

## **Mary's apostolic mission and our participation**

The Marian Doctrine of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade

Developed by Emil Neubert, S.M.

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The spiritual sons of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade in the Society of Mary (Marianists) seem to be the only group who have expounded the notion of Mary's Apostolic Mission in any explicit and regular manner. Their treatment is inspired mainly by the contribution of Chaminade to this topic. They extend the doctrine of Mary's Spiritual Motherhood to its full meaning in the spirit of Chaminade's original exposition.

### ***Chaminade's contribution to Mariology***

Chaminade's teaching on the concept of Mary's Apostolic Mission presents nothing radically new and different, except for his clarity and amplification, from what was held by the early Fathers from the second century at least. But his originality and development are manifested in the consequences he draws from the doctrine of Mary's Spiritual Maternity regarding her present role in the world. He clearly establishes Mary's Apostolic Mission as a corollary of her Spiritual Maternity. He explained Mary's Apostolic Mission as a particular, essential, and integral aspect of her social functions as Spiritual Mother and Associate of the Redeemer, who must yet apply to us the fruits of the Redemption.

Chaminade, in the spirit of the French School of Spirituality, was a precursor of the coming Age of Mary and the doctrines of salvation it highlights. In reality he emphasizes a basic element and consequence of Christology, Soteriology, ecclesiology, eschatology.

As Chaminade's most prominent and prolific herald, Neubert is also the clearest in presenting this Marian doctrine. Neubert distinctly and limpidly adapts the theological principles to practical pastoral living in concert with magisterial and contemporary teaching, and underscores the role of the laity in collaboration with clergy and religious.

This presentation, then, is a tribute to both master and disciple, Blessed William Joseph Chaminade and Father Emil Neubert; to their integration of the Marian perspective in all theology, and to their synthesis of Mary's participation in the magnanimous design of the Most Blessed Trinity.

### *Neubert and his Marian writings*

Formerly director of the Marianist International Seminary for over a quarter-century, the late Father Emil Neubert, S.M., (d.1967) was a member of the International Marian Academy.

Without a doubt he is the most renowned and most prolific Marianist writer about our Blessed Mother. Neubert enjoyed an international reputation as a Mariologist. His numerous books and articles about the Virgin Mary have had a wide circulation and several have been translated from French into other languages. He possessed the gift of lending effective expression in clear and simple discourse to profound ideas. Father Peter Resch, S.M., terms him without question the foremost doctor of Mariology among the sons of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, Neubert has done more than any other to develop and to popularize the Marian doctrine of Chaminade.

Neubert devotes an entire book to the Apostolic Mission of our Blessed Mother and gives summary treatment to this function in more than a half-dozen others.<sup>2</sup>

In his foreword to *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre* he mentions that he has touched upon this topic in most of his Marian books. He also states that he did not "discover" this doctrine but inherited it from Chaminade.<sup>3</sup>

1. Emil Neubert, S.M., *Mary in Doctrine*, (Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee 1954), Preface, p. v.
2. *La Devotion a Marie*, (Editions Xavier Mappus; Le Puy 1942); *Mary in Doctrine; La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, (Editions Alsatia; Paris 1956); *Our Gift from God*; trans. Sylvester P. Juergens, S.M., (n.p. [St Louis, Missouri], privately published, n.d. [1962]; *La Doctrine Mariale de M. Chaminade* (Editions du Cerf; Paris n.d. [1937]); *My Ideal, Jesus, Son of Mary*, (Maryhurst Press; Kirkwood, Missouri 1947); *Queen of Militants* (Grail Publications; St Meinrad, Indiana 1947); *Our Mother*, (Grail Publications; St. Meinrad, Indiana 1953), trans of *Nôtre Mere* (Editions Xavier Mappus; Le Puy 1941).
3. Neubert, *La Missioin apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 12, n. 3.

### *His approach to Mariology*

The Introduction to *Mary in Doctrine* traces in broad strokes the development of Marian theology.<sup>4</sup> In the Introduction, Neubert explains the method of exposition he uses in the book, and gives a summary of some key ideas found in the special appendix of the first edition of *Marie dans le Dogme*.<sup>5</sup> The major part of this orientation leads to the formulation of Neubert's principle of analogy for Mariology. Some excerpts from the Introduction will clarify his approach.

The history of the Mariological beliefs shows that the faithful – simple Christians with their pastors – have professed each one of these long before the theologians busied themselves with them....

St. Thomas speaks of a double manner of judging: “by reasoning and by a certain ‘connaturality’ (conformity of nature) with the things to be judged.”<sup>6</sup> ... St. Thomas calls this connaturality with an inclination, a sympathy. Pascal makes an analogous distinction with regard to the difference between the geometrical mind and the subtle mind.... [for example, geometricians] are lost when it comes to delicate matters in which principles are not so readily perceived. Here principles are barely seen—rather they are felt.<sup>7</sup>

4. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 1-3. this exposition also appears in “The Development of Marian Doctrine,” *Marian Library Studies* No. 7: (October 1960) published by the Marian Library, University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio.
5. This appendix is titled *Regles pour juger des privileges de Marie*. Neubert did not include it in future editions because he thought it pertained more to theology properly so-called. See Neubert, *Marie dans le Dogme*(Editions Spes; Paris 1946), *deuxieme edition*, p. 13, n.1. A similar treatment of the development of Marian theology is found in Emil Neubert, S.M., *De la Decouverte Progressive des Grandeurs de Marie*(Editions Spes; Paris 1951), *premiere partie*. The first edition of Neubert's *Marie dans le Dogme* appeared in 1933. The second edition, considerably reorganized and expanded, was published in 1946. The chapter on *La Mission Apostolique de Marie* was added in the second edition. See Neubert, *Marie dans le Dogme, deuxieme edition*. p. 12. *Mary in Doctrine* was translated from the third edition, which is dated 1953. The Introduction is not the same in the second and third French editions of *Marie dans le Dogme*.
6. *Summa Theologica*, II-II, q. 45, a. 2., c.
7. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 2.

“Of course,” remarks Neubert, “the Christian instinctively realizes that the similarity between the privileges of Christ and those of His Mother is in no sense identity.”<sup>8</sup>

After indicating these parallels in the mysteries of Jesus and Mary, Neubert cautions that the Christian realizes that Mary is only a creature, dependent on Christ for everything. Her grace is adapted to her own nature and to her special function. Mary’s participation in the prerogatives of her Son is the work of the filial piety of the Son of God for His Mother.<sup>9</sup>

### *Mariological principle of analogy*

There was no formal statement of this analogy between the prerogatives of Jesus and those of Mary by the earliest teachers of Christianity, although it was “felt from the earliest times and felt clearly enough to guide the judgment of the faithful with astonishing sureness amidst often contradictory opinions....”<sup>10</sup> In the first half of the eighth century St. John Darnascene affirmed it regarding the Assumption.

It was necessary that the Mother should have entered into the possession of all the goods of her Son, and that she should have been venerated by all creation as the Mother and Handmaid of God.... The Son, in fact, has submitted the entire creation to the dominion of His Mother.<sup>11</sup>

Neubert also cites St. Louis de Montfort, who repeats a truth already long recognized: “Whatever is proper to [the Son of God] by nature, is proper to Mary by grace.”<sup>12</sup>

To give this truth precision, Neubert formulates his principle of analogy for Mariology.

8. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 6.

9. Neubert, *Ibid.*

10. Neubert, *Ibid.*

11. *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. Migne (Paris), 96, col. 741, quoted in Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 6-7.

12. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 7.

To the various privileges of the humanity of Jesus there correspond analogous privileges in Mary, in the manner and in the degree required by the difference between her condition and that of her Son.<sup>13</sup>

The rule has been used in this form by several theologians who have recognized its fruitfulness.<sup>14</sup>

Theologians had earlier formulated two other rules in this regard.<sup>15</sup> The rule of *fitness* states that God accorded to Mary every privilege which befits her in herself and because of her Son. The rule of the *privileges of the Saints given to Mary* affirms that every privilege that God accorded on a saint, He must have conferred on Mary either in the same or in a more perfect form. Neubert takes the position that

These two rules are valid but rather vague in their application.... [They] have never helped the theologians to discover a new truth but only to confirm truths arrived at by the Christian consciousness of the faithful. On the contrary, the rule of analogies between the privileges of Christ and those of Mary is precise and fruitful. Following it the faithful have discovered all the Marian truths implicitly contained in Scripture and known by us today.<sup>16</sup>

Neubert also views the principle of analogies as more comprehensive than the praiseworthy and helpful principle of *consortium*,

... in virtue of which Mary is considered as the associate of Christ in His mission. The rule of analogies between Jesus and Mary applies to their functions -- as does the principle of consortium -- as well as to their other prerogatives.<sup>17</sup>

13. Neubert, *Ibid.* Neubert, *De la Decouverte Progressive des Grandeurs de Marie*, 56. Neubert first propounded this principle of analogy in the 1933 edition (*premiere edition*) in *Marie dans le Dogme*, 293, in the special appendix entitled *Regles pour juger des privileges de Marie*. He also elaborates the principle in *De la Decouverte Progressive des Grandeurs de Marie*, 43-62.

14. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 8, n. 12. Neubert, *De la Decouverte Progressive des Grandeurs de Marie*, 58, n. 1.

15. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, p. 7; *De la Decouverte Progressive des Grandeurs de Marie*, 57.

16. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 7.

17. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 7-8.

Their prerogatives are usually considered as two groups: those which are primarily social functions and those which are regarded as personal privileges in view of, or consequent upon, their functions. However, this is not an absolute distinction; for their privileges are functions and their functions, privileges.<sup>18</sup>

But he considers the principle of analogies as only one of the lights that guide the faithful in the discovery of Mary's privileges. Because there is analogy only, there will be differences as well as resemblances in the prerogatives of Jesus and Mary. The resemblances will be indicated only in a general way by the principle of analogy. The manner and degree of the resemblances between the prerogatives of Jesus and Mary are estimated by the faithful "with the help of certain related truths furnished either by Holy Scripture or by the common teaching of Christian doctrine."<sup>19</sup> For example, belief in the Assumption is determined by considering "not only Christ's Ascension and His place at the right hand of the Father but also the general doctrine of the resurrection of the body, together with St. Paul's teaching concerning our body, and the like." Neubert believes that these "related truths" have the added advantage of directing the mind toward the discovery of other Marian prerogatives.<sup>20</sup>

Neubert concluded his explanation of the development of Mariology by pointing out that

...the faithful, inspired by Scriptural data and by common Christian doctrine, deduce from what seem to be very vague Scriptural teachings on the Mother of Jesus, an increasing number of explicit statements. They are sure that they are not wrong; but, in fact, may they not be? To adhere completely to a given doctrine and to live by it, one must be certain of its truth beyond all possible shadow of doubt.... We do have three criteria [of infallibility for these Marian doctrines] -- the same three we have for all truths of faith [the common belief of the faithful, the ordinary magisterium of the Church, and papal infallibility].<sup>21</sup>

The stage set, we proceed to Neubert's exploration of Mary's Apostolic Mission.

18. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 15.

19. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 8.

20. Neubert, *Ibid.*

21. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 8-9.

### *Chaminadean background and Christocentric foundation of his Mariology*

In *Life of Union with Mary*, the spirituality of Chaminade is deftly summarized by Neubert in the statement that Chaminade insisted vigorously “on the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ and on our identification with Jesus, as well as upon the Spiritual Maternity of Mary and her Apostolic Mission in the world.”<sup>22</sup>

Our Blessed Mother is characterized by Neubert as the ‘Perfect Militant,’ the perfect apostle of Christianity.<sup>23</sup> He recalls three reasons why she is “Queen of Militants” in his book bearing this title. First, she is the Cooperatrix with Christ in the Redemption, and with Him must continue this work by applying to each soul in particular the fruits of the Redemption. This Apostolic Mission she has received directly from God. Secondly, Mary is the Distributrix of All Graces. Finally, Mary is the Mother of all.<sup>24</sup> With this capsule survey, we have an introduction to Neubert’s examination of Mary’s Apostolic Mission.

Neubert founds his teaching on a Christocentric core. A good example of his exposition of Jesus as our Model is found in *Life of Union with Mary*.<sup>25</sup> The first chapter is introduced by several Scriptural thoughts indicating that the most perfect Christian is the one who succeeds best in reproducing all the dispositions of Jesus.<sup>26</sup> Like Chaminade, he bases himself on Johannine and Pauline doctrine. Later in this work he quoted Chaminade as an authority in confirming that our Blessed Mother exercises, in continuing our education, a primary influence in our spiritual transformation. She forms Christ in us.<sup>27</sup> Because every Christian is another Christ, and Christ came to save the world, Neubert then devotes several chapters to outlining the Apostolic Mission that follows Mary’s functions as Spiritual Mother, Coredemptrix, Distributrix of All Graces, and Queen of the Universe, and our obligation to cooperate in this mission.<sup>28</sup> His brief treatment follows the same general lines as his more lengthy expositions of our subject and establishes the essential relationship between devotion to Mary and the apostolate.<sup>29</sup>

22. Neubert, *Life of Union with Mary* (Bruce Publishing Co.; Milwaukee 1959) 26.

23. Neubert, *Queen of Militants*, 30.

24. Neubert, *Ibid.* 30-34. Chaps. III-VIII give a thorough consideration of these points.

25. Neubert, *Life of Union with Mary*, 21-28.

26. Jn 13,15; Rom 8,29 Phil 2,5.

27. Neubert, *Life of Union with Mary*, 135. *Spirit of Our Foundation*, Vol. I, p. 144. Gal 4,19.

28. Neubert, *Life of Union with Mary*, 166-181, especially pp. 166-172.

29. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 172.

### *His pattern in studying Mary's Apostolic Mission*

In all his works, Neubert affirms that Mary's Apostolic Mission is the immediate consequence of her functions as Spiritual Mother, Coredeptrix, and Dispensatrix of All Graces. This main pattern of his doctrinal interpretations is found in an abridged treatment in *Our Mother*, in expanded form in *Mary in Doctrine*, and in extensive development in *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*. From these we will draw a compendium of his affirmations on the topic.

The procedure followed by Neubert in his investigation of Mary's Apostolic Mission is to study and relate evidence from Sacred Scripture, the Tradition of the Church, the Liturgy, the ordinary Magisterium of the Church, and pronouncements by the pontiffs. But first he considers some ideas regarding the concepts of an "apostle" and the "apostolate."<sup>30</sup>

#### *The notion of "apostle" and "apostolate"*

The Gospel tells us that Our Lord chose twelve disciples whom He called "apostles," meaning "those who are sent."<sup>31</sup> Actually, of course, Christ was the First Apostle, who selected the Twelve to help Him accomplish the mission for which He was sent: "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."<sup>32</sup> In the plan of God, all the three Divine Persons intervened in the Incarnation to send the First Apostle: the Father sent; the Son was sent; and the Holy Spirit, in making fruitful the Immaculate Virgin Mary, gave the Son the humanity needed to accomplish His apostolic mission.<sup>33</sup> The First Apostle, when He ascended into heaven, commissioned the Twelve to teach and baptize and promised He would be with them until the world's consummation.<sup>34</sup> Christ warned them of Satan's opposition, but He encouraged them and their successors with His continued presence in their prolongation of this apostolate.<sup>35</sup>

In the notion of the apostolate Neubert sees three ideas: being sent by God, wresting souls from Satan to make them children of God, and dedication without reckoning on final success.<sup>36</sup>

30. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 15-17; *Mary in Doctrine*, 125.

31. Lk 6, 12-13; Mk 3, 14; Mt 10, 1-2.

32. Jn 20, 21.

33. Lk 1, 35 Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 15.

34. Mt 28, 18-20

35. Jn 16, 4; Mt 28, 20.

36. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 16.



Tradition implies that Mary has also received an Apostolic Mission because God made her the New Eve, the Associate of Christ. Yet her mission is identical neither with that of the other apostles nor with Christ's, although it resembles that of Christ more than that of the other apostles. The mission confided to Mary by Christ contains the twofold objective of spreading the doctrine of salvation and the practice of the Christian life. Mary's Apostolic Mission embraces at the same time Christian education and Christian living.<sup>37</sup>

### *The testimony of Sacred Scripture*

What the Old Testament prefigured vaguely, the New Testament expresses with clarity. Here Neubert finds distinct indications of Mary's Apostolic Mission in the Annunciation, the Visitation, the first revelations of Christ to the world, the Cana nuptials, the Passion and Death on Calvary, the Pentecost retreat in the Cenacle. He also speculates concerning Mary's influence on the Gospels by St. Luke and St. John and the impact she had on the apostolic action of St. Peter, St. James, and St. Paul.<sup>38</sup>

The New Testament plainly realizes what the Old Testament foreshadows in Semitic imagery. Neubert explains:

It tells us how Mary freely and knowingly performed an apostolic act of infinite significance, an act from which would flow every future apostolate and which gave us the apostle per se, Jesus Christ. It shows us or allows us to surmise Mary's action with reference to the principal persons who were to share in the apostolate of Jesus. It was through the visit of Mary that the greatest of prophets, the one who was to go before the Lord to prepare His way, was sanctified and anointed by the Holy Spirit. It was near Mary that the shepherds of Bethlehem became the first apostles of the Messiah among the Jews and the Magi among the Gentiles. It was when receiving the Divine Child from Mary's arms that the prophets of the temple, Simeon and Anna, proclaimed before pious souls of Jerusalem the appearance of the Christ

37. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 16-17.

38. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 23-31.

who was so ardently awaited. It was the miracle obtained by Mary at Cana that confirmed the faith of the first five apostles. It was to Mary that Jesus, dying, confided him who represented the twelve apostles and the apostles of all times. Finally, it was after their retreat made in union with Mary that the Twelve received the Holy Spirit, who completed their apostolic formation and sent them into the world, powerful in word and work.<sup>39</sup>

### *The witness of Tradition and history*

The Apostolic Mission of Mary embraces a twofold work: the apostolate of teaching Christianity and the apostolate of Christian living -- to teach the true faith and to put it into practice. Surveying Tradition in this context, Neubert studies Mary as "Guardian of the Faith," and as "Mother and Educatrix of souls."<sup>40</sup>

The apostolate of Christian doctrine includes negative and positive aspects: preserving orthodoxy against falsification and propagating it to the entire world.

Neubert calls Mary a logical argument against heresy whose victorious action appears under various viewpoints. Her functions and privileges present a logical opposition, an argument of reason against heresy. Especially in the battle of the early Fathers against the Christological heresies is this evident.<sup>41</sup>

He makes a general examination of the Christological heresies that plagued the early Church and examines Mary's involvement in them.<sup>42</sup> The issues are outlined with the roles played by the great Doctors and Fathers in extirpating error. He looks into the questions of Christ's true humanity and Mary's human maternity; the divinity of Christ and the virginity of Mary; and the personal union of two natures in Christ through Mary's virginal conception, her Divine Maternity.<sup>43</sup> The liturgical text

39. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 130.

40. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 33-116; *Mary in Doctrine*, 132.

41. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 33; *Mary in Doctrine*, 131.

42. A comprehensive study of the earliest heresies, and their relation to Mariology, will be found in Emil Neubert, S.M., *Marie dans l'Eglise Antienneeeme* (Gabalda; Paris 1908).

43. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 33-40; *Mary in Doctrine*, 132.

repeated on so many feasts of our Blessed Mother is a reminder of her mission in preserving orthodoxy of faith: "Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, for you alone have vanquished all heresies in the whole world."

If Mary is a convincing argument in the refutation of heresies, for the majority she is a more convincing argument of the heart. This is examined in regard to certain heresies.<sup>44</sup> Neubert then studies this guardian of true Christianity engendering a deep spirit of faith and the dispositions fundamental to a healthy supernatural life.<sup>45</sup> Of all the errors condemned by the Church through the centuries, never was any Marian doctrine directly implicated. She possesses perfect faith and those who live habitually in her company acquire a spirit of faith and a sense of orthodoxy.<sup>46</sup>

Several miraculous interventions of Mary in the history of the Church are marshaled before us by Neubert to exemplify her efficacious role in defending and propagating the true faith.<sup>47</sup>

Still more comprehensive and more constant than Mary's role as Guardian of the Faith is her mission as Mother and Educatrix of souls. In the intimacy of Christian hearts she teaches them the lessons of the supernatural life and forms Christ in them -- an influence of which the Christian is often only feebly conscious.<sup>48</sup> In this regard and in the framework of Tradition, Neubert reviews Mary's action as a model and aid to sanctity in the Church's early times; her relation with the apostolic religious societies and the diocesan clergy; and to officially mandated Catholic Action, especially the Marian lay associations -- the Sodality, the Children of Mary, the Militia of Mary Immaculate and the Legion of Mary.

In the apostolates of teaching true Christian doctrine and of teaching the practice of Christ's precepts, Mary's role is not a passive one but an active one. From the numerous examples referred to by Neubert, it is easily seen that

... preoccupation with orthodoxy finds its source in the intimate and vital relations of confidence and of love which have always existed between the Christians and their heavenly Mother. It

44. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 41-48; *Mary in Doctrine*, 133.

45. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 49-59.

46. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 49; *Mary in Doctrine*, 133.

47. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 61-69.

48. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 71-138; *Mary in Doctrine*, 134-136.

is the love of Mary which has preserved the love of the true faith. Besides, it is undoubtedly through the graces of light and zeal that the Distributrix of All Graces makes of her very devoted children the most intrepid and skillful defenders of the true doctrines of Christ.<sup>49</sup>

When considering the living of Christianity Neubert remarks:

The missionaries notice that it is easier for them to enlighten and touch the minds and hearts of the pagans, by speaking to them first of the Mother of Jesus and by fostering among them the ordinary Marian devotional practices.... Respect for Mary promotes the rights of women and of children and establishes truly Christian families. Love for Mary among these converted populations assures perseverance in the new-found faith.<sup>50</sup>

Though an imposing mass of testimony about the Apostolic Mission of Mary has been drawn from Tradition, Neubert adds still more – the direct, miraculous interventions of the Queen of Apostles in modern times.<sup>51</sup>

Events and documents of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have amply verified the prophecies of St. Louis de Montfort and Blessed William Joseph Chaminade relative to the triumphant apostolic action of Mary Immaculate in these times. But, in Neubert's opinion, this did not suffice for our Blessed Mother. She added further evidence of her apostolic concern for our salvation by miraculously appearing to her children. Though these appearances were made to individuals, the messages were intended for the conversion and sanctification of all the faithful. He restricts his observations to the apostolic bearing of ecclesiastically approved apparitions.<sup>52</sup>

Neubert observes that it generally takes a long time for a zealous and effectively organized religious society or apostolic association to produce results in propagating

49. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 133.

50. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 137. See also the study by Anton Freitag, S.V.D., "Mary and the Work of the Missions," *Katholische Marienhunde*, Vol. III, *Maria im Christenleben*, Paul Strater, ed. (Verlg Ferdinand Schöningh; Paderborn 1951).

51. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 139-169.

52. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 139-140.

a message from our Blessed Mother. But to transform rapidly a modern era which was sterile from a Marian point of view to one which is eminently fruitful, the Virgin Mother intervened directly and personally.<sup>53</sup>

### *The Liturgy*

When presenting the witness of the Liturgy in affirming Mary's Apostolic Mission, Neubert examines certain Marian feasts and recalls the victories which some commemorate. Special attention is given to the feasts of Mary, Help of Christians; Holy Name of Mary; Our Lady of Mercy; and Mary, Queen of Apostles. The apostolic meaning of various prayers from the Liturgy of the Hours and the Mass for some feasts is recalled.<sup>54</sup>

The ancient antiphon, long used in the Liturgy, which hails Mary as the conqueror of all heresies has already been cited.

The Liturgy holds an incontestable place in clarifying the truth of doctrine. The principle of *lex supplicandi, lex credendi* has been employed since the origin of the Church.<sup>55</sup>

### *Papal Teachings*

Although Mary's Apostolic Mission has never been solemnly defined by the supreme authority of the Church, a considerable number of popes, especially in recent times, have taught it as an acceptable doctrine. Before naming particular papal documents and citing appropriate texts, Neubert recalls the evident fact that all through the ages the Pontiffs have recommended recourse to Mary when the Church and the faithful have been menaced by dangers.<sup>56</sup>

Neubert concentrates attention on Popes Leo XIII, St. Pius X, Benedict XV,

53. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 139.

54. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 171-172.

55. This principle is also expressed *lex orandi, lex credendi*. A French rendition is *telle priere, telle foi*. Used from earliest times, the principle was officially formulated in the fifth century by Pope St. Celestine. See Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 171.

56. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 173.

Pius XI and Pius XII.<sup>57</sup> He quotes from each of them and comments on their thoughts.<sup>58</sup>

### *Theological Precisions*

After a thorough review of this notion as a teaching based on Holy Scripture, contained in Tradition, and taught by the ordinary Magisterium of the Church, Neubert affirms that belief in Mary's Apostolic Mission is part of the deposit of Catholic faith. This accomplished, he proceeds to define exactly this notion of Mary's Apostolic Mission, to establish its foundations, to note its relations to the other functions of the Blessed Virgin, and to distinguish it from the apostolic mission of Christ and that of other Christians.<sup>59</sup> These theological precisions also provide a recapitulation of the entire notion.

It was seen earlier that the mission of an apostle supposes a sending by Christ to convert and sanctify souls by one's total dedication to this end. Neubert shows that the sending of Mary by God, her apostolic commission to cooperate in the salvation of the human race, is founded on her predestination as Mother of the Saviour and on the enactment of the Incarnation. She pronounced her *fiat* with the most apostolic verve and energy ever to spring from a human heart. This apostolic willingness and determination, far from weakening with the passage of time or the extreme severity of ordeals, intensified, especially when encountering trials. And her apostolic willingness endures in heaven as do all our supernatural dispositions but incomparably more perfect than on earth, immutable in its orientation yet constantly adapting to meet new circumstances.<sup>60</sup>

On Mary's *fiat* depends the Incarnation of the Son of God and His state of apostle, the apostolate of the Twelve, and that of the unending succession of popes, bishops, priests, religious and lay apostles until the end of time, and, during all eternity, the beatific vision of innumerable myriads of blessed.<sup>61</sup>

57. Pope John XXIII and his successors are not included because Neubert's writings on this subject were published prior to the death of Pius XII.

58. Neubert, Neubert, *Ibid.*, 171-182.

59. Neubert, Neubert, *Ibid.*, 183-205; *Mary in Doctrine*, 124- 129; *Our Mother*, 53-56.

60. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 183-184.

61. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 184.

From the viewpoint he has outlined, Neubert continues his exposition by studying the various functions which will show Mary in the conduct of her mission. This distinction is made regarding Mary's diverse functions: some call for or demand her Apostolic Mission; others, in a certain manner, coalesce or are combined with it integrally and inseparably as particular applications pertaining to it.<sup>62</sup>

### ***Functions requiring her Apostolic Mission***

The social functions of Mary that call for and require her Apostolic Mission are her Maternity in relation to Jesus, her cooperation with Jesus in the Redemption, and her association in all the mysteries of Jesus.<sup>63</sup> Each of these functions is examined in turn by Neubert. Called by God to give us Jesus in the mystery of the Incarnation, Mary's social and apostolic role in this mystery is to bring Him to each human being. This will be her continual mission.<sup>64</sup>

Having given Jesus to the entire world in general on the day of the Incarnation, she must give Him to every creature in particular throughout the ages.... With Jesus she worked at the Redemption of all, with Jesus she must work at their conversion and sanctification.<sup>65</sup>

Until the end of the world Christ must continue His redemptive mission. This is the apostolate -- the application and continuation of the Redemption. Cooperating with Christ the Redeemer is Mary the Coredemptrix. Her coredemptive function necessarily assigns to her an apostolic role -- applying to each soul the grace of salvation and divine filiation which she merited for us in principle, subordinate to and with Christ. This Apostolic Mission must continue until the consummation of the world.<sup>66</sup>

Mary cooperated with Jesus in the Redemption of mankind. Yet the Redemption, although merited in principle on Calvary for all, is not actually accomplished until

62. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 185-192.

63. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 185-187.

64. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 185-186.

65. Emil Neubert, S.M., "Mary and the Apostolate," *Marian Reprints*, No. 3, (Marian Library, University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio), p. 3.

66. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et ia Nôtre*, 186-187.

it is applied to every individual soul.... The cooperation which Mary gave her Son at Nazareth and on Calvary she must give until the end of time.<sup>67</sup>

It has always been the common belief of Christians that the God-Man shared His prerogatives with His Mother as far as she was capable of participating in them. Here Neubert is referring to the Mariological principle of analogy which he formulated in the first edition of *Marie dans le Dogme* and which we cited earlier.<sup>68</sup>

Frequently in his writings Neubert returns to the principle of analogy or refers to it. He considers the "Mystery of Mary" to be "the participation of the Blessed Virgin in the mission of her Son, a mission God wanted her to share when He made her our Mother."<sup>69</sup>

Mary... has always been, and continues to be, participant in all the activities -without exception -- of Christ the Redeemer. Her functions are absolutely unique. And that is the Mystery of Mary.<sup>70</sup>

For, the first and true Apostle of humankind is Christ. If, then, Mary participates in all the different functions of her Son, it is also necessary that she participate in His apostolate. It is necessary that the Son share with His Mother, according to the measure she is capable of receiving, His apostolic mission, which will endure as long as there are souls to save and sanctify.<sup>71</sup>

### ***Functions pertaining to her Apostolic Mission***

Continuing her theological summary, Neubert reviews the functions of Mary which pertain to her Apostolic Mission, the offices inseparable from and integral with it. These are her responsibilities as Distributrix of All Graces and Spiritual Mother.<sup>72</sup>

67. Neubert, "Mary and the Apostolate," 3.

68. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 7; *De la Decouverte Progressive des Grandeurs de Marie*, 56.

69. Emil Neubert, "The Mystery of Mary," *Estudios Marianos*, X (1950), reproduced in English translation as *Marian Reprints*, No. 16, 1.

70. Neubert, "The Mystery of Mary," 4.

71. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 187.

72. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 189-192.



Mary's distribution of all graces is an old doctrine in the Church, and recent popes have taught it on many occasions.<sup>73</sup> These popes have frequently affirmed that it is a natural consequence of her coredemptive role. The Virgin Mary cooperated with Christ in the acquisition of all graces. It is altogether natural, then, that she cooperate with Him in their distribution. Without doubt God has willed that all graces come to us through Mary and that we should seek them through her. Every apostolic action depends absolutely on divine grace. Consequently, all activities of the apostolate stem from her, relate to her.<sup>74</sup>

Neubert reasons that Mary's functions as Coredemptrix and Mother of all

... prove that God ought to confide to her a universal Apostolic Mission. Her office of Distributrix of All Graces proves that He did confide such a mission to her.<sup>75</sup>

Like Chaminade, his master, Neubert emphasizes the importance of knowing Mary's Universal Mediation in order to understand the significance of Mary's role in the economy of salvation, in the life of every person. Close examination reveals that her Universal Mediation is combined with and correlated to her function of Spiritual Maternity.

Mary, the Mother of Christ, is our Mother because she merited [congruously, through and with her Son] supernatural life for us as Coredemptrix, and as Distributrix of All Graces she gives this life to each one of us, nourishes it and brings it to fullness.<sup>76</sup>

All who reach the beatitude of heaven, without exception, owe their glory to the Mediatrix of All Graces.

As Mother of Christ, Mary is also the Mother of all the members of His Mystical Body. God did not first will the Maternity of Mary in relation to His Son, and then later, almost as an afterthought, desire her Maternity in our regard. From all eternity God willed the Incarnation of His Son as head of His Mystical Body. Therefore,

73. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 189

74. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 189-190.

75. Neubert, "Mary and the Apostolate," 4.

76. Neubert, *Our Mother*, 52.

Mary is Mother of "the Whole Christ." Here again, Neubert displays the mind of Chaminade in stressing these key concepts.

In a brief analysis of motherhood, Neubert teaches that every mother is the first apostle of her children: she has the responsibility to preserve her offspring from sin and have them baptized into supernatural life.

*A fortiori* Mary is the first apostle of her children. Two reasons are adduced: (1) she is the most perfect of mothers; (2) she is the Mother of their supernatural life.<sup>77</sup>

An ordinary mother gives physical life to her child in the natural order. But the situation is totally different with Mary. She is a Supernatural Mother whose maternity consists entirely in giving supernatural life. In Mary, maternity is practiced by her apostolic action, and all her apostolic action is related to her maternity.<sup>78</sup>

What, in fact, does Mary do to be so much our Mother? Neubert succinctly states that she brings us forth in the life of Jesus, preserves and maintains this life, and aids its growth to the attainment of the stature of Christ. Mary develops the Christ-life in her children by guiding them from spiritual infancy to spiritual maturity. Therefore, concludes Neubert, Mary is essentially apostle because she is essentially Mother. Either we must attribute to her a supereminent Apostolic Mission or we must deny her Spiritual Maternity.<sup>79</sup>

In this same vein Neubert asks:

Can we imagine that God made her mother of men and did not give her in the highest degree the greatest of all desires in the heart of a Christian mother -- to see her children eternally happy with her? Or, having given her that desire, would He refuse her the means of realizing it? All the reasons given to prove the eagerness of Mary to receive sinners prove likewise her Apostolic Mission.... To say that God confided to Mary a universal Apostolic Mission is simply to affirm that He made her a worthy mother of the Saviour and of mankind.<sup>80</sup>

77. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 191.

78. Neubert, *Ibid.*, *Mary in Doctrine*, 127.

79. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 191.

80. Neubert, "Mary and the Apostolate," 4.

### *The centrality of Mary's Spiritual Maternity*

Neubert finds the whole reason for Mary's role in the Divine Plan in motherhood – to be Mother of Jesus and of us. Mary's Motherhood is also the entire *raison d'être* of her other functions. This means that she is Mother, not because she was called by God to be Coredemptrix and Distributrix of All Graces, but she is Coredemptrix and Distributrix because she was called to be Mother.<sup>81</sup>

The coalescent relationship of these functions to one another and to Mary's Apostolic Mission are summarized by this terse passage:

Of course, to be truly their Mother, she must really and truly give them this life [grace]. In other words, she had to contribute something to the mystery of the redemption, which is the cause of all grace. Hence, the very necessity of her function of Coredemptrix.

Furthermore, this life of grace, merited in principle for all on Calvary, must now be applied individually, so that each one can be born of grace and grow in its supernatural life. Hence, Mary's role of Distributrix of All Graces.

And there you have the *raison d'être* of Mary's participation in Christ's work as Redeemer.... Any other explanation leaves Mary only metaphorically, but not really, the Mother of all.

And we must admit that such would be the case if Jesus had not chosen Mary to share in the perfection of His functions as well as in the glory of His privileges.<sup>82</sup>

The centrality of Mary's Motherhood in her Apostolic Mission Neubert highlights in the cogency of the concluding paragraph of the statement just quoted.

Actually, Mary's participation in the activities of Christ is already implied, though indirectly, in her Divine Maternity. It is her Spiritual Maternity that directly demands the role.<sup>83</sup>

81. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 192.

82. Neubert, "The Mystery of Mary," 5-6.

83. Neubert, "The Mystery of Mary," 6.

The integral and inseparable relation of Mary's social functions -- her universal mediation as Coredeptrix and Distributrix of All Graces, her Sovereignty, her sacerdotal role as Associate of Christ, our High Priest, and her Apostolic Mission in the world -- centered in her function of Motherhood presents the mystery of Mary as wondrously more beautiful, more fruitful, and more harmonious. For Mary's real cooperation in the mystery of the Saviour Christ manifests a "more perfect unity and, especially, a greater love of Christ for Mary and of Mary for Christ and of both of them for us."<sup>84</sup>

Each of her social functions assumes and implies an Apostolic Mission. Neubert has already demonstrated this in regard to Mary's Maternity and Universal Mediation. As Queen she not only guides souls in the life of Jesus; her Sovereignty is also a Queenship of conquest -changing the enemies of her Son into docile and loving subjects.<sup>85</sup> As Mother and Associate of Christ the Priest, she fulfills a special sacerdotal mission far outranking that of any ordained priest.<sup>86</sup>

Mary's personal privileges, especially her Immaculate Conception and Assumption, also have definite relationship to her Apostolic Mission. Mary in Doctrine makes mention of this point.<sup>87</sup>

Mary's social functions associate her to the Son of God become Man not only with regard to certain of His personal prerogatives, but also with regard to His very mission.<sup>88</sup> She shares in that great work, for which "the Word was made Flesh and lived among us."

The correlation of Jesus' apostolic mission to Mary's, and that of other apostles is another area analyzed by Neubert.<sup>89</sup>

Christ, it was already seen, is the First Apostle, the true and only Apostle. He transmits to His disciples the mission received from the Father .

84. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 89.

85. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 192.

86. Neubert, *Ibid.*

87. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 160 and 246.

88. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 94.

89. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 193- 195; Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 128-129.

As did her Son, Mary receives her Apostolic Mission directly from God. "The angel Gabriel was *sent* from God... to a virgin... named Mary."<sup>90</sup> In the name of the Most High the angel asked her to collaborate in the salvation of the world by giving it a Saviour. Mary's *fiat* was an essentially apostolic act.<sup>91</sup>

Reviewing quickly the Divine Plan to save the world through the Incarnation, Neubert affirms that the apostolate of Jesus was necessary in itself to accomplish the salvation of mankind because an act of infinite value was required. But Mary's apostolate is not necessary in itself; it is necessary by God's decree to associate the action of the Mother with that of the Son. Jesus' apostolic action is sufficient in itself to convert and sanctify all. Mary's apostolic action has value only in union with her Son's apostolate, from which hers derives all its efficacy.<sup>92</sup> The sound theocentric and Christocentric orientations of this Mariology are clearly evident.

Neubert also notes that the domain of action is the same for both the Mother and the Son. There are no reserved areas. The entire Christian apostolate is pursued at the same time by Jesus and Mary. Here, as in her other functions, Mary is the *socia Christi*, participating in the salvific action of Christ according to her condition of woman and Mother and drawing all the efficacy of her actions from that of her Son.<sup>93</sup> The relations between Jesus' apostolic mission and Mary's are the same as the relations between Jesus' mediatorial function and Mary's. It is natural, then, that their apostolic function is but a continuation and application of their mediatorial function.<sup>94</sup>

Jesus and Mary received their apostolic mission directly from the Father, or from the Most Holy Trinity. But other Christian apostles – the Twelve, bishops, religious, laymen, the simple faithful – receive their apostolic commission from the Incarnate Son of God. Their apostolic action continues that of Christ and is dependent on His apostolic mission. Their apostolic action is also a continuation of Mary's, as was explained earlier in considering Mary's functions of Mother, Coredemptrix and Distributrix of All Graces.<sup>95</sup>

90. Lk 2,26-27.

91. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 193.

92. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 193-194.

93. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 194.

94. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 194, n. 2.

95. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 195.

The apostolate means

... bringing souls to Jesus in order to be transformed into Him here on earth and to be made eternally happy with Him in heaven. But we get no grace except through Mary. Consequently, all the activity of an apostle, ... one's very vocation to the apostolate, come from her.... She it is who inspired us and is the cause of all our success. If she ceases to act for a moment, we cease to be apostles. She is the apostle. We are but her instruments much in the same way that priests are the instruments of the one Priest, Jesus Christ.... We do the work confided by God to Mary. We help her in distributing all graces.<sup>96</sup>

### *The uniqueness of Mary's Apostolic Mission*

In what terms may the uniqueness of Mary's Apostolic Mission be characterized? Neubert verifies that her mission is unique in its universality and in degree.<sup>97</sup>

Mary exercises an apostolate unique in its universality "because Mary is Mother of all, universal Coredemptrix and Distributrix of All Graces."<sup>98</sup> "The action of any other apostle is limited in space and time; that of the Blessed Virgin extends to all time and all places. It is as universal as that of Christ."<sup>99</sup>

Mary's apostolate is unique also in degree. It differs in rank from that of other apostles because

... hers is the mission of a leader; theirs, the mission of subordinates. Mary received directly from God the mission of sanctifying and of saving all souls; other apostles labour subordinately; ... their apostolate is only a participation in the apostolate of Mary.<sup>100</sup>

96. Neubert, "Mary and the Apostolate," 4.

97. Neubert, *Our Mother*, 53; *Mary in Doctrine*, 128-129; *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 128.

98. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 128.

99. Neubert, *Our Mother*, 53.

100. Neubert, *Ibid.*

Furthermore,

She alone, in fact, was Cooperatrix with Christ in the work of the Redemption and, therefore, she alone has the mission of completing this work; other apostles only help her in her mission. She alone is Mother of souls; the others, only assistants in the education of her children. She alone is Distributrix of All Graces; all others depend on her for the efficacy of their apostolate.<sup>101</sup>

When discussing Mary's role in the apostolate in an address to the Mission Circle at the University of Fribourg, Neubert touched on this idea while lamenting the fact that it is not widely understood because it "is of the highest importance" that

... Mary has been entrusted by God with an Apostolic Mission in the Church; not any kind of Apostolic Mission, but a Mission universal as regards time and space, a mission that extends to the whole Church and lasts from the death of Christ to the end of the world; an Apostolic Mission which not only is far superior to that of any other apostle, but is, with that of Christ, the very source of every other apostolate, so that the apostolate of all other apostles is but a participation in the apostolate of Mary. And this results directly from the three social functions mentioned above [Spiritual Mother, Coredemptrix, Distributrix].<sup>102</sup>

Hence, Mary's Apostolic Mission is unique in its universality and in its rank. In a single statement,

After Christ and through Christ, it is Mary, therefore, who is the true apostle. Others who bear this title are simply her instruments. Whether they realize it or not, they are only doing

101. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 128.

102. Neubert, "Mary and the Apostolate," 3.

the work which God entrusted primarily to Mary. They carry out in their little sphere and for a limited time the mission that has been confided to Mary for all times and all places. They are fighting in the army of Christ, of which Mary is the commander-in-chief.<sup>103</sup>

### *Role of the Holy Spirit in the Apostolate*

In his extensive treatment of the topic, Neubert does not overlook the "Forgotten Paraclete," for the mystery of Pentecost will not permit it.<sup>104</sup> The Holy Spirit plays a definite role in the apostolate -- Jesus', Mary's and ours. Neubert examines in the light of the Gospels of Matthew, Luke and John, and of the Acts of the Apostles, the eternal and temporal missions of the Holy Spirit as they relate to the salvation of the human race.

Christ founded the apostolate. By His gifts and inspirations the Holy Spirit draws it to its fulfilment and completion. As He completes the Trinity of Persons in the Divine Godhead as the substantial love of the Father and Son, so, in all apostles, He fulfills the work of perfection in love by completing the work begun by Jesus.<sup>105</sup>

The marvelous works and charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit in the primitive Church are vibrant testimony of His dynamic apostolic action. Today the interior effects of His sanctification of souls and their apostolic achievements offer amply clear witness to His active role in the Christian apostolate. He is no less necessary to the work of the Church today than in the beginning. Such are the indications of God in Sacred Scripture and in the practice of His Church, especially in its Liturgy.<sup>106</sup>

103. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 128-129.

104. Neubert, *La Mission Apostolique de Marie et la Nôtre*, 197-205.

105. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 198.

106. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 203-204.



As Mary is associated in the mission of Jesus, she is also associated, though in a different manner, in the mission of the Holy Spirit. The apostolic union of Mary and the Holy Spirit dates from her predestination in the Divine Plan to be the Mother of Christ the Apostle. From the moment of her conception the Holy Spirit dwelt with her constantly preparing her for her mission. At the moment of the Incarnation He accomplished a new wonder in her with her *fiat*. Together, He and she, she by Him, gave existence to the Great Apostle, from Whom all other apostles derive their mission. Without the common operation of Mary and the Holy Spirit, we would not have Christ the Apostle, or any other apostle, or any apostolate. In making Mary the Mother of Christ, the Holy Spirit made her the Associate in the apostolate of Christ, of the Twelve and of all those who work for the salvation of the world. What Mary did for the first apostles awaiting Pentecost, she will continue to do for all their successors in the apostolate.<sup>107</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

A theological study of Mary's Apostolic Mission in all its mutual and reciprocal relations is Father Emil Neubert's most original and significant contribution to twentieth-century Mariology.

He examines all sources of information about this notion -- Scripture, Tradition, Liturgy, history, the Magisterium and recent papal teachings -- to affirm that this Mission is the Spiritual Maternity under another name, the coredeemption continued, an essential application of her distribution of all graces.

Applying to Neubert's exposition of Mary's Apostolic Mission the Mariological principle of analogy which he formulated<sup>108</sup> and the three criteria for determining infallible truth,<sup>109</sup> we may conclude that Mary's Apostolic Mission is an orthodox Catholic doctrine. Neubert's own words give us the best recapitulation.

107. Neubert, *Ibid.*

108. Neubert, *Mary in Doctrine*, 7.

109. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 9-12.

These comparisons between Mary's Apostolic Mission and her role of Mother, Coredemptrix, and Distributrix of All Graces permit us to affirm that this Mission is revealed. It does not follow as a simple logical consequence of these three functions of Mary which are revealed, but as a particular aspect, as an integral part of them, to the point of being identified with them. Under another name it is simply her role of Coredemptrix and above all of Mother and of Distributrix of All Graces. It shares, consequently in the certitude of these three functions, and we can say that it is revealed as truly as these three are, even if tradition has never spoken explicitly of an Apostolic Mission of Mary. Provided the idea has been revealed, the name need not be.<sup>110</sup>

Tradition has never spoken of Mary's Apostolic Mission expressly and precisely, but Neubert affirms positively that this mission is revealed as a particular and integral aspect of her Spiritual Maternity and Coredemption, and is identified with them.

110. Neubert, *Ibid.*, 129.