

In Battle Array with the Co-redemptrix

By: Dr. Mark Miravalle

Dr. Miravalle is Professor of Theology and Mariology at the Franciscan University of Steubenville and President of the international Catholic movement, Vox Populi Mariae Mediatrici. The following is a transcript of a oral address delivered at the International Vox Populi Conference in Rome, May, 1998.

One of the most mysterious, profound and yet mariologically pregnant passages in Sacred Scripture is Revelation 12, verses 1-6:

“And a great sign appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; she was with child and she cried out in her pangs of birth, in anguish for delivery. And another sign appeared in heaven; behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems upon his heads. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven, and hurled them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, that he might devour her child when she brought it forth; she brought forth a male child, one who was to rule all the nations with an iron scepter, but her child was taken straight up to God and to his throne, and the woman escaped into the desert, where she has a place prepared by God, in which to be looked after for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.”

After the heavenly victory of Saint Michael the Archangel casting the dragon to earth, the drama continues in verse 13:

“And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had borne the male child. But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle that she might fly from the serpent into the desert, to the place where she is to be looked after for a time, and times, and half a time. The serpent vomited water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with the flood. But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river which the dragon had poured from his mouth. Then the dragon was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who obey the commandments of God and in themselves bear witness to Jesus.”

This passage of Sacred Scripture refers preeminently and undeniably to our Mother Mary. This teaching is repeated by the great nineteenth century theologian, Matthias Scheeben (who Cardinal Ratzinger said was one of the greatest German theologians of all time), and in the document *Signum Magnum* by Paul VI, and in the magisterial teachings of our Holy Father John Paul II. It is a revelation of the Woman who has been prepared by the Abba Father to battle the great adversary. Sacred Scripture begins and ends with the struggle between the woman and the ancient serpent. In this battle you must have preparation. Our Mother is the Immaculata, as Saint Maximilian Kolbe calls her. She is the woman *sine macula*, created without stain, precisely so that she would be able to do battle with the adversary.

The Song of Solomon 6:10 tells us: “Who is this arising like the dawn, fair as the moon, resplendent as the sun, terrible as a bannered army?” It is precisely the Co-redemptrix, for in the free and just plan of the Abba, the greatest creature struggles against the most heinous creature. She is the perfect masterpiece of the Father.

Moreover, Scripture says that the Woman of Revelation is suffering the pangs of birth. She cries out in anguish. Let us remember, as our holy Faith teaches us, that the Blessed Virgin Mary had no pangs of birth in giving birth to Jesus Christ, in light of her Immaculate Conception. But she has great pangs of birth in giving birth to each one of us, in giving birth to you and me at the foot of the Cross. Because there she suffers, she immolates and offers herself in complete conformity with our Lord Jesus so that we could be her sons and daughters. Scripture scholars tell us that the Woman of Revelation is the Woman at the foot of the Cross. Fr. Stefano Manelli, the eminent Scripture scholar from Italy, points out:

“As ‘Mother of the redeemed,’ Mary is the ‘Woman...who cried out in her pangs of birth, in anguish for delivery’ (Rev. 12:2). This text refers precisely to Calvary, or to the Woman ‘standing by the Cross of Jesus’ (John 19:25), to her who on Golgotha was constituted ‘truly Mother of the members of Jesus Christ,’ to use the expression of St. Augustine quoted also by *Lumen Gentium* (53)...’Woman, behold your son’ and ‘the Woman who cried out in her pangs of birth, in anguish for delivery’ are mutually related texts and when thus read form a unit revealing the mystery of Mary Coredeptrix. ‘John 19 and Revelations 12,’ writes René Laurentin, ‘match each other precisely. In the two texts the maternity of Mary in relation to the disciples is permeated by the context of suffering’” (*Foundations II*, page 101).

The Woman of Revelation is the Co-redemptrix. She is the Woman dressed in battle array by

the Father for battle. This calls each one of us to a critical and personal question. Are we ready and willing, in all spheres, to join the Woman Co-redemptrix in the great battle? Because as Saint Ignatius of Antioch, as Saint Anthony of the Desert, as Saint Ignatius of Loyola tell us, we are in the midst of a spiritual battle whether we acknowledge it or not. And perhaps the most dangerous of all places is to be in a spiritual battle and to not acknowledge it. This is true of our dioceses, this is true of our families, this is true of our very faith. With every battle there is the loss of life, but in this battle there is the loss of more than life; there is the loss of grace, there is the loss of souls.

This is the battle Our Lady Co-redemptrix wages for us, not just historically at Calvary, but right now. And the question remains for each one of us: Are we willing to put on our battle array with her? As we will see, that will demand sacrifice. It will demand the piercing of our hearts as her Immaculate Heart was pierced. In some cases it will demand the offering of our reputations as we stand at the foot of the Cross with the Co-redemptrix. Are we ready to stand with her? This is a question that each of us can only individually answer.

Revelation 12:15 continues to reveal: “The serpent vomited water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with the flood.” What is this water? What is the water that threatens to drown the Immaculate Heart? Is it not, as His Eminence Alfons Cardinal Stickler alluded to, to some large degree the new theological theories that seek to minimize and undermine the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Redemption? Let me seek clarity to the point of being blunt. Is there not a widespread attempt to reduce the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Redemption to a place lower than that which the most Holy Trinity has given her?

As the Co-redemptrix, Mediatrix, and Advocate she is the heart of Trinitarian action of sanctification. Always and forever *as creature*, but yet *at the heart*, because she co-operates as no one else in the work of Redemption.

It is interesting to note that in 1930 our Blessed Mother revealed to the Fatima visionary, Sister Lucia, the five greatest offenses against her Immaculate Heart. Three of the five offenses deal with the denial of the dogmatic and doctrinal truth about her. To deny Our Lady's Dogmas and doctrines *is to deny her very person, her very Heart*.

The first offense against the Immaculate Heart is the denial of her Immaculate Conception. The second offense constitutes blasphemies against her perpetual virginity. The third offense is the denial of Our Lady as the Mother of God and the spiritual Mother of all humanity. Consider

the wound this causes the Immaculate Hearts of this woman who suffers, and continues to suffer mystically, in order to mediate grace to the human heart, while many of her children not only reject the grace but reject her. And yet, in her mother's love, our Mother mediates graces even to those Christians who reject her, because she loves them in spite of their rejection.

The fourth offense is one that once again crushes a maternal heart: those who publicly attempt to instill in the hearts of children indifference, contempt, or even hatred of her Immaculate Heart. Many of you have been to the Holy Lands, and you have seen a millstone. A millstone weighs some five to six hundred pounds. That is what our Lord said is due to those who lead the little ones astray. That is what we bring upon ourselves when we deny the whole truth about the Mother of God. We are not just talking about an ivory tower theology here, for whenever we deny a child its mother we cause the detriment of the child and the crushing of the heart of the mother. The denial of the truth of our Mother leads to the delusion of love in the hearts of the faithful regarding this Mother. This is an error of the most grave nature. The fifth offense against the Immaculate Heart is the desecration of her images, which in a real sense, especially in the East where her holy icons are so revered, are a manifestation of her very presence.

The late Archbishop Fulton Sheen, who was a participant at the Second Vatican Council, later recalled what happened at the Council when Paul VI, the Vicar of Christ, wished to bestow on the Blessed Virgin Mary the title "Mother of the Church." Immediately there were the objections of the theologians. (On a lighter note, I tell my students at the Franciscan University of Steubenville that perhaps the most dangerous occupation in terms of salvation today, after the tax collectors and the prostitutes and the sinners, is the task of being a theologian.)

The theologians objected at the Second Vatican Council for three basic reasons. They said that you cannot give Our Lady the title "Mother of the Church," because, first of all, it is against Tradition. Secondly, it is against the ecumenical mission of the Church. Thirdly, it is bad theology, because she is only the daughter of the Church, not the Mother of the Church. Paul VI responded as follows: He said, number one, the title of Mother of the Church is immersed in Tradition. It is found in the original image of the New Eve. Number two, it is not against the ecumenical movement because anything that furthers our love of Jesus Christ cannot be against the ecumenical movement, and love of Mary furthers the love of Jesus Christ like nothing else. Therefore, love of Mary only advances the ecumenical movement. Number three, he said it is good theology, and in this he referred to the theology of St. Augustine. He said, as Mary gives physical birth to the head of the Body, Jesus Christ, she also gives mystical birth to the members

of the Body. Thus, she is most certainly the Mother of the Church. With that defense, Paul VI then offered it to the bishops, who voted overwhelmingly to grant the Mother of God this title, “Mother of the Church.” Fulton Sheen notes that when Paul VI announced and proclaimed Our Lady as Mother of the Church there was the most thunderous applause ever to be heard in the Basilica of St. Peter, lasting nearly ten minutes.

History is always repeating itself. We know that the same three objections are being raised against Our Lady Co-redemptrix and its definition by certain theological groups. I want to stand up for another significant group of theologians and mariologists, who during the last five years, have produced seven volumes of the most competent theological work, precisely defending not only Our Lady’s role as Co-redemptrix, but the appropriateness of its proper preparation and the need for promptness in a definition. Clearly, there is ample theological manifestation of this truth.

Let us now deal with these three objections which are again arising in various circles today. Number one, that the title Co-redemptrix is not in Tradition. Just as Paul VI responded, we can say with confidence that it is immersed in Tradition. It is found in the image of the New Eve, because, of course, the New Eve is the Mother of the living. In addition, the title “Co-redemptrix” is recorded since the fourteenth century. It has been defended time and time again, not just by the theologians, but the magisterial teachings of Holy Mother Church. Our present Holy Father has used the title six times, and he has also developed a theology richer, more detailed, more profound than any other Vicar of Christ.

Number two, that this is not in line with the ecumenical mission of the Church. In answer, let us go to the words of the Holy Father. In his document, *Ut Unum Sint* (That They May All Be One), he states clearly that the ecumenical mission of the Church never leads to the ending of the proper development of doctrine. In essence he says we can never dilute the fullness of our holy Catholic faith for the sake of ecumenism. In fact, his life, his mission as supreme pontiff, is a challenge to us *because he is fully Marian and fully ecumenical*. These are not contradictory terms. In honesty, we must avoid the presumption that says, based on theology or dialogue alone, we can end that which is already a millennial separation, a thousand year separation. We must go to the Mother. We must, in humility, realize that without the Mother who is always the ultimate instrument of unity, we will not have Christian unity. With the Mother we will have Christian unity, *because a mother unites the hearts of the children like no other can*, and far more than the children can unite themselves.

I want to note here a most important development, the recent Marian encyclical by His Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartolomeo I. About two months ago, the Ecumenical Patriarch, the head of the Orthodox Church, issued a Marian encyclical titled “On the Mother of God and Mother of Us All in the Order of Grace.” Ironically, this letter in many ways answers several theological objections that we cannot have a dogma (according to the theological commission) because it is anti-ecumenical. Now we see someone who is not in full communion with Rome speaking the whole truth about Mary. Is this not a strong answer to those who have said, Our Lady is not in the heart of the ecumenical movement?

Thirdly, there is the objection that Our Lady Co-redemptrix is bad theology. I do not wish to show any lack of charity to those who disagree with our position theologically, but I must point out that the Holy Father, himself, has answered this objection (as well as most other objections). I want to read to you from the Pope’s April 9, 1997 Wednesday Audience, when he stated specifically that the Blessed Virgin Mary, alone, participates in what is called objective Redemption. That she, alone, and uniquely is the Co-redemptrix:

“The collaboration of Christians in salvation takes place after the Calvary event, whose fruits they endeavor to spread by prayer and sacrifice. Mary, instead, co-operated during the event itself and in the role of mother; thus her co-operation embraces the whole of Christ’s saving work. She alone was associated in this way with the redemptive sacrifice that merited the salvation of all mankind. In union with Christ and in submission to him, she collaborated in obtaining the grace of salvation for all humanity...Although God’s call to co-operate in the work of salvation concerns every human being, the participation of the Savior's Mother in humanity’s Redemption is a unique and unrepeatable fact.”

Only the Blessed Virgin Mary participated in the acquisition of the graces of Redemption, and that is why, uniquely, she holds the title “Co-redemptrix.” And here we must be also straightforward in asking why do many people have difficulty with the title “Co-redemptrix”? Is it really a rejection of Our Lady, or is it perhaps a manifestation of a lack of understanding of our own role in the Church, that we do not fully realize our own role as “co-redeemers.” John Paul II on two occasions has used the term “co-redeemers.” Every one of us, everyone who lives on this planet, is called to be a co-redeemer, but we can only participate in subjective Redemption, in the *distribution* of graces. Our Lady participated in the *acquisition* of grace at the foot of the Cross.

Mary Co-redemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate is a sign of contradiction, a sign so much of

the world, and even certain members of the Church, do not want to embrace. In this regard, I want to quote a famous dialogue between the great and now Venerable Cardinal Newman, and the Anglican Pusey. In these dialogues, the Anglican rejected the title Co-redemptrix. He said it was going too far. Cardinal Newman responded: “Why do you protest against our Lady being called Co-redemptrix when you are ready to accept the immeasurably more glorious titles ascribed to her by the Fathers: Mother of God, Second Eve, Mother of All the Living, Mother of Life, Morning Star, Mystical New Heaven, the Center of Orthodoxy, the all-undefiled Mother of Holiness, and the like?” (cf. Letter to Pusey, p. 78).

Newman added, “Nestorius might easily have called the Blessed Virgin Co-redemptrix, but as long as he refused to confess her to be the Theotokos, he failed to give her her proper glory.”

Imagine that a creature gave birth to her own Creator, which is what we must ascribe to the Mother of God. Is the title Co-redemptrix, then, really going beyond that? No, it is simply saying that this greatest of creatures also had the greatest call to participate with the Redeemer. And that will be forever what the title means. Co-redemptrix means “with the Redeemer,” not equal to the Redeemer, not on the same level with the Redeemer. Could our Holy Father use a title that had intrinsic doctrinal problems, as some of the theological critics are accusing? Who is judging who? It is our Holy Father who determines the fullness of our Catholic faith.

At Fatima our Blessed Mother said “God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart.” This is a Trinitarian mission in which our Mother asks us to participate. *God* wishes to establish it. At Akita, the “Fatima of the East,” the approved apparitions which took place in the 1970’s, our Blessed Mother said, “I alone am able to save you from the calamities that approach. Those who place their confidence in me will be saved.” This is how central our Blessed Mother’s role is in the salvation of the world and in the mitigation of things to come. And as His Eminence Cardinal Stickler mentioned in terms of Our Lady of All Nations, another approved devotion, it is a call of mitigation, it is a call of intercession at this critical hour of human history. To understand the urgency of this call, we need only read the newspaper accounts about nuclear testing, markets crashing, pornography conquering much of the western world, family breakdown, the tragic slaughter of abortion of God’s very images in the wombs of women. This is why the New Eve, the Co-redemptrix, is asking us today to continue our labors on her behalf. Because the more we acknowledge her, the more she can mediate the grace of mitigation for our world.

Another objection to the dogma is, “Why must the Holy Father proclaim it, if it is already in

the doctrinal teachings of the Magisterium?” Here we enter one of the deepest mysteries of our faith. It is the mysterious interaction between divine providence and human free will. God himself has willed that human freedom always be respected, even unto death, even unto damnation in some cases. And so, applying this principal to our movement, and to our desire for the solemn declaration of the Dogma, we must understand that only when our Holy Father, in his freedom as Vicar of Christ, proclaims this truth on the highest level of definition will our Lady will be freed to mediate the special graces necessary for our present human situation. In a sense her hands are bound by our freedom. She does not force herself upon our hearts. She must be invited freely. And that is why until our beloved Holy Father makes the proclamation which rests in his heart, she cannot fully mediate the power that God desires for her to have in this critical stage of human history.

What then must be proclaimed, what must be defined? These simple truths: First of all, that she is the Co-redemptrix. She is the New Eve who with her Son redeems all peoples. This was beautifully confirmed in the letter of Patriarch Bartolomeo, when he said: “She [the Mother of God] deliberately followed her Son, Himself God, from His birth to His Passion and Cross. And the God-man from high on the Cross sent forth His most holy mother to all of us as our Mother in the order of grace.” This is a commonality of doctrine we have with our Orthodox brothers and sisters.

Secondly, that she is the Mediatrix of all graces. She is maternal compassion personified. She is the gift from the Abba Father to humanity, and she mediates, as the Second Vatican Council tells us, the gifts of eternal life (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 62). If we seek eternal life for ourselves and for others as co-redeemers, we must go to the heart of Our Lady. That is her God-given task, to mediate the gifts of eternal life.

Thirdly, she is the Advocate, she is the sweet bearer of all of our prayers to the heart of her most precious son. I believe the dogma is ordained by God. It will come. The question is, when will it come? And that question is something each of us must wrestle with, because in the great mystery between divine providence and human free will it is dependent upon *our response* as to when this dogma will come. But when it comes, it will initiate the triumph of our Mother’s Heart as prophesied at Fatima; it will be the means of grace beyond human comprehension, leading to a new springtime for the Church—the new springtime which our Holy Father speaks of so often, a springtime for which we all long.

Revelation 12:16 says: “But the earth came to the help of the woman.” Where is the desert

prepared by the Father for this woman? Where is the woman to flee from the vomitous water of the serpent? Where is her refuge? Ironically and paradoxically, her refuge is in our hearts. Her place of safety is in the hearts of her sons and daughters who have consecrated themselves without condition to her Immaculate Heart. And the door to that refuge is our freedom of choice. We must say “yes” by opening our hearts to her. If we refuse, if we do not let our Mother into our hearts, we are no better than the inn keepers at Bethlehem. Because we have no room for the Child and His Mother in our hearts.

It is easy to look back in history and say, how could the people of the time Jesus walked the earth not have responded? How could the apostles not be sure? How could they be so afraid gathered in the upper room at Pentecost? If I was there I would not have been frightened. If I was there I would respond. If I was there I would let them in. Well, my friends, *we are there*. Each one of us has been given the same invitation as the apostles. Now is the time when we can respond, or when we can say it is too dangerous, it is too threatening, there is too much at risk.

The book of Revelation goes on to say that the woman is given the two wings of the great eagle so that she can fly to the desert. The two wings are none other than a living faith and a burning charity that lifts our Mother away from the adversary. Our Mother wishes us to climb upon the wings of the great eagle through our faith and through our charity in fighting the battle. Now, our Mother has always been straightforward, and so must we. If you let the Immaculate Heart into your heart, if you consecrate yourselves to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, you must understand that your heart will be pierced. In the Greek, there were two words for a sword. There is a word for a little dagger, and a second word for a long crescent sword. St. Luke uses the second term in discussing what was thrust upon the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Simeon’s prophecy said a great long crescent sword will pierce your heart. And this is true of everyone who accepts the battle array, who accepts the call of consecration, and accepts to fight for the Dogma and the Triumph. All of our hearts will be pierced. We must understand this and accept it freely in order to live it. It will be a battle. We must remember, however, that it has always been a battle. At the Council of Ephesus, for example, where the definition of the Mother of God was debated, there were fisticuffs. There was even some concern that whoever lost would be killed by the opposing parties. In the battle for the Immaculate Conception, there were theologians at the throat of the other theologians, until Pius IX said enough, it is time, we will do it now, and we will do it this way.

Now, once again a great theological battle is underway. This should not be a surprise to us. We should expect this and realize that it is part of belonging to the Immaculate Heart. I want to

raise two examples of saints who have made the good fight for the whole truth about our Lord Jesus and the whole truth about our Blessed Virgin Mary. And I believe we should always look to the examples of the saints, because they are not merely abstract figures; they are men and women with free will and grace who accepted the challenge.

The first is St. Louis Marie Grignon De Montfort. He was rejected from diocese after diocese for preaching true devotion to Mary throughout France. His persecution was so significant that finally he went on a barefoot pilgrimage, walking from France to the Holy Father in Rome. When he arrived, he asked Clement XI, is this devotion worthy of God? Is it a true devotion? Clement XI replied by granting De Montfort the title of apostolic missionary because of the great importance of Marian consecration for the Church. St. Louis Marie De Montfort returned to France, continued to preach, continued to be rejected, and died at age forty-three seeing almost nothing of the fruit of his labor. At the time of his death there was no great order of De Montfort Fathers. There was no great mission of consecration to the Immaculate Heart throughout the world. He died in what appeared to be failure, humanly speaking, yet he had persevered to the end for the whole truth about Our Lady. We now see the abundant harvest of his labors, just one example of which is his role in the formation of the spirituality of John Paul II. Without De Montfort's perseverance, our present Holy Father would not have his motto, *Totus Tuus*, and the nineteenth and twentieth century Church would not have the most richly indulgent book after Scripture, *True Devotion To Mary*, and its gift of Marian consecration.

Perhaps the greatest example our Church gives us is the fourth century Patriarch of Alexandria, St. Athanasius. His name was literally synonymous with belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ. Often times a person was asked the question, are you Athanasian?, which meant, do you hold to the divinity of Jesus Christ? St. Athanasius was persecuted for over fifty years in one of the greatest theological white martyrdoms of all history. Athanasius was brought before sixty of his brother bishops during the Arian persecution, and he was accused of almost anything imaginable.

The first thing he was accused of was killing a fellow bishop, the Meletian Bishop, Arsenius. The opposers of Athanasius brought in what they considered clear, empirical evidence, the shriveled hand of Bishop Arsenius, and said, "You see, look what the Patriarch of Alexandria has done because of his beliefs." But by God's grace and prudence, St. Athanasius quickly found the living Bishop Arsenius and introduced him to the hall.

Then the Arians accused him of an act of gross impurity with a local virgin. This woman was

escorted into the trial to give evidence. Wisely, a priest of St. Athanasius, Timothy, stood up and said, “Woman, you are accusing me; have I ever lodged in your home, have I ever touched your body?” And the woman responded, “Yes, you did it, you who are the accused, you are the one who did everything” Immediately she was led out in laughter from all sides as she accused Timothy of the supposing crime of Athanasius.

Finally, this great Bishop, for holding onto belief in the divinity of Jesus, was exiled five times for a total of seventeen years. The Emperor Julian put a price on his head, so that soldiers went from anchorite hermitage to anchorite hermitage in the desert seeking the life of Athanasius, all because he simply accepted the divinity of Jesus Christ.

My friends in Jesus and Mary, *how little you and I have suffered for the Co-redemptrix*. How little we have been mocked, how little we have offered, how seldom, if ever, have we been treated as fools for the Blessed Mother—yet how much she has suffered for each one of us! We are called to have the same conviction as St. Louis Mariae De Montfort, and as St. Athanasius, for the whole truth about Mary. My prayer for you and my call to you is this: Let our names be synonymous with Our Lady Co-redemptrix, Mediatrix of all graces, and Advocate, regardless of threats to our reputations, which heaven does not nearly hold as dear as we sometimes do. Let our names be synonymous with the fight for the whole truth about the Blessed Virgin Mary, because it is not a matter of theology, it is a matter of the salvation of souls. It is a matter of grace, it is a matter of the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart upon which so many souls depend.

I want to read to you from an unpublished manuscript, the words of St. Maximilian Kolbe spoken in Japan in the early 1940’s:

“In the Catholic Church, they have not yet officially declared in public as certain belief that the Immaculata is the Mediatrix of All Graces. But it is a certain truth. It has been well know from the time of the advent of Christians. . . But when the faithful voice a desire requesting to admit it as a public belief, the Church must verify this truth and declare it . . . The source of all graces is God. Everything begins in God. But the graces given to human beings are not given directly from God but through Mary. If you have time to discuss or debate the issue, you should rather pray more. Holy Mary will be pleased if we pray for the early announcement that she is the Mediatrix of All Graces.”

This is the task before us, to pray for the early proclamation of the Dogma. On what day will this grace be given? On what day will we have this proclamation? I would instead ask another

question: *Have we limited the love of our Mother to a specific date?* Have we said we are going to love, and fight, and suffer, and offer for the Co-redemptrix until a certain day, after which we will fight no more? Our love for Our Lady must be eternal, and our fight for the dogma must continue until the Holy Father makes the proclamation. We pray it comes soon. We see the great appropriateness of its proclamation in preparation for the second millennium, but our task is to pray.

I ask you now to pray with me for the gifts the Holy Spirit wishes to bestow through Our Lady, the Mediatrix of all graces, for the Church and the world. Let us continue to pray with the Spirit, let us fight with the Spirit, let us teach in the Spirit, in all the ways that you have already done this. I will not single people out for praise, as our Mother does not. But you know who you are, you who have worked hard for the petitions, who have gone house to house, door to door, inviting people to sign a letter of love for Our Lady; the bishops who have preached, and taught, and been instruments of forwarding this cause in their dioceses; the theologians who have stout-heartedly written in favor of the Dogma; and all those who offer hidden sacrifices for its sake. Let us be faithful to this call, because the fruit is none other than a glimpse of what we see in Revelation 21:

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a great voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes’ ... And he who sat upon the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ Also he said, ‘Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.’” (Rev 21:1-5)

And so let us obey the call of St. Maximilian, let us now pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, always through the Immaculata, and for the grace for each one of us, in our own ways, to take on the battle array for the Co-redemptrix, to be committed in mind and heart to offer her all that we have, Masses, Rosaries, Eucharistic Adorations, teachings, preaching. Let us offer our very lives, because this is the price of consecration, so that She can take refuge in our hearts and we can take refuge in Her’s.

Let us pray: Sweet Mother of God, Mary most holy, you look upon these who are your nothings, such little ones, and yet look not upon our poverty but look upon our hearts, hearts

which are consecrated unconditionally to your Immaculate Heart. Use us as your instruments in ways only you know. Let us offer ourselves unconditionally to the fight for the Dogma, to the fight for the Triumph, for the great spiritual fruit for the era of peace, the Eucharistic reign, the new Pentecost, the new springtime for the Church. Hail Mary....