

***Lumen Gentium***  
**The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church**  
**(21 Nov 1964)**

**Question 4: Where is the Church?**

**Answer 1: On pilgrimage whilst on Earth, she is in communion  
her with members in Purgatory and those 'at home' in Heaven**

*“O blest communion, fellowship divine!  
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine,  
Yet all are one in Thee for all are Thine!”*  
(Hymn: For all the Saints)

*“Grace is glory in exile.  
Glory is grace at home”*  
(John Henry Cardinal Newman)

**CHAPTER VII THE ESCHATOLOGICAL NATURE OF THE PILGRIM CHURCH  
AND ITS UNION WITH THE CHURCH IN HEAVEN**

**#48-51**

- In the one Body of Christ, there is a unity of life between all her members
- This aspect of her as a mystery of communion (LG 1) will last eternally
- ‘The People of God’ will only be perfectly ‘the Body of Christ’ in the glory of Heaven
- We assist those on earth by our charity
- By the same charity we pray for those in the happy, purifying state of Purgatory
- We ourselves are strengthened and encouraged by the charity of those in glory

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**48.** The Church, to which we are **all called in Christ Jesus**, and in which we acquire sanctity through **the grace** of God, **will attain its full perfection only in the glory of heaven**, when there will come **the time of the restoration of all things**. At that time the **human race as well as the entire world...** will be perfectly re-established in Christ.

**Christ, having been lifted up from the earth has drawn all to Himself.** Rising from the dead, He sent His life-giving Spirit upon His disciples and through Him has established His Body which is the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation....

Already the final age of the world has come upon us and the renovation of the world is irrevocably decreed and is already anticipated in some kind of a real way; for the Church already on this earth is signed with a sanctity which is real although imperfect. However, until there shall be new heavens and a new earth in which justice dwells, the pilgrim Church in her sacraments and institutions has the appearance of this world which is passing and she herself dwells among creatures who groan and travail in pain until now and await the revelation of the sons of God.

Joined with Christ in the Church and signed with the Holy Spirit “who is the pledge of our inheritance”, truly we are called and we are sons of God but we have not yet appeared with Christ in glory, in which we shall be like to God, since we shall see Him as He is....

Since however we know not the day nor the hour, on Our Lord’s advice we must be constantly vigilant so that, having finished the course of our earthly life, we may merit to enter into the marriage feast with Him and to be numbered among the blessed and that we may not be ordered to go into eternal fire like the wicked and slothful servant, into the exterior darkness where “*there will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth*”. For before we reign with Christ in glory, all of us will be made manifest “*before the tribunal of Christ, so that each one may receive what he has won through the body, according to his works, whether good or evil*” and at the end of the world “*they who have done good shall come forth unto*

*resurrection of life; but those who have done evil unto resurrection of judgment". Reckoning therefore that "the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that will be revealed in us", strong in faith we look for the "blessed hope and the glorious coming of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ" "who will refashion the body of our lowliness, conforming it to the body of His glory, and who will come to be glorified in His saints and to be marvelled at in all those who have believed".*

- 49. Until the Lord shall come in His majesty, and all the angels with Him and death being destroyed, all things are subject to Him, some of His disciples are exiles on earth, some having died are purified, and others are in glory beholding "clearly God Himself triune and one, as He is"; but all in various ways and degrees are in communion in the same charity of God and neighbour and all sing the same hymn of glory to our God. For all who are in Christ, having His Spirit, form one Church and cleave together in Him.**

Therefore, the union of the wayfarers with the brethren who have gone to sleep in the peace of Christ is not in the least weakened or interrupted, but on the contrary, according to the perpetual faith of the Church, is strengthened by communication of spiritual goods. For by reason of the fact that those in heaven are more closely united with Christ, they establish the whole Church more firmly in holiness, lend nobility to the worship which the Church offers to God here on earth and in many ways contribute to its greater edification. For after they have been received into their heavenly home and are present to the Lord, through Him and with Him and in Him they do not cease to intercede with the Father for us, showing forth the merits which they won on earth through the one Mediator between God and man, serving God in all things and filling up in their flesh those things which are lacking of the sufferings of Christ for His Body which is the Church. Thus, by their brotherly interest our weakness is greatly strengthened.

- 50. Fully conscious of this communion of the whole Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the pilgrim Church from the very first ages of the Christian religion has cultivated with great piety the memory of the dead, and "because it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins", also offers suffrages for them. The Church has always believed that the apostles and Christ's martyrs who had given the supreme witness of faith and charity by the shedding of their blood, are closely joined with us in Christ, and she has always venerated them with special devotion, together with the Blessed Virgin Mary and the holy angels. The Church has piously implored the aid of their intercession. To these were soon added also those who had more closely imitated Christ's virginity and poverty, and finally others whom the outstanding practice of the Christian virtues and the divine charisms recommended to the pious devotion and imitation of the faithful.**

When we look at the lives of those who have faithfully followed Christ, we are inspired with a new reason for seeking the City that is to come and at the same time we are shown a most safe path by which among the vicissitudes of this world, in keeping with the state in life and condition proper to each of us, we will be able to arrive at perfect union with Christ, that is, perfect holiness. In the lives of those who, sharing in our humanity, are however more perfectly transformed into the image of Christ, God vividly manifests His presence and His face to men. **He speaks to us in them, and gives us a sign of His Kingdom, to which we are strongly drawn, having so great a cloud of witnesses over us and such a witness to the truth of the Gospel.**

Nor is it by the title of example only that we cherish the memory of those in heaven, but still more in order that **the union of the whole Church may be strengthened in the Spirit by the practice of fraternal charity.** For just as Christian communion among wayfarers brings us closer to Christ, so our companionship with the saints joins us to Christ, from Whom as from its Fountain and Head issues every grace and the very life of the people of God. It is supremely fitting, therefore, that we love those friends and coheirs of Jesus Christ, who are also our brothers and extraordinary benefactors, that we render due thanks to God for them and "suppliantly invoke them and have recourse to their prayers, their power and help in obtaining benefits from God through His Son, Jesus Christ, who is our Redeemer and Saviour." **For every genuine testimony of love shown by us to those in heaven, by its very nature tends toward and terminates in Christ who is the "crown of all saints," and through Him, in God Who is wonderful in his saints and is magnified in them.**

Our union with the Church in heaven is put into effect in its noblest manner especially in the sacred Liturgy, wherein the power of the Holy Spirit acts upon us through sacramental signs. Then, with combined rejoicing we celebrate together the praise of the divine majesty; then all those from every tribe and tongue and people and nation who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and gathered together into one Church, with one song of praise magnify the one and triune God. Celebrating the Eucharistic sacrifice therefore, we are most closely united to the Church in heaven in communion with and venerating the memory first of all of the glorious ever-Virgin Mary, of Blessed Joseph and the blessed apostles and martyrs and of all the saints.

51. This Sacred Council accepts with great devotion this venerable faith of our ancestors regarding this vital **fellowship with our brethren who are in heavenly glory or who having died are still being purified; and it proposes again the decrees of the Second Council of Nicaea, the Council of Florence and the Council of Trent.** And at the same time, in conformity with our own pastoral interests, we urge all concerned, if any abuses, excesses or defects have crept in here or there, to do what is in their power to remove or correct them, and to restore all things to a fuller praise of Christ and of God. Let them therefore teach the faithful that the authentic cult of the saints consists not so much in the multiplying of external acts, but rather in the greater intensity of our love, whereby, for our own greater good and that of the whole Church, we seek from the saints “example in their way of life, fellowship in their communion, and aid by their intercession.” On the other hand, let them teach the faithful that our communion with those in heaven, provided that it is understood in the fuller light of faith according to its genuine nature, in no way weakens, but conversely, more thoroughly enriches the laetitic (i.e. reverent, adoring) worship we give to God the Father, through Christ, in the Spirit.

For all of us, who...  
**constitute one family in Christ,**  
as long as **we remain in communion with one another in mutual charity**  
**and in one praise of the most holy Trinity,**  
are corresponding with **the intimate vocation of the Church**  
and **partaking in foretaste the liturgy of consummate glory.**

For when Christ shall appear and the glorious resurrection of the dead will take place,  
**the glory of God will light up the heavenly City and the Lamb will be its lamp.**

**Then the whole Church of the saints**  
**in the supreme happiness of charity**  
**will adore God and “the Lamb who was slain”,**  
**proclaiming with one voice:**

***“To Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb blessing,  
and honour, and glory, and dominion forever and ever”.***

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Question 4 Where is the Church?

Answer 2: The Church is already all she is called to be  
in the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God

*“Maiden yet a mother, daughter of thy Son,  
high beyond all other, lowlier is none;  
thou the consummation planned by God’s decree,  
when our lost creation nobler rose in thee!”*

(Dante Alighieri 1321.  
Translated by Ronald Knox)

CHAPTER VIII THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF GOD,  
IN THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

#52-69

- Whilst the Church on earth continues her pilgrimage,
- there is one who goes ahead of her in whom the triumph of Christ is already complete.
- Mary, the Mother of Christ, entirely one with ‘the Person and Work of her Son’,
- is also his most faithful disciple:
- Member, model, and Mother of the Church, she a sure sign of hope
- until the Father’s plan of love is fulfilled in the members of the Church as it already is in her.

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I. INTRODUCTION

52. Wishing in His supreme goodness and wisdom to effect (bring about) the redemption of the world,  
*“when the fullness of time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Scripture Gal 4:4).*

*“For us men, and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit from the Virgin Mary” (The Creed).*

This **divine mystery of salvation** is revealed to us and continued in the Church, which the Lord established as His body. Joined to Christ the Head and in the unity of fellowship with all His saints, the faithful must in the first place reverence the memory *“of the glorious ever **Virgin Mary, Mother of our God and Lord Jesus Christ**” (The Liturgy).*

53. The Virgin Mary, who at the message of the angel, received the Word of God in her heart and in her body and gave Life to the world, is acknowledged and honoured as being truly the **Mother of God and Mother of the Redeemer**.

Redeemed by reason of the merits of her Son and united to Him by a close and indissoluble tie, she is endowed with the high office and dignity of being:

the **Mother of the Son of God**, by which account she is also  
**the beloved daughter of the Father** and  
**the temple of the Holy Spirit**.

- a. Because of this gift of sublime grace, she **far surpasses all creatures**, both in heaven and on earth.
- b. At the same time, however, **because she belongs to the offspring of Adam**  
she is **one with all those who are to be saved**.  
She is *“the mother of the members of Christ...  
having cooperated by charity that faithful might be born in the Church,  
who are members of that Head” (St Augustine).*
- c. Wherefore she is **hailed as a pre-eminent and singular member of the Church**, and as **its type and excellent exemplar** in faith and charity. The Catholic Church, **taught by the Holy Spirit**, honours her with filial affection and piety as a most beloved mother.

54. Wherefore this Holy Synod, in expounding the doctrine on the Church, in which the divine Redeemer works salvation, intends to describe with diligence both
- the role of the Blessed Virgin in the mystery of the Incarnate Word and the Mystical Body,
  - and the duties of redeemed mankind toward the Mother of God,  
who is mother of Christ and mother of men, particularly of the faithful.

It does not, however, have it in mind

- to give a complete doctrine on Mary,
- nor does it wish to decide those questions  
which the work of theologians has not yet fully clarified.

Those opinions therefore may be lawfully retained which are propounded in Catholic schools concerning her, **who occupies a place in the Church which is the highest after Christ and yet very close to us<sup>11</sup>.**

## II. THE ROLE OF THE BLESSED MOTHER IN THE ECONOMY (PLAN) OF SALVATION

55. The Sacred Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament, as well as ancient Tradition show the role of the Mother of the Saviour in the economy of salvation in an ever clearer light and draw attention to it.

The **books of the Old Testament** describe the history of salvation, by which the coming of Christ into the world was slowly prepared. These earliest documents, as they are read in the Church and are understood in the light of a further and full revelation, **bring the figure of the woman, Mother of the Redeemer, into a gradually clearer light.**

- When it is looked at in this way, she is already prophetically **foreshadowed in the promise of victory** over the serpent which was given to our first parents after their fall into sin.
- Likewise, she is **the Virgin who shall conceive and bear a son**, whose name will be called Emmanuel.
- She stands out **among the poor and humble of the Lord**, who confidently hope for and receive salvation from Him.
- With her the **exalted Daughter of Zion**, and after a long expectation of the promise, **the times are fulfilled and the new Economy established**, when **the Son of God took a human nature from her**, that He might **in the mysteries of His flesh free man from sin.**

56. The Father of mercies willed that **the incarnation should be preceded by the acceptance of her who was predestined to be the mother of His Son**, so that just as a woman contributed to death, so also a woman should contribute to life. That is true in outstanding fashion of **the mother of Jesus**, who gave to the world Him who is Life itself and who renews all things, and who was enriched by God with the gifts which befit such a role.

It is no wonder therefore that the usage prevailed among the Fathers **whereby they called the mother of God entirely holy and free from all stain of sin**, as though **fashioned by the Holy Spirit and formed as a new creature.**

Adorned from the **first instant of her conception<sup>12</sup>** with **the radiance of an entirely unique holiness**, the Virgin of Nazareth is greeted, on God's command, by an angel messenger as **"full of grace"**, and to the heavenly messenger she replies: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word".

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Ineffabilis Deus* Pope Pius IX, 1854 in which he affirmed that the Church had always believed that Mary was conceived without sin by the merits of her Son's Passion and Death.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid*

Thus Mary, a daughter of Adam, consenting to the divine Word, became the **mother of Jesus**, the one and only Mediator.

**Embracing God's salvific will with a full heart and impeded by no sin, she devoted herself totally as a handmaid of the Lord TO THE PERSON AND WORK OF HER SON, under Him and with Him, by the grace of almighty God, SERVING THE MYSTERY OF REDEMPTION.**

Rightly therefore the holy Fathers<sup>13</sup> see her as used by God not merely in a passive way, but as **freely cooperating in the work of human salvation through faith and obedience**.

For, as **St. Irenaeus** says, she ***"being obedient, became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race"***.

Hence not a few of the early Fathers gladly assert in their preaching,

***"The knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience; what the virgin Eve bound through her unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosened by her faith."***

Comparing Mary with Eve, they call her ***"the Mother of the living,"*** and still more often they say: ***"death through Eve, life through Mary."***

**57. This union of the Mother with the Son in the work of salvation** is made manifest from the time of Christ's virginal conception up to His death. It is shown:

- first of all, when Mary, arising in haste to go to visit Elizabeth,
- is greeted by her as blessed because of her belief in the promise of salvation
- and the precursor leaped with joy in the womb of his mother.
- **This union is manifest also at the birth of Our Lord, who did not diminish His mother's virginal integrity but sanctified it,**
- when the Mother of God joyfully showed her firstborn Son to the shepherds and Magi.
- When she presented Him to the Lord in the temple, making the offering of the poor, she heard Simeon foretelling at the same time that her Son would be a sign of contradiction and that a sword would pierce the mother's soul, that out of many hearts thoughts might be revealed. When the Child Jesus was lost and they had sought Him sorrowing, His parents found Him in the temple, taken up with the things that were His Father's business; and they did not understand the word of their Son.

**His Mother indeed kept these things to be pondered over in her heart.**

**58. In the public life of Jesus, Mary makes significant appearances.**

This is so even at the very beginning, when at the marriage feast of Cana, moved with pity, she brought about by her intercession the beginning of miracles of Jesus the Messiah.

In the course of her Son's preaching, she received the words whereby in extolling a kingdom beyond the calculations and bonds of flesh and blood, He declared **"blessed those who heard and kept the word of God"**, as she was faithfully doing.

After this manner the Blessed Virgin **advanced in her pilgrimage of faith**,

and **FAITHFULLY PERSEVERED IN HER UNION WITH HER SON UNTO THE CROSS**,

where she stood, in keeping with the divine plan, grieving exceedingly with her only begotten Son, uniting herself with a maternal heart with His sacrifice,

and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this Victim which she herself had brought forth.

Finally, she was given by the same Christ Jesus dying on the cross **as a mother to His disciple** with these words: ***"Woman, behold thy son"***.

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<sup>13</sup> Sts. Irenaeus; Augustine; Epiphanius; Cyril of Jerusalem; John Chrysostom; John Damascus; Ambrose...

59. But since it has pleased God not to manifest solemnly the mystery of the salvation of the human race before He would pour forth the Spirit promised by Christ, **we see the apostles before the day of Pentecost** “*persevering with one mind in prayer with the women and Mary the Mother of Jesus, and with His brethren*”, and **Mary by her prayers imploring the gift of the Spirit, who had already overshadowed her in the Annunciation.** Finally, the Immaculate Virgin, **preserved free from all guilt of original sin, on the completion of her earthly sojourn, was taken up/assumed body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen of the universe, that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and the conqueror of sin and death.**

### III. ON THE BLESSED VIRGIN AND THE CHURCH

60. There is but one Mediator as we know from the words of the apostle, “for there is one God and one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a redemption for all”.

The maternal duty of Mary toward us in no wise obscures or diminishes this unique mediation of Christ, but rather shows His power. For all the salvific influence of the Blessed Virgin originates, not from some inner necessity, but from the divine pleasure.

**It flows forth from the superabundance of the merits of Christ, rests on His mediation, depends entirely on it and draws all its power from it. In no way does it impede, but rather does it foster the immediate union of the faithful with Christ.**

61. Predestined from eternity **by that decree of divine providence which determined the incarnation of the Word** to be the **MOTHER OF GOD**, the Blessed Virgin was in this earth the **virgin Mother of the Redeemer**, and above all others and in a singular way the **generous associate and humble handmaid of the Lord.**

- She conceived, brought forth and nourished Christ.
- She presented Him to the Father in the temple,
- and was united with Him by compassion as He died on the Cross.
- In this singular way she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in the work of the Saviour in giving back supernatural life to souls.

**Wherefore she is our mother in the order of grace.**

62. This **maternity of Mary in the order of grace**

- **began with the consent which she gave** in faith at the Annunciation
- which she **sustained without wavering beneath the cross,**
- **lasts until the eternal fulfilment of all the elect.**

Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this salvific duty,

but by her constant intercession continued to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation.

By her maternal charity, she cares for the brethren of her Son, who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led into the happiness of their true home.

Therefore, the Blessed Virgin is invoked by the Church under the titles of **Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix, and Mediatrix.** This, however, is to be so understood that it neither takes away from nor adds anything to the dignity and efficaciousness of Christ the one Mediator.

For no creature could ever be counted as equal with the Incarnate Word and Redeemer.

Just **as the priesthood of Christ is shared in various ways both by the ministers and by the faithful, and as the one goodness of God is really communicated in different ways to His creatures, so also, the unique mediation of the Redeemer does not exclude but rather gives rise to a manifold cooperation which is but a sharing in this one source (Paul to Timothy, 2Tim 2:5-7).**

The Church does not hesitate to profess this subordinate role of Mary. It knows it through unfailing experience of it and commends it to the hearts of the faithful, so that encouraged by this maternal help they may the more intimately adhere to the Mediator and Redeemer.

63. By reason of the **gift and role of divine maternity**, by which she is united with her Son, the Redeemer, and with His singular graces and functions, the Blessed Virgin is **also intimately united with the Church**.

As St. Ambrose taught, **the Mother of God is a type of the Church** in the order of faith, charity and perfect union with Christ.

For in the mystery of the Church, which is itself rightly called **mother and virgin**, the Blessed Virgin stands out in **eminent and singular fashion as exemplar both of virgin and mother**.

By her **belief and obedience**, not knowing man but overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, **as the new Eve** she brought forth on earth **the very Son of the Father**, showing an undefiled faith, not in the word of the ancient serpent, but in that of God's messenger.

The Son whom she brought forth is He whom God placed as the first-born among many brethren, namely the faithful, **in whose birth and education she cooperates with a maternal love**<sup>15</sup>.

64. **The Church** indeed, contemplating her hidden sanctity, imitating her charity and faithfully fulfilling the Father's will, by receiving the word of God in faith becomes herself a mother.

By her preaching she brings forth to a new and immortal life the sons who are born to her in baptism, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of God.

**She herself is a virgin**, who keeps the faith given to her by her Spouse whole and entire. imitating the mother of her Lord, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, she keeps with virginal purity an entire faith, a firm hope and a sincere charity.

65. But while **in the most holy Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she is without spot or wrinkle**, the followers of Christ still strive to increase in holiness by conquering sin.

And so they turn their eyes to Mary who shines forth to the whole community of the elect as the model of virtues.

Piously meditating on her and contemplating her in the light of the Word made man, the Church with reverence enters more intimately into the great mystery of the Incarnation and becomes more and more like her Spouse. For **Mary**, who since her entry into salvation history unites in herself and re-echoes the greatest teachings of the faith as she is proclaimed and venerated, calls the faithful to her Son and His sacrifice and to the love of the Father.

Seeking after the glory of Christ, **the Church** becomes more like her exalted Type, and continually progresses in faith, hope and charity, seeking and doing the will of God in all things.

Hence **the Church**, in her apostolic work also, justly **looks to (Mary)**, who, conceived of the Holy Spirit, **brought forth Christ**, who was born of the Virgin that through the Church He may be born and may increase in the hearts of the faithful also.

The Virgin in her own life **lived an example of that maternal love**, by which it behoves that all should be animated who cooperate in the apostolic mission of the Church for the regeneration of all.

#### IV. THE CULT OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN IN THE CHURCH

66. Placed **by the grace of God, as God's Mother, next to her Son**, and exalted above all angels and men, Mary intervened in the mysteries of Christ and is justly honoured by a special cult in the Church.

Clearly from earliest times the Blessed Virgin is **honoured under the title of Mother of God**, under whose protection the faithful took refuge in all their dangers and necessities. Hence after the **Synod of Ephesus**<sup>16</sup> the cult of God's people toward Mary wonderfully increased in veneration and love, in invocation and imitation, according to her own prophetic words: *"All generations shall call me blessed, because He that is mighty hath done great things to me"*.

This cult, as it always existed ... differs essentially from the cult of adoration which is offered to the Incarnate Word, as well to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and it is most favourable to it.

The various forms of piety toward the **Mother of God**, which the Church

- within the limits of sound and orthodox doctrine,
- according to the conditions of time and place, and
- the nature and ingenuity of the faithful has approved,

bring it about that

**while the Mother is honoured,  
the Son, through whom all things have their being  
and in whom it has pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell,  
is rightly known, loved and glorified and that all His commands are observed.**

67. This most Holy Synod deliberately teaches this Catholic doctrine and at the same time admonishes all the sons of the Church that the cult, especially the liturgical cult, of the Blessed Virgin, be generously fostered, and the practices and exercises of piety, recommended by the magisterium of the Church toward her in the course of centuries be made of great moment, and those decrees, which have been given in the early days regarding the cult of images of Christ, the Blessed Virgin and the saints, be religiously observed<sup>17</sup>.

But, in considering the singular dignity of the Mother of God, it **exhorts theologians and preachers of the divine word to abstain zealously**

**both from all gross exaggerations**

**as well as from petty narrow-mindedness**

Following the study of Sacred Scripture, the Holy Fathers, the doctors and liturgy of the Church, and under the guidance of the Church's magisterium,

let them rightly illustrate the **duties and privileges of the Blessed Virgin which always look to Christ**, the source of all truth, sanctity and piety.

Let them assiduously keep away from whatever, either by word or deed, could lead separated brethren or any other into error regarding the true doctrine of the Church.

Let **the faithful remember** moreover that **true devotion consists**

**neither in sterile nor transitory affection, nor in a certain vain credulity,**

but **proceeds from true faith**, by which we are led to know **the excellence of the Mother of God**, and we are moved to a filial love toward our mother and to the imitation of her virtues.

<sup>16</sup> 431 Condemned teachings of Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who said Mary could only be called *Christotokos* (Christ-bearer), not *Theotokos* (God-bearer, Mother of God)

<sup>17</sup> See *Marialis Cultus* by Pope Paul VI, 1974, on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

V. **MARY THE SIGN OF TRUE HOPE AND COMFORT TO THE PILGRIM PEOPLE OF GOD**

68. In the interim,

**just as the Mother of Jesus**, glorified in body and soul in heaven,  
is **the image and beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected in the world to come**,  
so too does she shine forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come,  
as **a sign of sure hope and solace to the people of God during its sojourn on earth**.

69. It gives great joy and comfort to this holy and general Synod that even among the separated brethren there are some who give due honour to the Mother of our Lord and Saviour, especially among the **Oriental**s, who with devout mind and fervent impulse give honour to the Mother of God, ever virgin.

**The entire body of the faithful pours forth instant supplications  
to the Mother of God and Mother of men  
that she, who aided the beginnings of the Church by her prayers,  
may now, exalted as she is above all the angels and saints,  
intercede before her Son in the fellowship of all the saints,  
until all families of people,  
whether they are honoured with the title of Christian  
or whether they still do not know the Saviour,  
may be happily gathered together  
in peace and harmony into one people of God,  
for the glory of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity.**

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