

The Sword That Began in the Heart of Mary *Ended in the Heart of Jesus on Calvary*



It was decreed by God at the fall of our first parents, that as their children would have inherited graces and glory if his commands had been obeyed, so, because of their disobedience, their children were to inherit only sin and shame. This law is universal. Not even the greatest saints were exempt from it. Once, and once only, did God create a soul as pure and beautiful, at the moment of its conception, as it is now in heaven: a soul to which the Almighty could turn when weary of the deformity which sin had stamped upon mankind. It was the time when the fullness of years had come and it was decreed that the Son should leave the bosom of the Father and take flesh among men.

For centuries, God had not created a soul in grace. Yes, he had fashioned and sent them into the world, but they were in the power of the enemy before they left his Almighty hand. But now, for an instant, the old time was to come back again when God could look upon his work and say that it was 'good,' and that it did not repent him that he made it. And so, the Blessed Trinity fashioned and formed and sent into the world, the soul of Mary. And God admired his handy work, and the angels bowed down and paid homage to their Queen, and hell trembled at the conception of a woman who was destined to break the power of its prince.

(Professor Courtney Bartholomew, M.D., A SCIENTIST RESEARCHES MARY, MOTHER AND COREDEMPTRIX, 101 Foundation, Asbury, NJ, Page 10, quoting Rev. Leo Clifford on "The Mother of God" in his "Reflections" series.)

On September 8, the Roman Catholic Church celebrates the nativity of Mary--the most beautiful creature God has ever made--nine months after the solemnity of her Immaculate Conception. On September 12, we celebrate her most holy name, "**Mary**," stemming from the Hebrew **Miriam**, which means "**beloved of God**," or "**exalted one**." Why is this woman so beloved of God and so exalted by Him?



Maria Bambino

To answer, we must ponder the question: had there been no sin, would there have been an Incarnation, a Redeemer, a Mary? Dr. Bartholomew quotes Fr. Martindale, S.J. in the **Canadian Messenger**, May, 1941:

I hold that, even had sin not been sinned, the Incarnation would have taken place, so that in every possible way communion between man and God might be established. Imagine saying that because there had been no sin, *therefore* there would be no Jesus, no Blessed Sacrament, no Mary! But given that the Incarnation—the birth of the Son of God from a human mother—was eternally decreed, then in God's mind that mother was immaculate, that is, filled with grace, the supernatural life, from the first moment of her existence. The Immaculate Conception, then, is no disconcerting, edge-ways-on privilege. It simply means that Mary was exactly what God always intended that she should be.

But--there was sin, and sin came into the world through a man and a woman, so it is fitting that redemption, too, should come into the world through a man and a woman. Eve

was the **peccatrix**, the sinner, who seduced Adam, the **co-peccator**, co-sinner, and so the New Adam and the New Eve become the **Redemptor** and the **Co-redemptrix** to undo the evil Adam and Eve had done. Jesus is the only Redeemer and Mediator between man and God, but Mary, His Queen Mother, with all the authority of the Queen at the right hand of the king, prefigured in the Hebrew Testament, shares in His redeeming work as Co-redemptrix and Mediatrix of His grace. The Queen Mother always intercedes for the people with the King. The sacrifice of the unblemished Lamb of God on the cross on the hill of Calvary is the most perfect and complete act of love throughout the history of the world. And standing beneath that cross on that same hill stood His Mother, whose own heart was crucified as surely as was His Body, with a love second only to her Son's. In the message of Our Lady of America, Our Lady calls herself "**Co-redemptrix**" and "**the channel through which the graces of the Sacred Heart are given to men,**" the **Mediatrix of His grace**. Recent public statements by some in high places in the Church regarding Mary as Co-redemptrix have left many puzzled. As we celebrate the feast of the Sorrows of Mary on September 15th it is fitting to understand that those sorrows are all shaped by her role of co-operation, maternal mediation, and collaboration in her Divine Son's work of redemption.

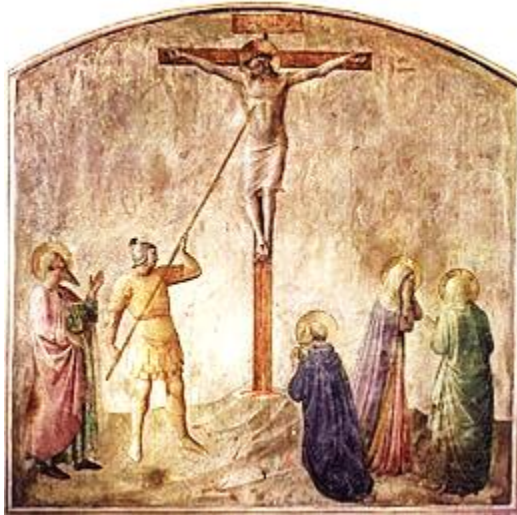


Some years ago, a number of cardinals and bishops petitioned Rome to declare Mary as Co-redemptrix a dogma of faith. ***The response was, it was not necessary as this was already clearly a doctrine dating back to the early days of the Church.*** The term "**Co-redemptrix**" was first used by St. Pius X in 1908, and by Pope Pius XI in 1933. As Rev. Francis P. Filice said: "**The proclamation of the Marian Dogma as Co-redemptrix would not make Mary Co-redemptrix, but would only express a reality that already exists.**" **But isn't this what every dogma does?** Mary is not part of the Trinity; she is not divine nor equal to Jesus. Like Eve was to Adam, she is a helpmate to Jesus; her role was not parallel but subordinate, collaborative, cooperative. No mere human person could be the Redeemer, for as St. Thomas Aquinas explains, the Redeemer must be infinite (God) to satisfy divine justice for the offense committed against the infinite God, and must also be human (man), to make atonement on behalf of humankind who sinned against God in the person of Adam. Mary, no matter how intimate her share in Christ's redeeming work, is not and cannot be both human and divine. Her role in no way threatens our understanding of Jesus as the only Mediator with the Father, the God-man, the only Savior of the world. But, by an eternally ordained decree of God Himself, Mary gave Jesus His Body and Blood by which to redeem us. It is this same Body and Blood, received from her but now glorified, which we receive in Holy Communion. According to Dr. Bartholomew, page 15, the whole work of redemption depended on Mary's free will, "**because God Himself willed it to be conditioned by her consent. In that sense redemption in its entirety is her cooperative work also, and for that reason alone she deserves to be called Co-redemptrix.**"

Christ could have redeemed us on His own, but He chose otherwise. Mary could never have redeemed us on her own. Her role was secondary and subordinate, yet, as

some would say, a highly favored maternal mediation as seen in Christ's first miracle performed at the wedding feast of Cana at the behest of His Mother. "Co" does not mean co-equal but co-operating with, much as a co-pilot is subordinate to the pilot himself but is so necessary for the safety of the passengers on any flight. Don't travel without one!

After finding Jesus in the temple, Mary recedes into the background. She is not evident on Palm Sunday, not at Tabor, but shows up dramatically on Jesus' sorrowful Way of the Cross. That was her place; it was near the spot where Abraham was ordered to immolate his son Isaac, but was spared the sacrifice, as was his wife Sarah.



But God did not spare the sorrowful agony of His own Mother. No angel held back the hand as in the case of Isaac. A lance pierced her Son's heart and a sword pierced hers. It was the ultimate sacrifice—a Man on the Cross and beneath it, the mother stood. *Stabat mater dolorosa*. And if there were a thousand mothers standing at the feet of a thousand crosses bearing their thousand crucified sons, the sum total of their anguish could not measure the sorrow of that woman on that hill on that Friday that some men call "Good." That was the price of being *Co-redemptrix*. (Bartholomew, Page 16.)

The mystic, Maria Valtorta, tells how Jesus appeared first to His Mother after His resurrection, promising never to leave her alone again, noting that for the past three days she had been very alone and buried in her grief, because...

...that sorrow of yours was required for the Redemption. Much is continuously to be added to the redemption because much will be continuously created in the way of sin. I will call all my servants to this redeeming participation, but you are the one who, by yourself, will do more than all the others together. (Bartholomew, Page 17.)

Our dear Mother has favored her children in America with her appearance as Our Lady of America, the Immaculate Virgin, to show her gratitude for our devotion to her as Patroness of our land, and to ask us to help her save those who will not save themselves. Can we hear her cries? Can we feel the sword cutting through her heart? Are we listening to her warnings, her pleadings for our co-operation with her in union with her Son's work for our salvation? Will we say "yes" to Our Lady and pray and do penance so the agony of her Son and her own agony will not have been in vain? We must plead the Blood of Jesus upon our world, our Church, our Nation, our families, all peoples! We must plead with heaven for true and lasting peace, the kind Jesus brought with Him from heaven!

Behold, O my children, the tears of your Mother! Shall I weep in vain? Assuage the sorrow of my Heart over the ingratitude of sinful men by the love and chasteness of your lives. Will you do this for me, beloved children, or will you allow your Mother to weep in vain?

(Sister Mildred (Mary Ephrem) Neuzil, The Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA, Tiffin, Ohio, Page 12.)

Behold, my small one, so tenderly loved by your Mother, behold then my Heart pierced by a cruel sword. Oh, what grief my children have caused me! (The Diary, Page 19.)

See, I weep, but my children show me no compassion. They behold the sword in my heart but will make no move to withdraw it. I give them love; they give me only ingratitude. Weep, then, dear child, weep with your Mother over the sins of men. Intercede with me before the throne of mercy, for sin is overwhelming the world and punishment is not far away. (The Diary, Page 34.)

Pray and do penance, my sweet child that this may come to pass. Trust me and love me; I so desire it. Do not forget your poor Mother, who weeps over the loss of so many of her children. ...Help me save those who will not save themselves. (The Diary, Page 15.)

My child, nothing is accomplished without pain. Prepare to suffer much. You see the sword in the Heart of your Mother. Suffering completed the work of divine grace in my soul. He who refuses to suffer will never abide in the Spirit of Christ, will never be formed into His image. (The Diary, Page 23.)

The Seven Sorrows of Mary

1. Prophecy of Simeon.
2. Flight into Egypt.
3. Loss of the Child Jesus in the Temple.
4. Meeting Jesus along the Way of the Cross.
5. Crucifixion of Jesus.
6. Descent from the Cross; Mary receives the dead body of Jesus in her arms.
7. Burial of Jesus.

“Love draws all the pains, torments, sufferings, sorrows & wounds of the passion, cross and even the death of our Redeemer into the heart of his most holy Mother.”

-St. Francis de Sales

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Without doubt, Jesus Christ could have abolished pain at a single stroke, and, by virtue of the infinite grace of the Redemption, restored man to the state of complete, unmixed bliss that he enjoyed in the paradise of innocence. He did not so wish. He judged that, for some, suffering would be a source of merit, a gain, a source of glory, and a means of renewal and triumph; that, for the greater number, it would be a necessary expiation. He therefore maintained suffering, but purified, ennobled, and transfigured it by taking it upon Himself. He became the man of sorrows, *virum dolorum*, in the strict and absolute sense of these words." — Dr. Bartholomew quoting Fr. Charles Arminjon.

Let us pray daily during September one Hail Mary while meditating on each of the Seven Sorrows of Our Lady!

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In honor of Our Lady's birth, her Holy Name, her Sorrows!...and her role as Co-redemptrix in God's plan for our salvation!