8.html (accessed 05.04.2019).

passage, but in the *Tertius Sensus*, that is about Christ and Blessed Virgin. It seems to me, that there is used text of Rupertus, which is commented by Cornelius in parenthesis.

Besides the problems with the allocation of the text, we could find it very interesting, that the author, who used the title Mother of the Church in the commentary, was accepted and honored by Protestants for his exegetical work.

Jean Jacques Olier

Jean Jacques Olier (d. 1657) was a priest from France. He founded the Sulpicians - Society of the Priests of Saint Sulpice. He is author of books such as *La journee chretienne* (1655), a *Catechisme chretien* (1656), *L'Introduction a la vie et aux vertus chretiennes* (1657), and *L'Explication des ceremonies de la grande messe de paroisse* (1657). In his works, he openly used the title Mother of the Church.

*“Jesus Christ ... while choosing the Blessed Virgin for a mother of her physical body, He chose her, at the same time, to be Mother of the Church, which is His mystical body. He (Jesus Christ) associates the Virgin with that life which he received from the Father, to water and nourish the Church, which is that only daughter (the Church) that this adorable Father generated in Mary in the generating the Son ... Jesus Christ and His Church were born in Mary because Jesus Christ, intimately united to his divine Mother, receives life for Himself and for the whole Church, so the holy Virgin, participating in this divine life, also becomes, in her Son Jesus Christ, the nourishing Mother of the Church.”*³¹

Olier placed Mary in his work above the Church, because “all that appears in the Church is small in comparison with the eminent participation of himself Jesus Christ gives to his holy mother.”³² Later he takes her as the one, who guided the Church after the Ascension³³. Because they are so close to each other, according to Olier, “it seems that Jesus and Mary are wholly consummated into one and are but one thing,”³⁴ she shares with Christ the lordship over a whole world.³⁵

Olier honored Mary with the title mother of the Church, due to her close relationship with Christ. In Mary’s womb, the Church was created with Jesus.

Angelo Paciuchelli

Angelo Paciuchelli (d. 1660) was an Italian Dominican priest, theologian, and exegete. Among his many writings are *Lectiones morales in prophetam Jonam* and *Discursus morales de passione domini nostri Jesu Christi*. In the commentary on Psalm 87 (verse 5) he wrote:

“If you look on Zion, to whom he is talking about? I reply Sion is spiritual Church, which has only really worshiped God, and they offer sacrifice of honored actions, which are welcome, not outside of it. What does say this man, Jesus, from Sion, that is the Church? Of course, this is your mother: you have Father of mercy, so receive and take

³¹ Roschini 322; Jean Jacques Olier, *De Lettres Spirituelles*, tom. 1 (Paris, 1862), 486-490.

³² Graef, 306; Jean Jacques Olier, *Vie intérieure de la très sainte Vierge* (Rome: Impr. Salviucci, 1866), 243.

³³ Graef, 307; Jean Jacques Olier, *Vie intérieure de la très sainte Vierge*, 278.

³⁴ Graef, 307; Jean Jacques Olier, *Vie intérieure de la très sainte Vierge*, 315.

³⁵ Graef, 307; Jean Jacques Olier, *Vie intérieure de la très sainte Vierge*, 319.

the mother of all comfort and compassion. Here is your mother, o Zion, o Church, she (Mary) which is my (Jesus') mother, I want to be your mother too. She is natural mother to me; to you she is spiritual mother. See, Mother of the Redeemer is the mother of the sinner in the Church."³⁶

In this text, the Mary maternal role towards the faithful is willed by God and is only to be considered as a spiritual one. Mary is not literally given the title Mother of the Church, but her maternal role over the Church is considered.

Georg Reismyler

Georg Reismyler (d. ca 1652) was a German theologian of the 17th century. He is author of *Beatae Virginæ Mariae Magnae Dei Matris, Reginae Sanctorum omnium semper auguste Corona stellarum duodecim*. In his comment on the passage under the Cross, she is considered not only the Mother of Christ but also of all men. It was the will of Christ; in fact, he said *Ecce mater tua* to St. John apostle. St. John according to Georg was one who represented all in the Church. "There is such great love of God for her (Mary), because He has merited it and he has placed her as the universal Queen, patron and beloved mother. Christ wanted her (Mary) to be a mother not only to him but also for men, that is why he said to John: *Ecce mater tua*. Here in the person of the John, whole Church is represented."³⁷

Reismyler considered the maternal role of Mary as the willed by Christ Himself.

Jean Crasset

Jean Crasset (d. 1692) was a French Jesuit, theologian, and writer of ascetic works. His works contain writing such as *Methode d'oraison*, and *Considérations chrétiennes pour tous les jours de l'année*. In his work, *La véritable dévotion envers la sainte Vierge établie et défendue* affirms Mary's will totally united with God's will. He stated it with even stronger words: "the Virgin has no other will than that of God, she loves all that he loves and hates all that he hates; hence she wants to save all men just as He does."³⁸ Something similar is said in another of his work: "Even though she is a Mother of mercy, she was not nearly as much tenderness for us as God, who is Goodness Itself."³⁹ In the context of the very warm attitude towards Mary by many authors, Crasset is a little different when he said: "Let us love her as the Mother of Love, let us fear her as the Mother of Justice."⁴⁰

Crasset calls Mary a mother, and gives her maternal attribute, but with a different approach.

Jacques Bénigne Bossuet

Jacques Bénigne Bossuet (d. 1704) was a French theologian and a bishop known by his very French styled sermons. He is the author of many writings. One of the major would

³⁶ Roschini 322-323; Angelo Paciuchelli, *Excitationes Dormitantis Animae Circa Psalmum 86* (Monarchium, 1677), 140.

³⁷ Roschini 323; Georg Reismyler, *Beatae Virginæ Mariae Magnae Dei Matris, Reginae Sanctorum omnium semper auguste Corona stellarum duodecim*, conc.7 (Ingolstadii: Typ. G. Haenlini, 1652).

³⁸ Graef, 316-317; Jean Crasset, *La véritable dévotion envers la sainte Vierge établie et défendue* (F. Muguet, 1679), 93.

³⁹ Graef, 317; Jean Crasset, *La véritable dévotion envers la sainte Vierge établie et défendue*, 31.

⁴⁰ Graef, 317; Jean Crasset, *La véritable dévotion envers la sainte Vierge établie et défendue*, 162.

be *Politics Derived from the Words of Holy Scripture*. He had a more sober view of Mary that many members of the so-called group the *École Française*.⁴¹ His view and work are based on traditional Eve-Mary parallelism. It is the base for her share in our redemption: “This is the solid foundation of the great devotion the Church has always had for the holy Virgin. She has the same part in our salvation as Eve had in our ruin.”⁴² The fundamental passages from the Scripture about her part in the redemption, according to Bossuet, are the one about Incarnation and that at the foot of the Cross. By the words “Behold thy son” (Jn 19: 26), Christ communicated to her His own fecundity, and by these words, she has been made the Mother of Christ’s children. Mary’s consent to the death of her son was also wanted by God. So, when John is given to her in the place of Christ, “she becomes the Mother of Christians in the stress of an affliction without measure.”⁴³ Mary’s motherhood towards Christians is in a certain way conditioned. Bossuet stressed the connection between the inner life of prayer and the outer practice of life and devotions: “let him know that, since his heart is far from Jesus, Mary abhors his prayers.”⁴⁴

Bossuet saw in Mary mother of Christians. However, he did not extend her motherhood to the Church, not giving her the title Mother of the Church.

Benedict XIV

Prospero Lorenzo Lambertini (d. 1758) was born in a noble family from Bologna, Italy. He was elected pope in 1740 and took name Benedict XIV. Among many papal documents issued by him, probably the most known is the apostolic constitution *Pastoralis Romani Pontificis*. After a long period, he was the first pope who gave Mary essential maternal relationships towards the Church.

In the document *Gloriosae Dominae* he declared that “the Catholic Church, instructed by the Magisterium of the Holy Spirit, has always professed the maximum filial devotion to Mary ... as towards the most loving of mothers, bequeathed to her by the very voice of Jesus, her dying spouse.”⁴⁵ Roschini considered the importance of the document in three points: “1) for the authority of the author: it is a pontifical document, and therefore of the ordinary ecclesiastical Magisterium; 2) for the categorical affirmation of Mary’s motherhood towards the Church; 3) for the foundation on which the Supreme Shepherd rests his assertion: ‘the Catholic Church, instructed by the Magisterium of the Holy Spirit’.”⁴⁶

The title Mother of the Church here is not affirmly proclaimed, but the maternal aspect of Mary towards the Church is confirmed by the pope. It could be considered as teaching of the Church, but not as necessary.

⁴¹ Hilda Graef puts in the so-called group Pierre de Bérulle, Jean Jacques Olier and Jean Eudes.

⁴² Graef, 320; Jacques Bénigne Bossuet, *Oeuvres complètes de Bossuet*, vol.7, F. Lachat edition (Paris: L. Vivès, 1862), 205.

⁴³ Graef, 320; Jacques Bénigne Bossuet, *Oeuvres complètes de Bossuet*, vol.9, 500-520.

⁴⁴ Graef, 321; Jacques Bénigne Bossuet, *Oeuvres complètes de Bossuet*, vol. 9, 548.

⁴⁵ Roschini, 323; Benedictus XIV, “*Gloriosae Dominae*” from 27th September 1748.

⁴⁶ Roschini, 323-324.

Gioacchino Ventura (dei Baroni) di Raulica

Gioacchino Ventura (dei Baroni) di Raulica (d. 1861) was an Italian Roman Catholic priest, philosopher, and writer. One of his major works could be *La raison philosophique et la raison catholique*. In work *La Madre di Dio madre degli uomini* he considers Mary's maternal relationship towards the Church and faithful many times.

*"Mary, by giving Jesus Christ to crucified and died; and we sinners, and not already her Son, we have gathered the fruit of generosity of his offer. In the figure, the mother has only one son; in the figurative Maria has but two sons, the natural Son Jesus Christ conceived of her substance (body), and the adopted sons generated by his love. So she does the two acts of maternal love in his only Son, whence he loses and saves it, he yields it and it recovers: Mary performs on two different subjects these acts of her maternal affection; it is free the one to save the other, one yields to death to recall the other to life. Finally like that lucky woman, to the generous act of giving the child, to avoid seeing him die, is recognized and proclaimed true mother (look to 1 Kings 3:16-27); so Maria, to the generous act of having given the one son to the death to save the other, is also recognized and proclaimed our true mother."*⁴⁷

Mary's motherhood of Jesus was extended on the Calvary to all his brothers (and sisters). Mary's maternal affection is the second one after the Father's one. It is love that leads to the offering of Son for our Salvation:

*"After the love of the heavenly Father, love comes immediately of Mary for the human race. God himself transfused the flames of his charity towards us. She was penetrated and filled with it as far as her most pure soul was capable of receiving. His heart burned hence of the flames of this heavenly fire. The work of our health was dear to her more than life precious of his own Son."*⁴⁸

Roschini summarized the work of Ventura in two constitutions based on Jn 19: 26-27. The first, according to him, it constitutes Mary as *Madre della Chiesa* (Mother of the Church). The second constitutes the Church and all truly faithful to be the sons (and daughters) of Mary. The second one is the natural consequence of the first one.⁴⁹

In the works, we find Ventura's expression of Mary's motherhood toward all men and her love towards all humanity. Mary's maternal relationship towards the Church is not expressed, even Roschini considered it so.

Pierre Jeanjacquot

Pierre Jeanjacquot (d. ca 1890) was a French Jesuit of the 19th century. He is the author of *Maria cooperatrice alla Redenzione e Madre nostra*. There we find that

"the Holy Virgin is not only our Mother in a more sublime way than is the Church, but she is also the Mother of the Church herself: first of all because the Church is nothing but the reunion of all the children of God and there is no one among the children of God who is not the son of Mary Most Holy, and, secondly, because having Jesus Christ offered his blood for the redemption of each one in particular and for

⁴⁷ Roschini, 324; Gioacchino Ventura, *La Madre di Dio madre degli uomini* (Roma, 1841), 109.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 19.

⁴⁹ Roschini, 324.

everyone together, wishing that all should form one mystical body with Him, the Virgin cooperated in that Redemption and wanted it in that same way and with the same intention. Therefore she conceived in the bowels of her heart, and truly gave birth to all the men and with them the same Church."⁵⁰

Pierre Jeanjacquot considered Mary as the mother of the faithful and the Church based on her unique place in the Redemption. Mary's motherhood toward all the men and the Church are linked together.

John Henry Newman

In the 19th century there was a revival of Marian devotion. That surpassed the boundaries of the Catholic Church involving on field of devotion and doctrine. We find the Oxford movement in England, whose main characters were John Kelbe (d. 1866), Edwards Bouverie Pusey (d. 1882), and John Henry Newman (d. 1890). There we find renewed interest on Mary in doctrinal aspect of teaching about her along with the renewal of devotion to her. I will focus here only on Newman.

John Henry Newman was an English theologian, poet, and member of the Oxford movement. He was ordained a priest in the Anglican church, later entered into Catholic Church and was elected cardinal. His major works are *Tracts for the Times* (1833 – 1841), *Grammar of Assent* (1870), and poem the *Dream of Gerontius* (1865). Newman at first did not agree with devotion towards Mary, as it was a practice. But later he realized that it is impossible to profess Marian doctrine without devotion to her. His Mariology is strongly founded on the Church Fathers and Scripture. The whole devotion to her is based on the divine mystery of Incarnation and that "Mary is exalted for the sake of Jesus."⁵¹ It is because "a mother without a home in the Church, without dignity, without gifts, would have been, as far as the defense of the Incarnation goes, no mother at all ... If she is to witness and remind the world that God became man, she must be on a high and eminent station for the purpose."⁵²

The veneration of Mary is set clearly in the Church⁵³ based on the divinity of her Son, following Church Fathers. We can find another result from the quotation. Mary's place is set in the Church. She is not above the Church; she is a member of her because only in the 'environment' (in the Church) her person and her role are recognized.

Matthias Joseph Scheeben

Mathias Joseph Scheeben (d. 1888) was a German Catholic theological writer, priest, and mystic. He was a professor of dogmatic at the seminary at Cologne. He was called by Keckes the "theologian of modern Mariology."⁵⁴ His most famous work is *Mysterien des Christenthums*.

⁵⁰ Roschini, 324; Pierre Jeanjacquot, SJ, *Maria cooperatrice alla Redenzione e Madre nostra*, (Roma, 1878), 166-167.

⁵¹ Graef, 363; John Henry Newman, *Catholic Sermons of Cardinal Newman* (London: Burns & Oates, 1957), 348.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Graef commented it, that Newman considered Mary as "nothing else than our fellow." (See. Graef, 372).

⁵⁴ Graef, 371.

Scheeben's Mariology is based more on the maternal-bride relationship with Christ, seeing her as his helper. According to him, this is the key to all Mariology⁵⁵. It is an idea coming from medieval times. As is stressed by Graef, that idea can't be very much interested in ecumenically oriented theologians.⁵⁶

The result of the idea is that Mary could be clearly considered *co-redemptrix*. Scheeben saw it differently. Mary's part in the work of salvation of her Son is based on the grace of her divine maternity. It is "the principle of a supernatural activity specifically proper to her in a similar way as the grace of union is for the humanity of Christ, and which gives her activity a quite peculiar dignity and force... This activity belongs to... to a creature who is united to Christ and God only as a bride."⁵⁷ Then "the effects of the redemptive work of Christ can and must be attributed also to his mother as their principle in a very true sense... Thus, she is the middle cause of all the effects of salvation in all...."⁵⁸ Scheeben did not like expression *co-redemptress*, and emphasized Mary's completed subordinate on Christ. His sacrifice "is an independently effective sacrifice, whereas the sacrifice of Mary, being a purely affective one, is joined to it only as a secondary, accompanying sacrifice, or rather ... is the only reflection of it."⁵⁹ In that case, she could be called "*co-operatrix Redemptoris*, but not *coredemptrix*, because by her action she in no wise versa or pays herself the price of redemption."⁶⁰

From Christ's work of salvation, another outcome comes for Scheeben. "As Christ by his passion ... generates new humanity as a father ... so Mary by her compassion as a mother."⁶¹ She "is the spiritual mother of mankind in a higher way than even the Church, that she herself mediates his union with the Church and so is also the Mother of the Church; further, she co-operates fundamentally in establishing and acquiring the rebirth of all mankind, whereas the Church is active only in applying the completed work of redemption to individuals."⁶² Mary is also understood to be the spiritual Mother of men, because she "sub- and coordinated to her Son as their spiritual Father and as such occupies ... an intermediary position between them and Christ similar to that of a natural mother between father and children."⁶³

In *Spoza e Madre di Dio* Scheeben based Mary's motherhood towards men on the passages of Isaiah 53,8ff and Isaiah 66, 7ff and in contrast with the image from Revelation 12. It was obvious for him to apply the later image to both Mary and the Church. And then from this application comes Mary's spiritual motherhood towards men, which is

⁵⁵ Graef, 373; Mathias Joseph Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik* (Freiburg, 1882), 1592.

⁵⁶ Graef, 372.

⁵⁷ Graef, 375; Mathias Joseph Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*, 1764.

⁵⁸ Graef, 375; Mathias Joseph Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*, 1771.

⁵⁹ Graef, 376; Mathias Joseph Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*, 1793.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Graef, 377; Mathias Joseph Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*, 1813.

⁶² Graef, 377; Mathias Joseph Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*, 1818.

⁶³ Graef, 374; Mathias Joseph Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*, 1627.

different from the spiritual motherhood of saints. “Mary is the spiritual mother of humanity in a higher way also than the Church,”⁶⁴ because she “is more intimately linked with Christ as the spiritual father of humanity. It is, in fact, an organ of a union of the Church with Christ, and also the mother of the Church ... Mary's motherhood is the root and soul of the Church's motherhood so that it can exist and work only because Mary's motherhood is included and operating in it.”⁶⁵ Then Scheeben linked both motherhoods.⁶⁶

Scheeben gives Mary the title Mother of the Church, but he placed her once above the Church and other times made a deep connection between them. We find it as the result of his reflection on the mystery of Incarnation and as the result of the maternal-bridal relationship between Mary and Christ. As it is mentioned by Graef, quoted above, this point of the departure of his theology could be very difficult to accept by ecumenical theologians.

Leo XIII.

Vincenzo Gioacchino Raffaele Luigi Pecci (d. 1903) was born in Italy. He was elected pope in 1878 and took the name of Leo XIII. It was a time of turmoil. He is mostly known for his work in the social field and his Encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum*. He is also considered to be a Marian pope, due to his one encyclical and one apostolic letter on the Rosary.⁶⁷ In Encyclical letter on the Rosary *Adiutricem*,⁶⁸ he stressed that Jesus bequeathed Mary to John, by words: “Behold thy Son” (Jn 19:27). John is considered the representative of the whole race, and thus the Church too. Then he continued:

“With a generous heart Mary undertook and discharged the duties of her high but laborious office, the beginnings of which were consecrated in the Cenacle. With wonderful care she nurtured the first Christians by her holy example, her authoritative counsel, her sweet consolation, her fruitful prayers. She was, in very truth, the Mother of the Church, the Teacher and Queen of the Apostles, to whom, besides, she confided no small part of the divine mysteries which she kept in her heart (Ad 6).”

In the next paragraph he wrote about her active maternal role in the heaven: “From her heavenly abode she began, by God’s decree, to watch over the Church, to assist and befriend us as our Mother; so that she who was so intimately associated with the mystery of human salvation is just as closely associated with the distribution of the graces which for all time will flow from the Redemption (*Ad 7*)”. In the next paragraphs, Mary’s role of the help of the Christians, Mother of the Nations and Mother of unity is stressed.

Pope Leo XIII expressed the maternal relationship of Mary towards the faithful and towards the Church by calling her the Mother of the Church. Besides mentioned above, pope Leo XII was concerned about the unity of Christians, but still in the line of

⁶⁴ Mathias Joseph Scheeben, Carl Feckes, *Sposa e Madre di Dio* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1955), 254.

⁶⁵ Mathias Joseph Scheeben, Carl Feckes, *Sposa e Madre di Dio*, 255.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Between years 1883 and 1897 he wrote 10 Encyclical letters on the Rosary.

⁶⁸ Leo XIII, *Encyclical Letter Adiutricem* [Ad], 5 September 1895.

requesting it as the return of the communities and churches, that have departed from the Catholic Church. A concept of unity that deeply varies from the current one.

Pius X

Giuseppe Melchiorre Sarto (d. 1914) was an Italian, who was elected pope in 1903 and took name Pius X. He is very much known for vigorously opposing modernist interpretations of Catholic doctrine. As a successor of Leo XIII, he continued as well in the tradition of writing Encyclical on the Rosary. In 1904 he wrote Encyclical letter *Ad Diem Illum*.⁶⁹ It was to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Proclamation of the dogma of Immaculate conception as the Dogma in the Catholic Church. In point 10 Pius X wrote:

“Wherefore in the same holy bosom of his most chaste Mother Christ took to Himself flesh, and united to Himself the spiritual body formed by those who were to believe in Him. Hence Mary, carrying the Savior within her, may be said to have also carried all those whose life was contained in the life of the Savior. Therefore all we who are united to Christ, and as the Apostle says are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones (Eph 5, 30), have issued from the womb of Mary like a body united to its head. Hence, though in a spiritual and mystical fashion, we are all children of Mary, and she is Mother of us all. Mother, spiritually indeed, but truly Mother of the members of Christ, who are we (ADI 10).”

Pius X did not fully mention Mary as the Mother of the Church, but in the passages quoted, there is a strong emphasis on her maternal role towards the faithful. His emphasis comes from Pauline theology of the Body of Christ. (Eph 4 - 5).

Sergius Bulgakov

Sergius Bulgakov (d. 1944) was a Russian Orthodox Christian theologian, philosopher, and economist. He is the author of many books. As young he was interested in Marxism, but he returned to his Christian orthodox roots that resulted in forced exile. He went to the west and lived in Paris. He is mostly known for his *sophiology*, which is also considered controversial. He offered it for the first time in the book *Unfading Light*.

During his life the Ecumenical movement started. He contributed to it. In his reaction to commemoration of 1500 years from Ephesus council, he expressed Mary’s maternal relationship towards faithful, her importance in the life of the Church. She has her special place in the Church, that could not be denied. If so, “a true reunion of the church is impossible... a correct doctrine of the Church is impossible without a Mariology.”⁷⁰

In the work *Wisdom of God*,⁷¹ he continued in a similar sense giving a Mary maternal role towards race of man. She is “midway between creation and the heaven of God ... The Mother of God, since she gave to her Son the manhood of the second Adam, is also the mother of the race of man.”⁷² For him, Mary played not only a significant role when

⁶⁹ Pius X, Encyclical Letter *Ad Diem Illum* [ADI], 2 February 1904.

⁷⁰ Graef, 382.

⁷¹ Sergius Bulgakov, *The Wisdom of God: A Brief Summary of Sophiology*, trans. Patrick Thompson, O. Fielding Clarke and Miss Xenia Braikevitc (New York, N.Y: The Paisley Press, Inc., 1937).

⁷² Sergius Bulgakov, *The Wisdom of God: A Brief Summary of Sophiology*, 180.

God became man, but also in a divinization of the whole human race. Later he wrote in the same book about Mary in the light of ecumenism and on Protestantism: “to separate Christ from his mother (still more to forget her, as historical Protestantism has done) is in effect an attempted violation of the Incarnation in its innermost shrine ... Yet veneration of the Virgin extends not merely to her divine maternity, but also to herself ... (She is) as it were a personification of the Church.”⁷³

Bulgakov kept his orthodox tradition and traditional devotion towards Mary. He considered her maternal role towards men. All the relation of Mary towards the race of man is fully based on the mystery of Incarnation as the cornerstone. It is a very basic point for an ecumenical relationship. For him, Mary is really like a mother, who wants all children to be united.

Pius XII

Eugenio Maria Giuseppe Pacelli (d. 1958) was born in Rome. He was elected pope on the brink of World War II in 1939 and took the name, Pius XII. He left an extraordinarily rich legacy of Marian teaching to the Church, that will be developed later by his successors. Its peak is the dogmatic definition of the Assumption in the Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*.⁷⁴

In an address to pilgrims from Genova on 21st April 1940, he compares the role of Mary in the Church with Peter's and calls her Mother of all believers.⁷⁵

In the Encyclical letter *Mystici Corporis*,⁷⁶ in the last paragraphs he wrote about Mary's role in the Mystical Body of the Christ and her maternal role towards all its members:

“It was she, the second Eve, who, free from all sin, original or personal, and always more intimately united with her Son, offered Him on Golgotha to the Eternal Father for all the children of Adam, sin-stained by his unhappy fall, and her mother's rights and her mother's love were included in the holocaust. Thus she who, according to the flesh, was the mother of our Head, through the added title of pain and glory became, according to the Spirit, the mother of all His members. She it was through her powerful prayers obtained that the spirit of our Divine Redeemer, already given on the Cross, should be bestowed, accompanied by miraculous gifts, on the newly founded Church at Pentecost ... she continues to have for the Mystical Body of Christ, born of the pierced Heart of the Savior,[219] the same motherly care and ardent love with which she cherished and fed the Infant Jesus in the crib (MCC 110).”

⁷³ Sergius Bulgakov, *The Wisdom of God: A Brief Summary of Sophiology*, 184.

⁷⁴ Pius XII, *Apostolic Constitution Munificentissimus Deus*, 1 November 1950.

⁷⁵ Original text was not accessible to me. I used text and translation of Calkins. Arthur Burton Calkins, “Mary and the Church in the Papal Magisterium Before and After the Second Vatican Council,” in *Mary at the foot of the Cross - IX : Mary: Spouse of the Holy Spirit, coredemptrix and Mother of the Church : Acts of the Ninth International Symposium on Marian Coredemption : Casa Dores (Sanctuary), Fatima, Portugal, July 15-17, 2009*, (New Bedford, Massachusetts: Academy of the Immaculate, 2010), 25.

⁷⁶ Pius XII, *Encyclical Letter Mystici Corporis Christi* [MCC], 29 June 1943.

In the context of the title Mediatrix, pope Pius XII in the Encyclical letter *Mediator Dei*⁷⁷ linked it with Mary's maternal role: "She became our Mother also when the divine Redeemer offered the sacrifice of Himself; and hence by this title also, we are her children. She teaches us all the virtues; she gives us her Son and with Him all the help we need, for God "wished us to have everything through Mary (MD 169)."

Pius XII qualified Mary as "the spiritual Mother of all his members". (MCC 110) It is based on Mary's motherhood of Christ, who is the Head of the Church. But it is not a logical consequence for Pius XII to say that she is the mother of the body. His argument is based on Calvary, and it was established by Christ Himself. The passage of Jn 19, 25-27 is significant for him but is not quoted there and there is not any mention of it.⁷⁸

A maternal role is seen in her presence among the apostles in the Upper room and at the Pentecost. For him, it is her maternal role, that she had already exercised, since the first moments in the Bethlehem, when she took care of little baby Jesus. Her maternal role thus didn't cease to exist but is still on. For Pius XII it was willed by Christ. The passage is short, and it stands at the end of the Encyclical letter.⁷⁹

Pius XII expressed Mary's maternal role towards the faithful, but he did not express it towards the Church. The maternal role of Mary in the time of the pontificate of Pius XII could be stressed because of the world events that happened in that period. The destruction and all horrors of war were all around. The Maternal role of Mary could bring consolation into the hearts of the faithful.

Eric Lionel Mascall

Eric Lionel Mascall (d. 1993) was a British theologian, philosopher, and priest in the so called Anglo-Catholic tradition of the Church of England. He was for many years influential figure in the Church of England. He is author of more than 20 books. He expressed the Anglican theology in a very Catholic way.

In 1948 he contributed to the *Mother of God: a symposium* with his article *The Dogmatic Theology of the Mother of God*.⁸⁰ He stated that there are two options on how to start to take Mary into consideration. We can start with clauses of Creed: 'I believe in the Communion of Saints,' or 'Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary'. The first one is more about the ecclesiology, the second one about Christology. For him the second one, about Christology is crucial, and it is even more important for a full understanding of the humanity of Christ. It is important to keep in mind that Christ has always His human nature with Him in heaven. It was not left here after the Ascension. It means for Him, that Mary as the mother of Christ is always mother, she has not ceased to be as Christ has not too. Otherwise, heresies would be revived, or sometimes as he

⁷⁷ Pius XII, *Encyclical Letter Mediator Dei* [MD], 20 November 1947.

⁷⁸ Arthur Burton Calkins, "Mary and the Church in the Papal Magisterium Before and After the Second Vatican Council," 26 – 27.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Eric Lionel Mascall, "The Dogmatic Theology of the Mother of God," in *The Mother of God: a symposium* (Westminster (Maryland): Dacre Press, 1949), (hereafter Mascall). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040571X5005336409>

points out, there are not officially on, but in reality, our understanding of Christ is mixed with heretical position, therefore inadequate.⁸¹

In his opinion, the Incarnation naturally leads to Mary's motherhood towards all men. "For if the Church is the living organism of Christ's glorified human nature communicated to men, and if Mary is still the human mother of the human Christ, she is the mother of the Church and our mother too."⁸² Later Mascall summarized in "strictly dogmatic considerations."⁸³ Mary's maternal relationship with the Church is based on two relations. First is a one between her and her Son. The second is based on His relation to us and the Church. Because He adopted us, she became our mother. This was significant for Mascall that he wrote: "it can be denied only by denying the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation."⁸⁴



*Mary Mother of the Church mural in the Church of Visitation at Ein Kerem near Jerusalem.
By Lawrence OP on Flickr*

⁸¹ He meant particularly: Nestorinism, Docetism, Adoptionism and Eutachianism. The oppositum for them is the title *Theotokos*.

⁸² Mascall, 43.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Mascall 44.

The Incarnation is a unique event in the history of men. It is not just past history, but it carries effects up to the present time. For Mascall the Incarnation and Mary's motherhood are deeply interlinked. Denying one means denying the other one and wise-versa.

Mascall expresses Mary's motherhood toward the Church and gives her the title Mother of the Church too. The importance of Mascall position is based on fact, that he is not Roman Catholic, and he made this paper for an event in 1948. It was years before the solemn proclamation of the title Mother of the Church. He not only defended it but saw it as crucial for Catholic doctrine because it is deeply linked with the Incarnation, that is not just any historical event of the past but an everyday repeated reality in the Church.

John XXIII

Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli (d. 1963) was born in Lombardy into a simple family. After priestly ordination, he served in diplomacy and in 1958 was elected pope and took name John XXIII. The main contribution of his was announcing of an ecumenical council. In 1962 he opened the Second Vatican Council.

John XXIII on different occasions gave Mary maternal relation to the Church. He used the title Mother of the Church three times in them. In the radio message to the XVI National Eucharistic Congress of Italy (13th September 1959) he said: "the Italians all with renewed fervor venerate in her the Mother of the Mystical Body, of which the Eucharist is a symbol a vital center."⁸⁵

In the radio message to Ecuador (December 1959) John XIII called "Mary is Mother of God and our Mother." And later he said: "She is the Mother of the Church and she contributes with her omnipotent prayer and with the graces that sheds her hands on the world to the sowing and expansion of the evangelical seed."⁸⁶

In the radio message to the 1st Inter-American Marian Congress (November 1960), he noted how Congress had "studied the privileges and prerogatives of the Mother of the Church."⁸⁷ Later in the message, he said: "The first Christians gave each other the name of brothers and this was not a pure expression, ... is based on the sublime reality of all men being united in the same Creator Father, in the same Redeemer and in the same Mother who He gave us at the peak moment of the cross."⁸⁸

In an address held in the Basilica Liberiana (December 8, 1960) the pope confessed his affection towards the Virgin: "The turning of the circumstances of human conveniences, sometimes propitious, sometimes adverse or silent to Our undertaking, can neither exalt us beyond measure nor depress our energies, which count above all on the intercession of the Immaculate Mother of Jesus: *Mater Ecclesiae, et Mater nostra dulcissima*."⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Radio Message 13.09.1959; http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/it/messages/pont_messages/1959/documents/hf_j-xxiii_mes_19590913_congresso-catania.html (accessed 28.04.2019).

⁸⁶ Radio Message 13 december 1959; http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/es/messages/pont_messages/1959/documents/hf_j-xxiii_mes_19591213_ecuador.html (accessed 28.04.2019).

⁸⁷ Radiomessage 13 November 1960; AAS 52 (1960), 980.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Homily on 8th December 1960; http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/it/homilies/1960/documents/hf_j-xxiii_hom_19601208_immacolata-concezione.html (accessed 28.04.2019).

In the radio message to the 7th National Marian Congress in France, he asserted that Mary was “bodily the Mother of Christ and spiritually the Mother of His Mystical Body, which is the Church.”⁹⁰

John XXIII considered Mary’s maternal role towards all men and the Church. He gave her the title Mother of the Church on a few occasions. On one occasion he made reference to a passage from the Scripture when he interlinked Mary’s maternal role with a scene on Calvary.

Conclusion

In the course of history from the time of the Reformation until the brink of the Second Vatican Council, the maternal role of Mary toward the Church was stressed. The title Mother of the Church has been used but still of rare appearance. While her maternal role towards the faithful was stressed many times, she was mostly considered not above the Church, but as a member of her.

The Scriptural fundamentals are not set very often. Mostly the position is based on Jn 19: 26-27, but not many times it is indicated indirectly by mentioning the scene of Calvary. Similarly, scriptural references are not very much stressed in published works of popes in this period.

In the context of the Reformation, I have observed that first reformers accepted mostly Mary's maternal role towards faithful, but not toward the Church. They stressed a significant role of the Holy Spirit and God’s grace within it. In person of Mary, they recognized her role as an example for Christian life.

Authors coming outside of the Catholic Church considered Mary's maternal role towards faithful. However, there is no mention of the title Mother of the Church. The significance of her is stressed many times, but mostly due to keeping the sound Christian doctrine within the Scripture. I have observed that the authors were mostly from the 19th century onwards. It shows the rapture in the Protestant theology, that was not fully consistent with one that of the Reformers. The new outcome in the 19th century is the sign of hope for building unity in the context of the doctrine about Mary.

From the second half of the 19th century (1854) there is more interest in Mary. It is up to the second half of the 20th century (1950). This time of the length of one century is considered as Marian century. It is known for increasing amounts of work and articles published that had Mary as their topic. It will leave its marks on next period starting with Second Vatican council until present. The title could be seen as an end in the line of long development of thoughts on the motherly attitude of mother of Jesus towards members of the Church that was slowly making the way for the solemn proclamation by pope Paul VI in 1964.

⁹⁰ Radiomessage 7th National Marian Congress in France; AAS 53 (1961), 505.

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