

THE VIRGIN MARY AND THE SPLIT OF CHURCHES: A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Catholics believe that the Virgin Mary must be honoured. However, non-Catholics refuse to honour her; but they are proud of women like Ruth (1:16-17), Esther (4:14), the Shunammite woman (2 Kgs. 4:8-37), Deborah (Judges 4:5), Anna (Lk. 2:36-38), etc. Unfortunately, they do not want to mention the Virgin Mary, whose roles are also in the Bible (Matt. 1-2; Lk. 1:28-48). This work uses Historical Critical Method, that allows us to go beyond the New Testament text, and sees Mary as the *Gebirah* (Queen Mother). It combines this methodology with Progressive Hermeneutics, that is aimed at giving the Virgin Mary the honour due to her in our time; because the Word took flesh and dwelt in her womb (Jn. 1:14), without which we might not have the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ. This study found out that most of the Christians who dishonour the Virgin Mary, honour the wives of their pastors and female pastors. It recommends that the Virgin Mary should be honoured as the Mother of God (Acts 1:14). Secondly, she is full of grace. Finally, she is the only trinitarian woman in the New Testament (Lk. 1:28-39). It raises critical question. Why do you honour deaconesses but dishonour the Mother of God?

Keywords: Mary, Virgin, honour, pastors, woman, and church.

Introduction

One of the red lines in the Catholic faith is the honour given to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, which is called *Hyperdulia*. No one crosses this red tape without being shown the door. Starting from the era of Arius and Nestorius' *Christotokos* (Christ-

bearer) and not *Theotokos* (God-bearer)¹ to the yesteryears of the Watch Man Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement (WCCRM)² all those who tried to dishonour the Blessed Virgin Mary were thrown out. The fact is simple. Without the Virgin Mary, there could be no hypostatic union of Jesus in the form we had Him in history. May be there could have been other means to His coming, but if God chose the Virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit came upon her and she conceived the Son of God (Lk. 1:34-35), why do you call what God chose unholy (cf. Acts 10:13-15)? Those who dishonour the Virgin Mary cite Mk. 6:1-6 as their reason. But using Historical Critical Method and its combination with Progressive Hermeneutics, the authors go beyond what is written in the New Testament to what was in the Marcan Tradition. This study states aright some erroneous theories that call the Virgin Mary an envelope or orange peel and refer Catholics as idiots or stupid people.³ It follows the theory that maintains that the Virgin Mary was a virgin before, during, and after the birth of Christ.⁴ Their conclusion is that honour should be given to the Blessed Virgin Mary. If the Queen Mother is named after the son in the Old Testament (Gebirah), which is most probably the Marcan source, that is why Jesus is called the son of Mary (Mk. 6:3).

The methodology of this work is Historical Critical Method which is combined with Progressive Hermeneutics. The Historical Critical Method has the Synchronic and Diachronic aspects. We will analyze the original meaning of texts. The Synchronic Method analyses the languages of the text based on a particular time in history while the Diachronic Method looks at the analyses of the text at different periods in history. The Progressive Hermeneutics applies the meaning and use of the text at different times and traces same to the present realities of Christian living.

The aims and objectives of the work are to show how Christians are divided along the lines of those who honour the Virgin Mary and those who dishonour her. It tries also to show that the Mother of God cannot be a divisive figure, because the hypostatic union of Jesus is made possible in her womb (Jn. 1:14). Therefore, it is baseless to worship Christ and dishonour the Mother of Christ or to honour Christ the son of Mary (Mk. 6:3), but dishonour Mary, the Mother of Christ.

¹ Shaff, P. & Wace, H., (editors), 1996 [1890], A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, vol. VII, Eerdmans.

² About the ministry of the Watchman: <https://www.wccrmlagos.org/about/>, accessed, 02/04/2023. 10.05 am.

³ Benson Commentary. Luke 1:28. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/luke/1-28.htm>, accessed on 20/01/2023, 8:29am.

⁴ Bromiley, 1995, The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, p. 269.

The limit and scope of this work are on Mary, the Mother of Jesus (Matt. 1:16; 2:11; Acts 1:14), and not on any of the other Marys in the Bible such as: Mary the wife of Clopas (Jn. 19:25), Mary the sister of Lazarus and Martha (Lk. 10:39), Mary Magdalene (Matt. 27:56; Mk. 15:40; Jn. 19:25), Mary the mother of James the younger (Mk. 15:40), Mary the mother of John Mark (Acts 12:12), Mary of Rome (Rom. 16:6), etc. The main problem of this work is denominational interest. Many people do *eisegesis* (reading into the text) whenever they come to the issue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Most of those who criticize the Virgin Mary try to protect their Church by teaching what they are ignorant of. As the Scripture says, there are certain things “in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.” (2 Pt. 3:16b). One of such texts is Mk. 6:1-6, which is an honour given to Mary but turned into a dishonour by non-biblical experts.

The Brothers and Sisters of Jesus (Mk 6:1-6)

Mark calls his work, the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Mk. 1:1) and the son of Mary (6:3). By this, he states clearly his areas of interest. His concentration is on the life and ministry of Jesus, the Son of God and the son of Mary, whereby Mary is seen as the Queen Mother. Mark did not talk about the genealogy (Matt. 2), the angelic visitation (Lk. 1:28-48), etc., but Mark talks about the mother and the brothers and sisters of Jesus who were standing outside the assembly and desiring to see Him (Mk. 3:31-35). **However**, “the sinister purpose of the visit betrays itself in the fact that the brethren did not present themselves before Christ, but sent a messenger; although they could as easily have had access to His presence as their messenger could.”⁵ If this event took place in Capernaum, it is most probably that Jesus’ extended family members from Nazareth who heard what was happening in Capernaum, came to seize Him, to help their own relation by taking Him home. In this context, Mark wants to show that Jesus has extended family members who also cared for Him. But Jesus changes this to doing the will of God which becomes the real **criterion** for being a brother and sister of Christ. It is in Mark that Jesus introduces the eschatological family ties when He says that those who do the will of God are His mother and brothers and sisters. All those who will do the will of God are the new family

⁵ MacLaren’s Expositions. Mark 3:31-Mark 3:35. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/mark/3-31.htm>, accessed, 25/01/2023.

members of Jesus, because He has come to do not His own will but the will of the Father (Jn. 5:19).

Mark 6:1-6 takes up the issue of Jesus going home. Jesus taught in the synagogue and they began to ask: “Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us? And they took offense at him.” Mark calls Jesus the carpenter’s and “the son of God” (1:1). But in antithesis to the “son of a carpenter” (Matt. 13:15), he calls him the son of Mary (Mk. 6:3), which is a derogatory name in Jewish tradition and culture but not to the Gentile community that Mark wrote to.

Describing Jesus as the carpenter is an expression of the surprise that Jesus rose from the humble artisans’ class, which serves as a lowly beginning of the labourer’s son to being a teacher of the law and miracle worker. Thus, Jesus would reply, a prophet is without honour only in his own town and among his kins men and women (Mk. 6:4). Those dishonouring Him are His kinsmen and women. And **the fact that** they took offense at him shows He was not accepted among His kinsmen.

Marcan Priority

Mark being the first author of the Synoptic Gospel gives the names of the brothers and sisters of Jesus as well as calls Jesus the son of Mary, that is, the Queen Mother (Gebirah). He ignored Joseph completely. These dispositions of Mark (3:31-35; 6:1-6) serve as biblical background to the doubts and contentions of those who question the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The unfortunate thing about their hermeneutics is that it is eisegesis, reading into Marcan texts what Mark never intended. Mark names Mary alongside the son as it is the culture in the Old Testament where Queen Mothers are mentioned after the king. Examples are the cases of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon and the name of his mother is Naamah (1 Kgs. 14:21); Asa was the king of Judah and the mother’s name is Maacah (15:9-10). Furthermore, Mark wrote to the Gentiles who have no problem with the expression, son of Mary.

Mark was fully interested in the Jesus’ Event, His miraculous power and His healing ministry, etc., which are called *Marcan Priority*.⁶ Mark has no interest on the genealogy, incarnation, roles of the angel, and Joseph. **But** he calls Mary the Queen Mother. He went

⁶ Funk, 1993, Roy W. Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, 1-30.

straight to the Gospel of the Son of God, the baptism of Jesus, the call of the disciples, the exorcism of the unclean spirit, the healing of many at Simon's house, healing of the leper and the paralytic, etc. (Mk. 1:1-12). When Matthew comes to write to his fellow Jews, he knows the implications of Jesus without the family history. Hence, he gives the genealogy of Jesus and locates His family history in the Dynasty of David. He accords Joseph an honourable position as the carpenter and Jesus as **the** carpenter's son (Matt. 1-2). When Luke comes, he begins with the angelic visitation, the Marian visit to Elizabeth and the public announcement of the presence of God amongst men and women of good will. Luke idolizes Mary and gives her an honour above all women (Lk. 1). When these three evangelical positions are pieced together, one cannot but see the synchronic and diachronic aspects of the evangelists, which count for the reason while they are called Synoptic Gospel. Mark started with a particular period, and wrote to the Gentiles who have no problem with Jesus, the son of Mary (6:3). Matthew continued it within the Jewish custom (1-2) and Luke followed them, but not without critical examination of their works (Lk. 1:1-4). Each author tries to complement the human elements of other authors and to position the Gospel of Jesus Christ in such a way that the Christian community to whom they wrote to will accept the Jesus' Event in the same way the hagiographers wanted them.

The Q-Source

The **Q Source** comes from the German word **Quelle (Source)**. The **Q Source** material simply means those **hypothetical** written collections of the primary sayings (*logia*) of Jesus. Those teachings of Jesus that are found in Matthew and Luke but are not found in Mark can be explained through the **Q Source**. This means that Matthew and Luke went outside Mark's source to dig deep into what was in the Oral Tradition, Hebrew Bible and the secular world that were not recorded by Mark.⁷ Matthew and Luke wrote independently and at different locations but they made use of Mark as a common Source but apart from Mark, they also used other sources.⁸ The Matthew's source is called **M Source** while the Lukan source is called **L Source**. Luke's source is closer to the original *koine Greek*, also known as Hellenistic Greek, Biblical Greek or New Testament Greek.⁹

⁷ Horsely & Draper, 1999, *Whoever hears You Hears Me: Prophets, Performance, and Tradition in Q*, 74.

⁸ Onwukeme, 2021, *Introducing Exegesis*, 27.

⁹ Mournet, 2005, *Oral Tradition and Literary Dependency. Variability and Stability in the Synoptic Tradition and Q.*, 54-99.

It simply means that Mark wrote his Gospel with his own interests in view, mentioning the dynamic and exorcist works of Jesus the Son of God and the son of Mary, the Queen Mother. Matthew complements him, follows him, but joined his other source materials and his personal views. Finally, Luke having examined what Mark, Matthew and others wrote, wanted to make the message of Jesus Christ clearer to most excellent Theophilus (Lk 1:1-4). This means that the Synoptic Gospel complement each other and should not be cited independently as if they are not correlated. “The Bible is the result of collective efforts and the historical growth of these efforts. It would therefore be unfair to treat the Bible as if it were the work of a single author in a particular age.”¹⁰ At the same time, they should not be read as if they were written by a single author called Jesus Christ. “Although the New Testament narrates stories about the life of Jesus, Jesus did not personally compose any of the books of the New Testament.”¹¹ The New Testament is made up of twenty-seven (27) books with individual authors and God inspired them at different points in time, at different locations, for different Christian communities and for different reasons, but all for the spreading of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus.

Mark talks about Mary the Queen Mother (Gebirah). The foster father of Jesus that is not an issue in Mark’s Gospel is given a pride of place by Matthew who brings in the role of the foster father and that of the angel, the visitation and conception are taken care of by Luke. These resolve by themselves the problem of the brothers and sisters of Jesus, because the Bible is not a doctorate thesis or an autobiography of Jesus, but a collection of books from different Traditions and Sources written by different authors, at different times, for the need of the faith communities at different locations.

Mary, the Mother of my Lord (Lk. 1:43)

The Scripture says, “Who am I that the mother of my Lord should visit me.” (Lk. 1:43). The emphasis is on: “*ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ Κυρίου μου πρὸς ἐμέ*” (the mother of my Lord, to me). These are the words of Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. **Notably**, “on Mary’s arrival, Elisabeth was conscious of the approach of her who was to be the mother of the great Redeemer. At the same time, she was filled with the Holy Ghost, and under his influence declared that Mary and her expected child were most blessed and happy, as peculiarly

¹⁰ Onwukeme, 2021, Introducing Exegesis, 27.

¹¹ Umoren, 2016, How the Bible came to be, 9.

honoured of and dear to the Most High God.”¹² Elizabeth speaks of “the mother of my Lord, to me.” This expression needs further explanation. So, “the word ‘Lord’ sometimes denotes ‘divinity,’ and sometimes superior, master, teacher, or governor. It was given by the Jews to their expected Messiah.”¹³ The one who is the mother of the King (the Queen Mother, *Gebirah*) is given a place of honour in every society. The mother of the governor is given a great deal of honour. The wives of pastors and the overseers are given honorary positions in their churches. Some of their members even call them “our mummy.” The Blessed Virgin Mary being the Mother of the Lord (*Gebirah*) deserves the highest honour that women are given. God overshadowed her, the Holy Spirit came upon her and she bore the Son of God (Lk. 1:34-35). She embodies the Triune God, and most close to the Trinity. Those who honour a child, honour also the mother of that child, and those who dishonour parents can forget their children. It will be hard to love a child and hate the mother. How does this sound in your ears: “I love you Lord but I hate that your stupid mother?” Do you think that such a friendship will last or will it definitely end itself?

The Lukan text continues by affirming that Elizabeth was speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit (Lk. 1:41). Therefore, “the sudden inspiration bids Elizabeth, rising above all lower thoughts, to recognize that the child of Mary would be also the Son of the Highest. The contrast leaves no room for doubt that she used the word ‘Lord’ in its highest sense ... Great as her own son was to be (Luke 1:15) in the sight of the Lord, here was the mother of One yet greater, even of the Lord Himself.”¹⁴ The inspiration that Elizabeth got came directly from God. It was not a fake claim. The conclusion is that “Elizabeth in these words acknowledged both the incarnation of Christ, and the union of the Divine and human nature in the one person of the Mediator; she acknowledged Christ as her Lord, and Mary to be his mother... Elizabeth was far from envying the superior honour conferred on her kinswoman, who was both meaner and younger than she; that she esteems it a wonderful favour, that she should be indulged with a visit from her, who had already conceived the Messiah: and in due time would be the mother of him, as man; who, in his divine nature, is Lord of all angels, and men, and every creature; and in an especial manner was her Lord, and the Lord of all the saints; by his Father’s gift from eternity, by his own

¹² Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary. Luke 1:39-44. (<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/luke/1-44.htm>, accessed on 10/01/2023, 10:07pm)

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary. Luke 1:39-44. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/luke/1-43.htm>, accessed, 22/02/2023, 3:43 am.

purchase in time, and by the power of his grace on each of their souls. Thus, the Virgin Mary is said to be the mother of our Lord, and so may be called the Mother of God; because she was **the** parent of that child, which was in union with him, who is truly Lord and God: Just in such sense as the Lord of life and glory is said to be crucified, and God is said to purchase the church with his own blood ...”¹⁵

Evaluation & Conclusion

Rejections and Controversies Surrounding the Rosary and the Honour Given to Mary

Many have zero tolerance when it comes to saying the Rosary, the role and honour given to the Blessed Virgin Mary. They see in the Blessed Virgin Mary nothing more than any other great woman in the Scripture. “Compare Mary with other renowned women, and what had she, besides this favour, more than they? Had she the spirit of prophecy? so had they. Had she the spirit of sanctification? so had they, and she had no more immunity and freedom from sin and death than they. Accordingly, the angel says, Blessed art thou among women, not, Blessed art thou above women.”¹⁶ Such critics also attack Catholics. They call Catholics names such as senseless people, etc. “How senseless are they, **first**, in turning a salutation into a prayer! **Second**, in making use of these words upon every occasion, which were spoken by an angel upon a special occasion! **Third**, in applying these words to her now in heaven, which suited with her only when she was here on earth, saying, ‘Full of grace,’ to her who is full of glory, and, ‘The Lord is with thee,’ to her who is with the Lord!”¹⁷ But have they ever asked themselves, why is it that the Virgin Mary is called the Mother of God (Acts 1:14)? This singular title, the Mother of God, makes her most blessed among all women and sets her apart from every other creature.

It is also on record that some members of a certain charismatic group started their new movement by refusing to say the Rosary. They left the Catholic Church and formed Watchman Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement (WCCRM), also known as Voice of the Last Days Ministry in 1985. They were part of the Catholic faith, but rejected the Rosary. The Catholic Hierarchy threw them out. **It is said that** “the Roman Catholic Institution happens to be the Jerusalem of the WCCRM. This is because the brethren were part of the people, pursuing the vision from within until the vision was rejected and those pursuing it thrown

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Benson Commentary. Luke 1:28. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/luke/1-28.htm>, accessed on 20/03/2023, 8:29 am.

¹⁷ Ibid.

out.”¹⁸ This could be part of the reasons why the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) directed that the members of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Nigeria (CCRN) should always start their prayer meeting with the Holy Rosary.

Another group that rejects the Holy Rosary arose and taught the people to believe that the Virgin Mary can be likened to an envelope and that Christ is **likened** to a letter within the envelope. They claimed that one needs to read the letter and after that throws away the envelope. That is to say that you need only to accept the content of God’s letter to humanity, Jesus Christ, and forget all about the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Jesus (Acts 1:14). However, this claim is unscriptural. Where is it in the Bible that the Virgin Mary should not be honoured? The opposite shows that the Virgin Mary is honoured by God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Spirit (Lk. 1:35), and as the Most Blessed of all women (Lk. 1:42). Furthermore, for those who have the sense of documentation, the envelope is as important as the letter. It contains the stamp that appreciates in value as years go by, the source of the document and the processes of delivery. In times of crises, the envelope becomes the first reference point. When an Austrian politician picked up a chocolate that was put in an envelope and kept on his windscreen, he ate the content and got into trouble. The criminal police started the investigation with the envelope. It was the finger print on the envelope that led to the discovery of who poisoned the politician.¹⁹ Therefore, the analogy of the envelope and its content do not apply to the honour given to the Virgin Mary.

Other critics of the Virgin Mary opine that Mary and Jesus are like orange and the content of the orange, that is, the juice and the shell of the orange. They prefer to take only the juices of the orange and throw away the rind. For those who do not know that every part of the orange is important, their arguments seem to hold water. But in the industrialized world, every part of the organic food is useful. Today, the peels of oranges are used in the production of various food drinks like Lemonade, Lemon Juice, Bitter Lemon, etc., because they are rich in vitamins A and C, and are also natural antioxidants that boost the overall health of the immune system and help to fight bacteria, such as cold and flu. Therefore, the mystery of the mother and child cannot be likened to orange juice and the peels. It is much more than that. It is simply a mystery and humanity can only grope in the dark when it comes

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Death by Chocolate. Austrian Found Guilty of Attempted Murder with Poisoned Praline, Spiegel Online, <https://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/death-by-chocolate-austrian-found-guilty-of-attempted-murder-with-poisoned-praline-a-554511.html>, 08/03/2023, 8.34 pm.

to the mystery of God made man in the womb of the Virgin Mary (Jn 1:14). According to John Rose, “the Messiah took human form in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and therefore, there was oneness of Christ’s and Virgin’s flesh.”²⁰ Their union is really a mystery and no one knows exactly what goes on in the womb.

Another attack on the Virgin Mary is the physical destruction of the Statue of Our Lady. This is called *iconoclasm*, which teaches that images of any sort are idolatrous. Those who hold this view cite Ex. 20:4 and it says, “you shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.” The context speaks of the verb (*Qal*) “to do” or “to make” and the noun (*pe.sel*) “an idol” or “an image” and not taking a photograph or making representative portraits or statue. There is never a time sculptural works are idolatrous. Being a **sculpture sculptor** is a noble profession. The Statue of Our Lady cannot be an idol but a sculptural work. Those who fashioned a portrait decide what it represents for them. Artists give names to their Art works. After the fashioning of the Golden Calf in the wilderness, Aaron said to the people, “here is your god,” who brought you out of the land of Egypt (Ex. 32:1-8). Based on this proclamation, they worshipped the Golden Calf. God punished them with death. He said, never shall you usurp my power and give same to other gods (20:3). But we have flyers and Billboards all over the streets. We also have portraits of our dead parents and loved ones in our homes. Do those who put the portraits of their “daddy and mummy” in churches worship them? Furthermore, to counteract the false worship of the Golden Calf, God ordered Moses to make a serpent of bronze in Numbers 21:9: “So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.” Does it mean that God fashioned idol and asked the Israelites to worship it? God used the same imagery to correct the sin of idolatry, the worship of the Golden Calf.

The sculptural works of Mary or any other statue can only be named by no other group order than those who owned them. And the name that they gave to them are the real name and meaning of the Statue. If they say, it is their symbol; it remains that for them. When parents give birth to children, they give them names such as Oḡfia (Bush), Oḡrji (Iroko tree), etc. These names have symbols and meanings. They may not be good for you, but those are the names of their children. You are free to hate the names, but you cannot change them.

²⁰ Rose, 2011, John’s Homilies on Saints and Feast Days, 187.

The Statue is a symbol of Mary just as Billboard pictures are symbols of your pastors and overseers and their wives. Take it or leave it, they are their private property and that is it.

Conclusion

Our findings show that the honour given to the Blessed Virgin Mary is scriptural (Lk. 1:35), and should be encouraged. God, through angel Gabriel began the honour given to the Blessed Virgin Mary (Lk 1:28, 42). Anyone who follows this angelic greeting does this in imitation of God. In praying the Rosary also, we dare to take up this greeting to the Blessed Virgin Mary with the regard God had for the lowliness of His humble servant and exults in the joy He finds in her (1:46-55). Mary is to rejoice because she is full of grace and the Lord is with her which takes us back to the prophet Zephaniah (Zeph 3:14-17; cf. Joel 2:21). Secondly, the honour given to the mummies in their churches is not scriptural but religious piety in accordance with societal norms which could be stopped once they cease to be the mummies of their churches. Thirdly, the Blessed Virgin Mary is the Mother of Christ in eternity. Thus, her honour is in perpetuity.

Furthermore, those who do not see the scriptural background of the honour and respect given to the Queen Mother (Gebirah) misunderstand the whole idea of Mariology. But how many Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal Christians respect and give honour to their female pastors and deaconess? Many of their members do shopping for them. What of those who fetch water and firewood for their mummies? What of those who do the house chores? They respect their patronesses and deaconess, though sinful women of God that they are (cf. Rom. 3:23). Yet they look beyond that to give them honour, but they stand on these human imperfections to dishonour the Mother of God.

The model of Catholic Women Organization is the Blessed Virgin Mary. Their wrapper is adorned with the picture of infant Jesus in the loving arm of Mary, His mother. The Feast comes up at the end of March which is usually before or after the Feast of Annunciation. The Council Fathers share this deep faith with us: “As we contemplate in the Mother of God a life totally shaped by the Word, we realize that we too are called to enter into the mystery of faith, whereby Christ comes to dwell in our lives. Every Christian believer, Saint Ambrose reminds us, in some way interiorly conceives and gives birth to the Word of God: even **though** there is only one Mother of Christ in the flesh, in the faith Christ

is the progeny of us all. Thus, what took place for Mary can daily take place in each of us, in the hearing of the Word and in the celebration of the sacraments.”²¹

With God, all things are possible (Matt. 19:26). However, the humanity of Christ as it is known in history would not have been possible without the presence of a woman, because Christ is born of a woman (Gal. 4:4), and that woman is Mary. Why did God not throw down His Son from heaven? *De facto* is: every critic of Mary cannot deny one fact, Christ is the son of Mary (Mk. 6:3). He came in flesh and blood (hypostatic union). Anyone who denies the humanity of Christ is a deceiver and anti-Christ (2 Jn. 1:7). The Scripture is hard on this because of Docetism. Hopefully, the error is not being repeated in a different way.

²¹ Verbum Domini, N0. 28.

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