

EDITED BY

John C. Cavadini

AND

Danielle M. Peters

Mary ON THE EVE OF

THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME PRESS

NOTRE DAME, INDIANA

CHAPTER 7

Catholica Mater

The Marian Insights of Henri de Lubac

Troy A. Stefano

The great Marian moment of rediscovery arrived in the nineteenth century with Matthias Joseph Scheeben (1835–88), who, unlike his contemporaries or the majority of the Mariology of the previous millennia, saw in Mary's motherhood the highest expression of her spousal relation to God. Among modern theologians, Scheeben was the first to realize that the category of spouse, unlike that of mother (when taken in isolation), preserves Mary's constitutive embeddedness in the economy of salvation. This insight opened a new pathway for rediscovery that culminated in the Second Vatican Council's *Lumen Gentium*.

The full implications of this insight, especially in its relation to ecclesiology, were not realized by Scheeben. It was at the hands of the theologians who wrote between his time and that of the Council that it was brought to fruition. Among these figures stood Henri de Lubac (1896–1991). His contributions not only were indisputable and influential at the Second

Vatican Council, where he served as a theological *peritus*, but also, more importantly, they still serve as a source of renewal and inspiration for many theologians and believers. For those familiar with de Lubac's oeuvre, the choice to present his Mariology

17

9

180 Troy A. Stefano

may seem initially surprising.¹ For de Lubac did not write any particular book or treatise on Mary *per se*. De Lubac's explicit treatments of Mary are dispersed and integrated into his engagement with other themes, mostly the Church.² If I were to remain at the level of textual references and quantity, this chapter would be very short indeed. But to read de Lubac in such a fashion would be to remain at the surface and to do him a disservice.

The challenge for the reader of de Lubac lies in the fact that he makes the following four interpretive claims regarding Mary. First, that all he has said about the Church not only can be applied to Mary specifically but also derives from Mary as a person.³ Second, that Mary is the embodiment not only of the Church, "in person and as person," but also of creation, and, as such, she concretizes the relationship between nature and grace.⁴ Third, that if all of Scripture refers to Christ and the Church, and in the Church to the individual soul, the entirety of Scripture refers especially to our Lady, in whom is contained the singular and full perfection of the Church and the faithful soul. Thus all exegesis is related to Mary.⁵ Fourth, that Mary is the indispensable guarantee that we will not turn the Incarnation into an abstraction and thus turn Christianity into an ideology.⁶ Given these four claims, it is only fair to say that if de Lubac did not write a treatise on Mary it is because his entire corpus is thoroughly Marian. This dynamic points to de Lubac's presupposition that the Christian mysteries interpenetrate; they all mutually converge in the Incarnate One, and we never receive the Incarnate One apart from his mother's mediation.

It is my task to synthesize the scope of de Lubac's claims with the breadth of his corpus and to articulate his mariological insights in their full magnitude. My method is to show the way in which de Lubac's corpus sheds light on his claims about Mary. In the first section I begin by asking where, for Henri de Lubac, Mary's place is within the mystery of faith. In

the second section I turn to consider what de Lubac sees as the main challenges to Mary. In the third section I articulate de Lubac's response to those challenges. I show in three points of "incarnational logic" how for de Lubac the economy of salvation extends into the economy of the Church. In the fourth section I point to how Mary is the point of convergence for and the indispensable guarantee of these three points of "incarnational logic."

Catholica Mater 181

THE PLACE OF MARY WITHIN THE MYSTERY OF FAITH

De Lubac describes Christian theology not as a straight syllogistic line but as a circle around which the theologian moves to consider the different aspects of a single mystery.⁷ This means that Marian dogmas are not ends in themselves but are anagogic: they "point" toward a mystery, a reality that far exceeds but is nevertheless expressed in the dogmatic formulation. For this reason, the Church invokes Mary in symbols more than in definitions, in images more than in concepts, and in devotion more than in theorization.⁸ For de Lubac, the mystery of the Cross is the ultimate point of reference. And if we are not to efface the truth of the Incarnation, dialectic must always give way to anagogy and symbol. Otherwise we would turn it into an abstract reality, and, in essence, we would make Christianity an ideology. This holds true for Mary and the Church. To say, "Mary is 'nothing other than . . .'" is a methodological red flag.⁹ In such a case, we are fully identifying her with one of the aspects of her reality, expressed dialectically. Such is the case when she is reduced to a mere instrument for the Incarnation, for such a rationalist approach always simultaneously desacralizes and transforms the object of the mystery into an ideological parody, hollowing out the depth dimension of mystery.¹⁰

For de Lubac, the unity of the Christian mysteries has deep implications for theological considerations of Mary. Mariology, more than any other area of inquiry, emphasizes the interconnections of the Christian mysteries; thus it is the most defining property of Mariology that it can never be exclusively, or even predominately, mariological.¹¹ Mary must be understood within the context of salvation history or, more broadly, the economy of salvation. And it is for this reason that the category of Mary as spouse is so important for the proper interpretation of her divine motherhood.¹² De Lubac offers us the insight that our regard for Mary,

whether operating intuitively or expressed self-consciously, forms our principal stance toward the entire Christian mystery. The reason for this is that Mary is the principle of embodiment and concreteness. Mary encapsulates, and—as a Jewish woman—recapitulates the historical and qualitative point at which God ceased to be merely the transcendent and impersonal God of philosophers and became the tripersonal God of history.

182 Troy A. Stefano

CHALLENGES TO THE CHURCH AND TO MARY: HUMAN COOPERATION AND EMBODIED PERSONAL MEDIATION

Mary has been the site of much contention since the Reformation. She has embodied, in many a Protestant's eyes, the twofold usurpation of Christ's mediation and God's absolute sovereignty.¹³ But de Lubac tells us that “a demand of this kind is ‘more Christian’ in appearance only” since “neither the gratuitousness of the divine initiative nor the transcendence of the divine action has anything to suffer from an economy of salvation that was set up by God himself.”¹⁴ For, de Lubac posits, if we could see the internal logic of such an approach, we would realize that it effaces the true depths and importance of the Incarnation.¹⁵ What is immediately at stake in Mary are the two intertwined mysteries of human cooperation in redemption and the economy of embodied mediation, by which he means the continued mediation of the Incarnation in the Church. Thus I expound on de Lubac's presentation of the Protestant understanding of human cooperation, ecclesiology, and Mariology as a specific way of reading the Incarnation.

Human Cooperation. In Luther's theology, the human being remains a sinner regardless of grace's work (*Simul justus et peccator*), since God imputes to the believer the merits of Christ.¹⁶ And, in the view of Calvin, a person's salvation or damnation was predestined by the immutable will of God from all of eternity. For Barth, grace “remains grace,” and human beings have “not the least control over it” because it is a one-way relationship “without reciprocity.”¹⁷ In the eyes of these theologians, they are preserving the unique, exclusive mediation of Christ and the absolute sovereignty of God, not only in initiating salvation but, more importantly, in effecting it.¹⁸

Ecclesiology. For Barth, “a Catholic understanding of soteriology is synergistic, a cooperation between divine grace and human effort. God in Christ does not save; God in Christ graciously enables and helps us to save ourselves.”¹⁹ Such a view regarding cooperation, in turn, affects one’s view of the Church. In this view, for a “bodily” Church to propose to be an organ of grace would be the same as for a human being to claim to have “control” over God: it would entail the idolatrous attempt at “lay- ing hands on God.”²⁰ For Luther, there is the “bodily” church, which is

Catholica Mater 183

nothing but a “human creation,” and the heavenly church, which is divine; in Calvin the Church is defined (abstractly) as “the company of the faithful whom God has ordained and elected to eternal life.”²¹ And in Barth, it is his (famous) doctrine of election that takes the place of the Church. Thus for Barth all that is distinctly Catholic is precisely the human being “laying hands on God.”²²

Mariology. According to de Lubac’s observation, not only does such a view regarding human cooperation affect the previously stated views regarding the Church but the regard for the Church of those who hold those views becomes concentrated (or concretized) in their regard for Mary. In fact, it is remarkable that here we see the inverse reflection of the Catholic belief that Mary is the “*typus Ecclesiae*.” What is said of the Church at large is applied concretely to Mary. Despite the undeniable beauty of Luther’s commentary on the *Magnificat*, one must note the remarkable lack of agency or freedom he allots to Mary. Luther stresses repeatedly that Mary has nothing of herself; indeed, she is but “nothingness.”²³ It was largely Calvin who set the standard for the subsequent Protestant tradition in a threefold way: he absolutely rejected all forms of Marian piety; he insisted on the clear Christological boundaries within which Mary might be dis- cussed; and he emphatically saw any concession to Mary’s causal or per- sonal role as an unforgivable betrayal of God’s honor. This tradition cul- minated in Schleiermacher’s abrupt and straightforward dismissal of Mary from dogmatic theology altogether.²⁴ Karl Barth most explicitly captures not only the dependence of Mariology and ecclesiology on one’s stance regarding human cooperation but also the interrelationship between Mary and the Church. Barth is able to say, with his usual degree of vitu- peration: “Where Mary is ‘venerated,’ where this whole doctrine with its corresponding devotion is current, there the Church of Christ is

not.”²⁵

HUMAN COOPERATION AND EMBODIED PERSONAL MEDIATION AS PRESERVING THE INCARNATION

De Lubac saw in the internal logic of the Reformers’ tradition a specific reading of the Incarnation. In turn, his own fundamental conviction could be expressed in three points of “incarnational logic” that govern one’s entire approach to Christianity and converge in what we say about Mary:

184 Troy A. Stefano

1. The Incarnation, from the vantage point of the divine intention to condescend to our sensible nature, sin, and weakness, entails “the divine mystery of the ‘economy’ according to man.”²⁶ The Incarnation is as indispensable as our human nature. God, thus bodily mediated, is never consequently received unmediated apart from Christ’s body. De Lubac reminds us, quoting John 14:7–9: “‘If you had known me, you would without doubt have known my Father also. . . . Philip, he that seeth me seeth the Father also.’ Nobody, even at the highest peak of the spiritual life, will attain a knowledge of the Father that will dispense him, from that point onward, from going through him who will, always and for all, be ‘the Way’ and ‘the Image of the invisible God.’”²⁷ The Incarnate form—in all of its concreteness and uniqueness—is precisely the divine condescension apart from which there is no salvation or knowledge of the Father. 2. If the Incarnate One is unsurpassable, this poses the question of how to make the Incarnation universal. For de Lubac, this is the true point of divergence with the Reformers. He sees their internal logic as grounded in the mechanism by which they make Christ universal. That is, the method that underlies their approach to human cooperation, ecclesiology, and Mariology is one of abstraction. Then the Incarnation is seen only as a prelude to Redemption; in fact, the concreteness and uniqueness of the Incarnation itself becomes vaporized into soteriology. De Lubac claims that this effectively rejects the Incarnation.²⁸ It violates the concrete form of the Incarnate One, which itself is the concretization of the divine mercy in the form of condescending adaptation. Furthermore, it bypasses procedurally the divine intention (point 1) insofar as the divine intention makes the adaptation to our human weakness.²⁹ Soteriology must be

rooted in the person of Christ rather than abstracting the concrete person into his work. The person of Christ can never be reduced to a function³⁰—not even the function of saving us. It is always the *person* who acts.³¹

Therefore, only a form of universalization from which Christ cannot be abstracted is acceptable. And for de Lubac this is none other than the “the economy of the Church,” including the Marian mysteries, that flow out of Christ’s side.³² For this mode of mediation maintains the concrete, historical, and embodied form of the Incarnation itself, and thus entails its fulfillment and guarantee, not its usurpation.³³

Catholica Mater 185

3. The third point to follow from this logic is that if the economy of the Church is the only guarantee and fulfillment of the Incarnation, and if the economy of the Church presupposes the cooperation of human freedom with grace and the preservation of nature as its conditions, the cooperation of human freedom with grace and the preservation of nature are themselves facets of the work and scope of the Incarnation.

If one can universalize the Incarnation via abstraction, one can dispense with the entire economy of the Church and Mary. But if one preserves the concrete, historical, and embodied form of the Incarnate One, Mary and the Church are the Incarnation’s indispensable guarantee and fulfillment. At the heart of this matter is the way in which one interprets “*Christus descendit et ascendit ut impleret omnia*” (Eph. 4:10). How is the unique and particular life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ universalized? Or what is the relationship between Christology and soteriology, the concrete, unique person of Christ and the universal work of Christ? According to de Lubac, this is the crux of the second incarnational point and the source of divergences in understandings of human cooperation, ecclesiology, and Mariology; however one answers this question will determine the rest of one’s understanding of the matter.³⁴

For de Lubac, the first answer—which is that of the Reformation tradition considered earlier—attempts to make of the Incarnation a one-time historic event of insurmountable importance, but one that has now been procedurally surpassed and made accessible through nonhistoric and nonembodied means: a process of universalizing abstraction. The emphasis in this reading is on the accomplishment of the historic Christ, on the one hand, and on the unmediated reception of that accomplish-

ment by the believer, on the other. And anything that comes between Christ's accomplishment and the believer's unmediated reception is deemed an idolatrous intrusion on Christ's unique mediation and God's absolute sovereignty. The result, as mentioned earlier, is that the theologian's abstracting movement goes from the historic Christ (*concretissimum*; Barth) to a "divine church" (Luther), "the faithful whom God has ordained and elected to eternal life" (Calvin), "the spotless bride of Jesus Christ governed and refreshed by the Spirit of God" (Zwingli), and "the invisible Church," which is "an undivided unity" and "infallible" (Schleiermacher).³⁵ But this vertical movement from the historic Christ to a

186 Troy A. Stefano

supratemporal, supramundane entity bypasses history and embodied personal mediation. It establishes a direct relationship with the historic Christ and *that* Church. This gives the believer who is historically straddling the Christ of history and *that* Church with little to no role except that of pure receptivity. The Church, thus conceived, is extrinsic to the mediation of grace. And if the Church claimed to have any mediating power—or, more boldly, as the Catholic Church claims, if it believed itself to be the "sacrament" of Christ, that is, the sign and instrument that both bears witness to *and* effects (mediates) Christ's revealing and salvific work in the world—such a claim would be idolatrous since it would detract from Christ's unique and exclusive mediation and God's absolute sovereignty. Furthermore, as is typical of de Lubac, he does not limit his critique to the Reformation but includes constrictions within the Catholic tradition. Thus any Catholic thinker who makes of the Incarnation an abstraction in order to pursue a more "intellectual faith" or to form an abstract utopia is subject to the same critique.³⁶

This brings us to the second reading of how to universalize the Incarnation event. For de Lubac, to believe in the Incarnation is to hold that Christ is uniquely personal, free, concrete, historical, and embodied. In fact, the only form of mediation proper to Christ's uniqueness is one that itself emerges from him. De Lubac makes use of Nyssa's description of "the divine mystery of the economy according to man," which, he says, expands into "the economy of the Church."³⁷ The sacramental economy of the Church or the role allotted to Mary is neither, therefore, a replacement of the Incarnation nor a distraction but is precisely its fulfillment and extension in time. It is in this sense that de Lubac, like

Johann Adam Möhler, considers the Church as the “Incarnation continued.”³⁸ It is what Augustine called the *totus Christus*.

MARIAN CONVERGENCES

It is de Lubac’s most significant mariological claim that the incarnational logic stands or falls with Mary. Mary’s place is the promise and guarantee of the Incarnation, not its replacement or its distraction. There are three key terms that de Lubac uses to refer to Mary’s significance: Immaculate

Catholica Mater 187

Spouse, Virgin Mother, and Mother of the Church.³⁹ There is a specific order and structure to these three terms that preserves the integrity of his incarnational logic. These terms represent a specific reading of the entire Christian mystery, and thus, if we understand the significance that de Lubac allots to each of these terms, we capture—at once—how he understands Mary, the Church, and the Incarnation. For the sake of clarity, I describe de Lubac’s Mariology under the headings of those three terms (Immaculate Spouse, Virgin Mother, and Mother of the Church). For the categories of both Immaculate Spouse and Virgin Mother, I describe three aspects corresponding to the three incarnational points that they preserve, respectively. However, according to de Lubac, the category of Mother of the Church alone contains the entire mystery and thus all three points simultaneously. It is for this reason, above all else, that de Lubac bids us to call on Mary as our Mother; he believes that in that invocation rests the true purification, reform, and healing of the Church.

Mary as Immaculate Spouse

From the perspective of rediscovery, de Lubac synthesizes the Marian realizations of Scheeben with the ecclesiological discoveries of Möhler and of John Henry Newman: Mary as Immaculate Spouse is the key to understanding her within the scope of salvation history. It irrevocably situates her within the narrative of the Triune God’s work of fusing the creature with its Lord in spousal love, which spanned the period from creation through Israel to Christ and is fulfilled eschatologically in divinization.

Point 1 of Incarnational Logic. Mary as Immaculate Spouse discloses God's intention of condescending to our weakness. The category of spouse at once discloses Mary's unique relation to the Word and her embeddedness in salvation history. Hence, to refer to Mary as Spouse of the Word we emphasize the narrative of God's condescension to human weakness in the economy of salvation. For God's spousal relation with Israel in particular and with creation in general becomes concretized in Mary as Spouse of the Word.⁴⁰ It is her "Yes" that begins the *matrimonium divinum*, the fruit of which is the Word made flesh.⁴¹ De Lubac relies heavily on the Latin tradition of commentary on the Song of Songs and writes that the beloved Spouse who is awaiting the "kisses of his

188 Troy A. Stefano

mouth" (1:2) is first and foremost the Virgin in whose womb, as in a bridal chamber, the Word was united with human nature—"the first kiss of the Word, which is the pledge of the final union."⁴² As such, Mary as spouse at once invokes both the historical form of God's engagement with humanity and the intimacy that underlies such a form.

Point 2 of Incarnational Logic. Mary as Immaculate Spouse preserves the uniqueness and concreteness of Christ's form. When the Church professes the dogma of the Immaculate Conception it means, among other things, that Mary, by a special and unique act of God, is the first Spouse to flow out of Christ's side on the Cross.⁴³ Before Mary could be Mother to the Incarnate One, she had to share in his Cross.⁴⁴ The logic of the Immaculate Conception is something like this: the condition for Christ's pierced heart is Christ's Incarnation in Mary's womb; the condition for Christ's Incarnation in her womb is her total "Yes" to God; the condition for her absolute and total "Yes" to God is her freedom from sin; the condition for her freedom from sin is a unique act of grace by which God applied to her the merits of Christ in anticipation; and the condition for this unique application of Christ's merits is Christ's pierced heart. Here we arrive at a point of circularity at which one could say that Mary, as Immaculate Spouse, flows out of Christ's side in order that Christ, being born of her as Virgin Mother, may be pierced for us and for her.⁴⁵ This has two consequences. First, Mary does not condition the Incarnation of the Word, but, by the anticipatory sharing of his Cross, the Word establishes his own unique and concrete conditions, from which one cannot abstract anything. And second, in this God took the narrow path. He entrusted himself to

human freedom, albeit one that was already achieved by his Cross; the triumph of the Word was not *de- spite* human freedom but precisely *in* it—corresponding to de Lubac’s third point of incarnational logic. The dogma of the Immaculate Con- ception, therefore, is a doctrine of God’s intimacy and vulnerability.

Point 3 of Incarnational Logic. Mary as Immaculate Spouse entails personhood and free cooperation with grace. God’s spousal love is not mechanical, nor is it impersonal. God’s love gives birth to persons, and persons are the recipients of God’s love. Only persons can be free, and only persons can be called to a spousal relation with the eternal person of the Word. Mary’s “Yes” to God initiates, from the human side, a history of

Catholica Mater 189

receiving and living God’s freedom.⁴⁶ Mary’s “Yes” shows how, as God reveals himself in the *person* of the Word, he gives birth to persons as the correlative effect of his self-revelation. In the logic of the Incarnation, God did not “forcefully” initiate a history of freedom. De Lubac cites Newman in noting that the early Fathers “do not speak of the Blessed Virgin merely as the physical instrument of our Lord’s taking flesh, but as an intelligent, responsible cause of it.”⁴⁷ For this reason, de Lubac writes, “Catholic faith regarding our Lady sums up symbolically, in its special case, the doctrine of human cooperation in the Redemption and thus pro- vides the synthesis, or matrix concept, of the dogma of the Church.”⁴⁸

Mary as Virgin Mother

De Lubac recounts a momentous shift in human thought patterns around the eleventh century, which took place deep “down, in the dark basements of the mind, in that mysterious zone where everything becomes entangled in advance, before seeing the light of day.”⁴⁹ It was the emergence of dialectic as the exclusive modality of human reason itself and of doing theology. Among the many consequences there was within the Catholic tradition an increasing dissociation of Mary’s spousal role from her maternal role. Thus, for example, Thomas Aquinas treats of Mary in the section of his *Summa Theologica* (*ST*) on the entry of the Son of God into the world (*ST* III, qq. 27–30). In this mode, Mary’s spousal relation to the Word, so prominent in the early Church, is largely, if not entirely,

subordinated to Mary's role in the Incarnation as the Mother of God. Her primary function, then, is as the guarantor of the Word's true humanity. De Lubac, following Scheeben, prioritizes Mary's spousal role, within which alone her divine motherhood can be understood. For to emphasize Mary as Immaculate Spouse is to ensure that Mary as Virgin Mother cannot be turned into an abstraction by seeing her as solely an instrument for the Incarnation. De Lubac maintains both aspects of Mary in tension, as is proper to the nature of a Christian mystery.

Point 1 of Incarnational Logic. Mary as Virgin Mother is within the scope of Mary as Immaculate Spouse. The spousal narrative in which Mary has her unique place began with God's love for his creation. This means that in Mary's womb, the Word was wed not to a particular man

190 Troy A. Stefano

(as Nestorius would have it) but to human nature (as a whole) and all of creation. De Lubac writes, "Christ from the very first moment of his existence virtually bears all men within himself. . . . Whole and entire he will bear [human nature] then to Calvary, whole and entire he will raise it from the dead, whole and entire he will save it."⁵⁰ What this means is that Mary is the quintessence of creatureliness, of the world.⁵¹ If in her the Word was wed to all of creation, she must stand for all of creation;⁵² if in her the Word was wed to all of humanity, she must stand for all of humanity. As such, Mary is the principle of bodiliness, historicity, and createdness, with which the Word unites himself in his condescending adaption to our weakness. De Lubac comments extensively on this aspect of Mary's role. When, in the mystery of the Incarnation, "the heavenly King celebrated the wedding of his Son, giving him the Holy Church as his companion, Mary's womb was the bridal bed for this royal Spouse."⁵³ Her immaculate and luring beauty is an inverse reflection of God's self-emptying, spousal love. And her freedom to say "Yes" to God not only makes her the pinnacle of creation's receptivity to God but also makes her able to truly love, and thus to personally become the Bride of the Word. For that freedom is the touch of God's love: it is the first "kiss" of the Bridegroom.

Point 2 of Incarnational Logic. Christ is truly historical, unique, and embodied only if Mary is the "Sacrament of Christ." Mary, sanctified and freed to offer a total "Yes" to God as Immaculate Spouse, became the Mother of God when God emptied himself into her womb. The structure of Christ's own historicity is the "form" of his mediation; if Christ's condescension to

adapt to our weakness came through Mary, Christ's form remains as the Incarnate One through Mary. Christ is *for- ever* from Mary's womb.⁵⁴ To speak to the contrary or to dispose of Mary is to turn him into an abstraction. The dispensability of Mary rests with the presupposition that Christ can be abstracted from his concreteness and thus from Mary, through whom he was made concrete in body and in history. To retain Mary as the one through whom we receive Christ is not only to invoke "an economy of salvation that was set up by God him- self" but to ensure that the form of the Incarnate One is the form of di- vine mercy in history.⁵⁵ And this takes us to Mary's most essential role: to confess the full meaning of Mary as Immaculate Spouse and Virgin Mother is to say that she is the "Sacrament of Christ," the one whose significance resides in pointing to and making present the Word made

Catholica Mater 191

flesh.⁵⁶ As Immaculate Spouse, she signifies the Bridegroom; as Virgin Mother, she effects what she signifies.

Point 3 of Incarnational Logic. Mary as Virgin Mother embodies the part of creation that is willingly fertilized by the Holy Spirit. Catholic talk of cooperation, merit, freedom, nature, and so forth is, in the final analysis, talk about God's free use of human beings and human realities in Christ.⁵⁷ In this God certainly took the narrow path: salvation was not achieved despite human freedom and at the expense of nature; rather the Word's triumph was precisely *in* human freedom and *while* preserving nature.⁵⁸ Mary embodies the fundamental characteristic of creation, awaiting fertilization by God, awaiting what de Lubac calls the *donum perfectum*, or "the second gift," the first gift being that of creation itself. Mary embodies God's love for his creation. And, as a specific woman, willingly fertilized under the shadow of the Holy Spirit, Mary embodies the part of creation that has been willingly fertilized by the Holy Spirit, namely, the Church.⁵⁹ In the economy of salvation, Mary is the Mother of God only because she is beloved Spouse; *mutatis mutandis*, in the econ- omy of creation, she is the source of the race only because she is the an- swering person. Her "Yes" to God was not only the fulfillment of Israel's longing for God but also the long-awaited answer to creation's "groan- ing" (Rom. 8:22). It is here that we see de Lubac's contribution regarding the divisions and orders of nature and grace bear Marian fruit: creation's *desiderium naturale* is now personified and made concrete in Mary, who stands for all

of creation. Mary—and therefore also the Church—is not only the sacrament of Christ, that is, the instrument and sign that makes him present and becomes truly herself as she points to Him, but truly the “sacrament of the world” or, more felicitously, “the sacrament of Christ for the world,” in the sense of embodying both the heights of a theophanic universe that always “proclaims the work of the Lord” and the sign of God’s salvific work for all of creation.⁶⁰ To pray with Mary is to pray “*ut (Ecclesia) fiat mundo salutis sacramentum*,” since Mary is—in person and as a person—“*mundus reconciliatus Ecclesia*.”⁶¹

Mary and the Church

De Lubac makes the claim that to call Mary the *typus ecclesiae* is, in a sense, to see the full scope of her as Immaculate Spouse and Virgin Mother.⁶²

192 Troy A. Stefano

Mary as Immaculate Spouse and the Church as Immaculate Spouse. De Lubac makes clear that the relationship between Mary as Immaculate Spouse and the Church as Spouse to Christ is not a matter of “transfer- ring,” as if as an afterthought, parallels from Mary to the Church or vice versa.⁶³ When we consider Mary as the first Immaculate Spouse that flowed out of Christ’s side, we find embodied, in its entirety, the Church in one person.⁶⁴ The only point in all of history in which the entire Church was unified and gathered as one and its essence corresponded fully to its existence was in the person of Our Lady. De Lubac sees in this four important insights.

1. De Lubac argues that it is for this reason that the Church is a “she.”⁶⁵ The Church is wholly personal because Mary is a person, and she is a person in her relation to the person of the Word, her Spouse and Son. Thus Mary’s life offers the Church her “form,” her intrinsic mode of existence.⁶⁶ As de Lubac writes, “We might say that they are ‘one single and unique mystery.’”⁶⁷ 2. If Mary is the “form” and “pleroma” of the Church, her life is the prehistory of the Church.⁶⁸ “Mary is the first-beloved; but in her all saintly souls, and primarily the Church, whose ‘form’ she is, are also loved.”⁶⁹ This means that Mary’s life is already an embodiment of what the Church will be. The Church is not an organization but an organism that has at its very heart a Marian experience.⁷⁰ And for that reason, Mary

defines the essence of the Church. 3. The Church is not an extrinsic parallel or analogy. The relationships between Mary and the Church are “not only numerous and close; they are essential and woven within.”⁷¹ Hence Mary and the Church are not two species under the genus of Spouse to Christ, which would result in an extrinsic understanding of their relation.⁷² Rather Mary embodied concretely and fully the genus of Spouse up to the foot of the Cross.⁷³ And when the Church, as such, was poured forth from Christ’s pierced side, the spousal “form” and experience of Mary became universalized and extended to the Church. For this reason, de Lubac believed, the universalization of Christ entails, to some extent, the universalization of his spousal and filial relation to Mary.⁷⁴ “In her the whole Church is outlined, and at the same time

Catholica Mater 193

already completed; she is simultaneously the ‘seed’ and the ‘pleroma’ of it.”⁷⁵ In order to understand the relationship between Mary as a specific person and the Church as such, one must consider the moment of universalization, that is, the Cross. Mary, as Spouse of the Word up to the point of the Cross, embodied the spousal relation in three senses: *in genere*, *specialiter*, and *singulariter*. They all converged in the one concrete person of Mary. But at the Cross, where the Church flowed out of the rib of the New Adam, the entire economy of embodied personal mediation that was in Mary alone was extended to the whole Church: now, the Church is Spouse *in genere*, the Christian soul is Spouse *singulariter*, and Mary is Spouse *specialiter*.⁷⁶ Therefore, if Mary is the “Sacrament of Christ,” in which she signifies and brings forth the Word, then so also is the Church and every individual Christian. This universalization of Mary’s spousal relation into the Church, and with it into every Christian, is the guarantee that we will not turn Christ into an abstraction but that we must maintain Christ’s own concrete, historical form. It is the fulfillment of the economy established by God himself. 4. The universalization of Mary’s spousal relation to Christ to that of the Church as such and to every single Christian has implications for the Church’s essence. De Lubac calls Mary the “genuine universal concrete, which includes to an eminent degree and in a pure state the sum of perfection of all other members.”⁷⁷ He calls her “the universal creature” in which God has placed “the fullness of all good.” God has “filled her ‘to an eminent degree with the substance of which the Church is formed’; he

conferred on her ‘in wonderful pre- eminence all the majestic qualities’ with which he endows ‘his Bride the Holy Church.’”⁷⁸ The Church’s essence and existence fully coincided only in Mary. Her universalization entails inserting, as it were, a space between essence and existence in which the Church is journeying toward fulfilling her eschatological identity. And if the Church’s essence is the eschatological chorus of faithful souls, that eschatological finality is defined by the one in whom it has already been realized *specialiter*, Mary.⁷⁹ In this we find the meaning of Mary’s Assumption. De Lubac writes: “In the mystery of the Assumption—which marks, in our Lady, the complete and definitive

194 Troy A. Stefano

triumph of the divine action upon her, right up to its consequences in the bodily order—[the Church] sees no mere wonderful exception to the common destiny, which has nothing to do with us; rather, she hails in it the pledge and anticipation of her own triumph.”⁸⁰ The Church’s irresolvable tension between essence and existence is the very mystery of our transformation into a destiny already realized in Our Lady. And thus we can see the two sides of the Church in this tension: “The Church is of God (*ex Trinitate*) and she is of men (*ex hominibus*); she is visible and invisible; she is of this earth and this time, and she is eschatological and eternal.”⁸¹

Mary as Virgin Mother and the Church as Virgin Mother. As Christ’s Immaculate Spouse, Mary represents the whole Church as Spouse; likewise, by being the Virgin Mother of God she has, within her, the entirety of the collective Christ.⁸² As de Lubac writes, “She bore One according to flesh, but spiritually she bore the whole human race.”⁸³ We have already seen how Mary’s spousal and maternal role can be summed up in calling her the “Sacrament of Christ,” the one who signifies the Word as Spouse and who, as Mother, makes him present. As the Church flows out of Christ’s side on Calvary, Mary’s sacramental dimension becomes universalized: the very Christ whom Mary signified by her spousal relation is now signified by the whole Church as Spouse, and the earthly Christ whom Mary brought forth by her maternal relation is now brought forth by the whole Church. De Lubac sees in this three implications.

1. The condition for the universalization of Christ while maintaining his

historical, embodied, and concrete form (point 2 of incarnational logic) is the universalization of the one who made him historical, embodied, and concrete. Therefore, by universalizing Mary as the Sacrament of Christ, the Church and every specific Christian became both Immaculate Spouse and Virgin Mother, bringing forth Christ's body in the world and for the world. De Lubac writes: "His word is born in each one of the faithful, as in the Church as a whole; but this is in the likeness of his birth in the soul of our Lady, and in addition, if faith is to bear its fruit, there must be in each of us the soul of our Lady, who magnified the Lord, and the Spirit of our

Catholica Mater 195

Lady, who rejoiced in God."⁸⁴ De Lubac makes clear that "in our eyes neither our Lady nor the Church in any way whatsoever replaces the humanity of Christ, as is feared even among those who make the most sincere of efforts to understand the matter." Rather the mystery "misunderstood by the Reformation is, *on the contrary, the indispensable guarantee of the importance of the Incarnation.*"⁸⁵ For de Lubac this means extending to the Church *in genere* what was applied to Mary *specialiter*: "the Sacrament of Christ." In fact, the very Spirit of Christ was at work not only in Mary but also in the Church, as her very soul and animating principle.⁸⁶ 2. If Mary as the Sacrament of Christ is universalized in such a way that the Church is the Sacrament of Christ, the Church and Mary have two aspects as regards their sacramentality. The first aspect is that of Spouse, and as such they are both *sanctified*. The second aspect is that of Virgin Mother, and as such they are both *sanctifying*. The first is the signifier; the second makes present what it signifies. The first ensures that Mary and the Church are means to an end—that is, Christ; the second ensures that they are never a dispensable means but that, until the end of the world, Christ is made present through his Mother. In order to understand why Mary and the Church are unsurpassable and indispensable signs, we need to see how they relate to the divine intention in the economy (point 1 of incarnational logic). The purpose of God's condescension is to adapt to our human weakness. Christ's concreteness is as unsurpassable as our bodiliness. This was made possible through Mary, who as sacrament is the preservation of the divine intention and work in Christ. Mary as sacrament is the preservation of the uniqueness of the historical form of God's condescension, from which nothing can be abstracted. And so the Church, as the extension and

universalization of Mary as sacrament, “is essentially related to our present condition,”⁸⁷ as de Lubac writes. To dispense with the Church (or Mary), therefore, is to dispense with the concreteness of the Incarnation, whose form is correlated with our human weakness. The moment that Mary or the Church become ends-in-themselves, they lose their significance. But the moment we lose Mary or the Church, we lose the concreteness and uniqueness of the Incarnate One, whose

196 Troy A. Stefano

form is preserved and universalized *only* in them. Therefore de Lubac writes of Mary and the Church: “Her whole end is to show us Christ, lead us to him, and communicate his grace to us; to put it in a nutshell, she exists solely to put us into relation with him. She alone can do that, and it is a task she never completes; there will never come a moment, either in the life of the individual or in the life of the race, in which her role ought to come to an end or even could come to an end.” In short, for this reason, de Lubac writes, “If the world lost the Church, it would lose Redemption too.”⁸⁸ 3. If the Church and Mary are both the “sacrament of Christ,” it is the Eucharist that is the point of continuity and preservation of the concrete and unique form of Christ (point 2 of incarnational logic), as well as the divine intention in condescending to human weakness (point 1 of incarnational logic). The Eucharist is the underlying bond between Mary and the Church, for the Eucharist is the very universalization of the Incarnate without abstraction. “Just as the maternal function of Mary is to give the God-Man to the world,” writes de Lubac, “so the maternal function of the Church, which culminates . . . in the celebration of the Eucharist, is to give us Christ, ‘the Head, Sacrifice, and Food of the members of his mystical body.’”⁸⁹ In short, “As Mary bore the earthly Christ, so the Church bears the Eucharistic Christ.”⁹⁰ And just as Mary as sacrament preserves the earthly Christ from being turned into an abstraction, so does the Church as sacrament preserve the Eucharistic Christ from being turned into an abstraction.

The moment of the Cross, in which the earthly Christ becomes universalized into the Eucharistic Christ, is the ground and reason for the universalization of Mary as Spouse and Virgin Mother in the Church and every faithful soul.

Mary as Mother of the Church

When Mary stood at the foot of the Cross, her identity was revealed to her. The “hour” of Our Lord is also the “hour” of Our Lady. She arrived at that place from which her special grace derived, but now the ultimate

Catholica Mater 197

reason for that initial “prevenient” grace was to be fulfilled and revealed: what flowed from Christ’s side was the Church, in its fullness, the very purpose of the Incarnation, and at that very moment Mary became not only the mother of the earthly Christ but the mother of his ecclesial and Eucharistic body, the Church.⁹¹ This means that her motherhood is not fully comprehensible until she is able to be invoked as Mother by all of us beloved disciples. The very body of the earthly Christ that she bore in her womb already contained his whole mystical body by anticipation.⁹² But when Christ on the Cross gave her to John as Mother, he revealed to her and to us the true depths of “the economy according to man,” becoming “the economy of the Church” and, correspondingly, Mary, the Immaculate Spouse and Virgin Mother of God becoming the Mother of the Church. The Church, therefore, has at its foundation a maternal memory of paschal birth. The moment when Christ was pierced on the Cross marked a special *transitus*. His self-offering—that is, his unique, concrete form, which is nothing other than the form of the divine mercy in history—was extended in the Eucharist. De Lubac calls the Eucharist the “heart of the Church,”⁹³ the center around which everything circum-ambulates.

We have seen how, for de Lubac, Mary took her origin from the side of Christ as Immaculate Spouse and, consequently, brought him forth as Mother. Thus the same applies to the Church’s two aspects, except with regard to the Eucharistic body. The Eucharist realizes the Church as Spouse, but the Church as Mother produces the Eucharist.⁹⁴ For Henri de Lubac, the “mystery of our being brought to birth by the Church is the conclusion of the historical birth of Christ through Mary—its continuation, as it were, under the influence of the same Spirit.”⁹⁵ Now we see the special status that de Lubac gives to the term “Mother of the Church.”⁹⁶ Mary as Immaculate Spouse and Virgin Mother became universalized at the moment of the Cross, wherein the earthly Christ was universalized into the

Eucharistic Christ. And if the very gesture of non- abstracting universalization shows the full depths of God’s *kenosis*, Mary, as Mother of the Church, is precisely the invocation of those incarnate depths. To invoke Mary as our Mother is to say that the Christ made present in body, soul, and divinity under the appearance of bread and wine and into whom we are incorporated is from Mary’s womb. It is to

198 Troy A. Stefano

say that the spousal and maternal mediations of the Church are themselves derivative of the concrete relation between Christ and Mary. And that the bond between Christ and Mary remains the concrete archetype of the self-emptying relation that God has formed between himself and his creature, as between a Bridegroom and a Bride, a Virgin Mother and her Son. In fact, to invoke Mary as our Mother, far from expressing a merely pious sentiment that refers to a notion of tenderness, captures in one appellation the concrete and unique work of the Incarnate One. It captures that moment under the midday sun—in all of its truth, uniqueness, and concreteness—when the full depths of the Incarnation became manifest: the *transitus* of “the divine economy according to man” into “the economy of the Church.” As de Lubac bids us, “The motherhood of the Church no longer means anything to our systems—but we, in order to free ourselves from their abstraction, need to return to our mother.”⁹⁷

NOTES

1. There is very little written on this topic. In terms of monographs, for example, one can profit greatly from Denis Dupont-Fauville’s *L’Église Mère chez Henri de Lubac* (Paris: Parole et Silence, 2009).
2. Thus, for example, *Méditation sur l’Église* (Paris: Aubier, 1953), whose concluding chapter, “Our Lady and the Church,” is the richest mariological treatment in his entire corpus; *Paradoxe et Mystère de l’Église* (Paris: Aubier, 1967), in which he reflects in the third chapter on the significance of treating Mary within *Lumen Gentium*; *L’Éternel Féminin* (Paris: Aubier, 1968), where he reflects on Teilhard de Chardin’s insights on Mary as embodying not only the Church but creation; and *La maternité de l’Église* (Paris: Aubier, 1971), in which he expounds in more detail the development of the mystical identity between Mary and the Church in the Church Fathers. In this chapter I use the following examples and references: *Splendor of the Church*, trans. Michael Mason (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1999); *The*

Church: Paradox and Mystery, trans. James R. Dunne (Staten Island, NY: Ecclesia, 1969); *The Eternal Feminine: A Study on the Text of Teilhard de Chardin*, trans. René Hague (London: William Collins Sons, 1970); and *Motherhood of the Church*, trans. Sr. Sergia Englund, O.C.D. (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1982). I also make frequent use of these: *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*, trans. Lancelot Sheppard and Sr. Elizabeth Englund, O.C.D. (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1988); *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages*, trans. Gemma Simmonds, C.J., Richard Price,

Catholica Mater 199

and Christopher Stephens (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006); and *Christian Faith: The Structure of the Apostles' Creed*, trans. Iltyd Trethowan and John Saward (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1986).

3. This is the key claim of his Mariology in *Splendor of the Church*, 314–77. 4. This is precisely the connection he makes throughout *Eternal Feminine*. 5. De Lubac makes this claim in bits and pieces throughout his massive *Medieval Exegesis*, but he articulates it most concretely in *Splendor of the Church*, 352–65.
6. De Lubac, *Motherhood of the Church*, 163–64. 7. De Lubac, *Christian Faith*, 129–30 and 135–37. 8. De Lubac, *Paradox and Mystery*, 21, and *Splendor of the Church*, 15. 9. We find something similar in Hans Urs von Balthasar's *Theo-Logic*, vol. 1: *The Truth of the World*, trans. Adrian J. Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2000), 16.
10. De Lubac identifies the turn to dialectic in the eleventh century as the origin of the tradition of Christian rationalism at the root of the modern period. See his *Corpus Mysticum*, 226–27.
11. This de Lubacian insight is captured especially keenly in Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger's *Mary: The Church at the Source*, trans. Adrian J. Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2005), 30.
12. It is Scheeben's rediscovery of the centrality of Mary as spouse that opened up the pathway for de Lubac's (and *Lumen Gentium*'s) entire approach. See de Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 314–77, and *Motherhood of the Church*, 17.
13. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 314. 14. *Ibid.*, 314–15. 15. De Lubac rightly sees arguments that Mary's dignity and prerogatives stem from what is "fitting" (*convenientia*) for the Mother of God, common among Neo-Scholastics, as inept. Not only do such arguments themselves give in to the dialectical impulse of prioritizing her divine motherhood to the exclusion of her spousal role, but they also do not reach to the real base of the problem.
16. Cf. Philipp Melancthon, *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* (1531), Article IV (On Justification).
17. Karl Barth, *Die Theologie und die Kirche* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1938), 295–96. See

Hans Urs von Balthasar's description of Barth in *The Theology of Karl Barth*, trans. Edward T. Oakes, S.J. (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1992), 51.

18. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 314–16. 19. Tim Perry, “‘What Is Little Mary Here For?’: Barth, Mary, and Election,” in *Pro Ecclesia* 19, no. 1 (2010): 53.

20. Cf. Karl Barth, *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik* II/1: *Die Lehre von Gott*, Part 1 (Zurich: Theol. Verlag, 1940), 656–57.

21. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 84–85. 22. For a powerful presentation of this aspect of Barth's writings, see Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 52. One can see this tradition's view of the Catholic belief about

200 Troy A. Stefano

the Church acutely expressed by none other than Friedrich Schleiermacher in *The Christian Faith*, ed. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart (Berkeley, CA: Apocryphile Press, 2011), 103, §24.

23. Martin Luther, *Werke*, Weimar edition, ed. J. C. F. Knaake et al., vol. 7 (1883), 568. See also Hilda C. Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1965), 6.

24. Cf. Friedrich Schleiermacher, H. R. Mackintosh, and J. S. Stewart, *The Christian Faith*, translation of the 2nd German edition (Edinburgh, 1928), 403–7.

25. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* I.2, ed. T. F. Torrance and G. W. Bromiley (New York: T. and T. Clark, 1963), 143. Against that claim, one can point to the keen insight of John Henry Newman: “If we take a survey at least of Europe, we shall find that it is not those religious communions which are characterized by devotion towards the Blessed Virgin that have ceased to adore her Eternal Son, but those very bodies, (when allowed by the law,) [punctuation *sic*] which have renounced devotion to her. The regard for His glory, which was professed in that keen jealousy of her exaltation, has not been supported by the event. They who were accused of worshipping a creature in His stead, still worship Him; their accusers, who hoped to worship Him so purely, they, wherever obstacles to the development of their principles have been removed, have ceased to worship Him altogether.” *The Development of Christian Doctrine* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 426.

26. De Lubac, *Christian Faith*, 90, quoting Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Moses*, 159. Cf. de Lubac, *Christian Faith*, 38–62.

27. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 203. 28. De Lubac, *Christian Faith*, 46–47. 29. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 85. 30. De Lubac, *Christian Faith*, 48. 31. De Lubac, *Paradox and Mystery*, 14. 32. Cf. de Lubac, *Motherhood of the Church*, 19. 33. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 315. 34. De Lubac approvingly notes that

the notion of the “concrete universal” was “applied to Christ and to the Virgin Mary by Blondel, Teilhard de Chardin [and] von Balthasar” to explain this idea. In “Mystique et Mystère,” in *Théologies d’occasion* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1984), 73.

35. Huldreich Zwingli, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Schwetschke, 1905), 538. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1986), 678, §149.
 36. De Lubac describes these intra-Catholic temptations at length in *Splendor of the Church*, 279–313.
 37. De Lubac, *Christian Faith*, 40–41. 38. De Lubac, *Paradox and Mystery*, 24. 39. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 321–53. 40. Ibid., 342. See also de Lubac, *Eternal Feminine*, 9–16 and 109–32.
- Catholica Mater* 201
-
41. It is here that we can see Scheeben’s rediscovery bearing the most fruit in de Lubac’s thought. Scheeben wrote: “The factor that really forms the *personal character* in the divine motherhood and . . . represents the *grace of the divine motherhood* is a *supernatural, spiritual union of the person of Mary with the divine Person of her Son, which is effected by the will and power of God*. . . . The simplest, most precise and most natural description of this union with the divine Person is the term *matrimonium divinum* or *conubium Verbi* in the strictest sense of the word.” Joseph Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik* (Freiburg: Herder, 1882), nn. 1588f.
 42. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 366; cf. Rupert of Deutz’s commentary *In Cantica canticorum de Incarnatione Domini*, and the opening of Book I, *Patrologia Latina* (PL) 168, cols. 839–40.
 43. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 334–35. 44. See de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 368–69.
 45. This circularity is the basis and the condition for Mary to be the Church as person and in person up until that point on the Cross. It also means that Mary’s Immaculate Conception, as the basis for her spousal relation, is the concrete “type” of our baptism.
 46. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 171–72. 47. Ibid., 314. 48. Ibid., 316. 49. See de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 220–47. 50. Ibid., 37–39. 51. See de Lubac, *Eternal Feminine*, 9–40. 52. De Lubac calls her “the universal creature” in *Splendor of the Church*, 351. 53. Ibid., 335. De Lubac quotes Gregory the Great, *Hom. 38, In evangelia*, no. 3 (PL 76, col. 1283).
 54. De Lubac, *Eternal Feminine*, 128. 55. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 315.
 56. Cf. *ibid.*, 340. 57. In his *Mystery of the Supernatural*, 54–96, de Lubac makes clear that his approach to nature and grace has four main convictions underlying it: (1) The task is to see grace as gratuitous from the historical and existential

concreteness of *now*, thereby preserving God's freedom and the gratuity of grace both speculatively and, most importantly, existentially. This is his main point. (2) God's call is constitutive, not *accidental*; thus the human desire for God as beatifying end is constitutive of what it means to be human. (3) This means that humans all have the same teleological options, which makes the human drama of infinite value (especially since heaven and hell are therefore the only two options, without a mitigating natural correlative). (4) This view is more "personalist" and "existential"—though not existentialist—and corresponds much better to de Lubac's reading of the tradition.

58. De Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 368.

202 Troy A. Stefano

59. Paul McPartlan, "Mary for Teilhard and de Lubac" (paper delivered to the Oxford branch of the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, November 18, 1987), 2–3.
60. Henri de Lubac, *A Brief Catechesis on Nature and Grace* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1984), 191–234.
61. *Ibid.*, 211, and de Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 184. 62. See de Lubac, *Paradox and Mystery*, 55–58. 63. See de Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 320. 64. *Ibid.*, 320–21 and 341–47. 65. Aidan Nichols, O.P., treats this aspect of de Lubac's writings in *Figuring Out the Church: Her Marks, and Her Masters* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2013), 97–98. 66. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 320.
67. *Ibid.*, 317. 68. *Ibid.*, 342. 69. *Ibid.*, 371. 70. De Lubac, *Motherhood of the Church*, 15, and *Paradox and Mystery*, 62ff. 71. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 316. 72. *Ibid.*, 348. 73. De Lubac, *Eternal Feminine*, 123. 74. Cf. *ibid.* The idea behind this can be found even in Thomas Aquinas, who writes, "The closer something gets to a principle, the more it participates in that principle's effects," *ST* III, q. 27, a. 5, corpus.
75. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 342. 76. *Ibid.*, 348–52. 77. *Ibid.*, 351. 78. *Ibid.* 79. *Ibid.*, 346–47. 80. *Ibid.*, 345–46. 81. De Lubac, *Paradox and Mystery*, 23. 82. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 330. 83. *Ibid.*, 330. 84. *Ibid.*, 351. 85. *Ibid.*, 315, emphasis mine. 86. *Ibid.*, 377. 87. *Ibid.*, 203. 88. *Ibid.*, 203. See de Lubac, *Paradox and Mystery*, 7. 89. De Lubac, *Splendor of the Church*, 329. 90. *Ibid.* 91. Cf. *ibid.*, 331. 92. *Ibid.*, 330. 93. *Ibid.*, chapter 4, "The Heart of the Church," 126–60.

Catholica Mater 203

94. Cf. *ibid.*, 151–52. 95. *Ibid.*, 337. 96. De Lubac, *Motherhood of the Church*,

159. 97. Ibid., 164. De Lubac wrote this as a meditation that he read at a Bible vigil at the Notre Dame Theological Congress in March 1966: “The Church is my mother because she brought me forth to a new life. . . . I am not deaf to the reproaches directed against my mother (truth to tell there are times when I am deafened by them), nor do I fail to see the justice of some of them. But I assert that [these reproaches] . . . are without force and will always remain so. . . . Happy are those who from childhood have learnt to look on the Church as a mother! . . . In a word, the Church is our mother because she gives us Christ. She brings about the birth of Christ in us.” In *Paradox and Mystery*, 4–5.