

Mary:  
Mother of All Peoples  
Co-Redemptrix  
Mediatrix of All Graces  
Advocate

As many of you know and remember, the titles above attributed to Mary are the basis of the 5<sup>th</sup> Marian Dogma that we desire the Holy Father to proclaim. In fact, it is the convergence point of all of our apostolate. This week the document “Mater Populi Fidelis” was released to the public by the Dicastery of the Doctrine of the Faith.

As so often happens in this day of hyper press coverage and the age of the 24/7 news cycle, reporters with a very vacuous understanding of the theological principles discussed began immediately to publish their “summaries” and “understandings” of the document which were very incomplete at best and in many cases totally exaggerated to produce “hype” around the subject.

As members of the Lay Fraternity of St. Dominic, we are grateful for this document clarifying the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in our salvation. We also very much take to heart the exoneration in the document to specify and clarify the way that we and Holy Mother Church understand these titles.

God the Father chose Mary to be the Mother of His Word, the second person of the Divine Trinity, whom in His human nature we know as Jesus the Christ. As the document so beautifully demonstrates that from this moment onward Mary had a special relationship with the Holy Trinity. She was created as a daughter of God the Father, became the spouse of the Holy Spirit, and the Mother of God the Son. Through this relationship and the fulfillment of her earthly mission, Mary plays an immensely important role in our salvation. She in no way can add to, nor does she detract from, the objective and immediate sacrifice of Jesus on the cross that alone merits our salvation, and makes Him our sole mediator before God the Father, as St. Paul so eloquently teaches, “For there is one God: and one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus:” 1 Timothy 2/5. We understand Mary’s role as a secondary one as the document states, “*Immediate but receptive or ecclesio- typical cooperation*. Cooperating insofar as she accepted the fruits of the Savior’s redeeming sacrifice and becomes the “first Church.” Through the power of her intercession with her Son and through her spouse, the Holy Spirit, she can gain great actual graces for us and then leads us by the attraction of her amazing example. It is this deeply human aspect that Mary brings, that makes the pursuit of holiness so real and apparent for us. It is in this way that we use the title “Co-redemptrix”.

Jesus was born of Mary. He is the source of Salvation representing the Father’s Will by being His Word. All graces flow from Jesus and through Mary as she gave birth to Him. We also see how solicitous Jesus is to requests she makes on our behalf, “And the wine failing, the mother of Jesus said to him: They have no wine. ...His mother saith to the waiters: whatsoever he shall say to you, do ye.” John 2/3,5. In this light we call Mary, Mediatrix of All Graces, also understanding that these are actual and effective graces she gains for us by her intercession not sanctifying grace. Due to her willingness to plead to her Son on our behalf, we also call her advocate.