

Research Article

Mary's Fiat: A Model for Marian Spirituality

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Abstract

Blessed Virgin Mary's fiat comes from a deep faith in God. It is a total surrender to God's will: "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1: 38). It is not a simple "yes", but one that comes with the responsibility of accepting the will of God in her life without reservations. Accepting to model one's life after Mary involves accepting to totally surrender to the will of God in one's life, no matter the situation. It is a spirituality that leads to imitating the virtues of Mary. It invites people to use even devotion to her to become inspired to imitate her virtues. By this, one can live a spirituality that is Marian in nature. This is because, true Marian devotion draws from and leads to an expression of faith in God; a faith that also recognizes the maternal affiliation and support of Mary for her children. So, devotion to her is part of the larger reality of following the model of Mary's fiat, as it leads to a greater intensity in Marian spirituality. Thus, Mary's fiat connects various aspects of Christian life in the journey to perfection. It enhances journey to holiness, helps in developing new and distinct focus in Christian living. It likewise enhances an appreciation of the nature of the Christian call and how modelling one's life after the fiat of the Blessed Virgin Mary makes the journey of spiritual life less cumbersome. This article argues that Mary's fiat is a model for developing a spirituality that unites one with God as the ultimate reality the soul desires.

Keywords

Christian, Devotion, Faith, Fiat, Imitation, Model, Spirituality, Total Surrender, Virtues

1. Introduction

Mary's spiritual life was emboldened by her fiat as recorded in Luke 1: 38. The word "*fiat*" derives from Latin word "*facere*" and simply refers to a 'yes' without equivocation or ambiguity. It means acceptance of what is being commanded. In this case, it is Mary's acceptance of the will of God in her life. Her humility and joyful acceptance of God's invitation to a mission God wants to accomplish through her was unparalleled in human history. Her fiat came from a deep conviction of her faith in the God she desires so much to always please. It was one of a total surrender to the will of God: "*Ecce ancilla Domini. Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum*" ("I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your

word", Luke 1: 38). Though this has become like a slogan in Christendom, it is by no means a simple yes. Christians often link it to the Blessed Virgin Mary alone; ignoring that it is a model for Christians in the climb of the ladder of spiritual life.

Mary's fiat is a model for Marian spirituality. While people do devotion to her, it should inspire a spirituality that is formed by imitating her. Marian spirituality is a model of life that inspires one to live out in practical ways, the experiences gathered from devotion to Mary. And when one embraces Mary's fiat as a model of spiritual life, it becomes a way of expressing a total surrender to the will of God, no matter the situation, following the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

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Marian spirituality is a lived religious experience of human persons and falls into the spiritual life that is studied as a particular aspect of spiritual theology [6] as a lived experience of Christian faith¹.

Embracing Mary's fiat is tantamount to accepting to live her kind of spirituality as one of the many ways to clearly manifest one's faith. This specifically leads to imitating the virtues of Mary. So, it implies that true devotion to her must be inspired by the strive to imitate her virtues. This can lead to a spirituality that is Marian in nature. Marian devotion draws from and leads to an expression of faith in God and also a recognition of the maternal affiliation and support of the Blessed Virgin Mary for Christians. Thus, devotion to her is part of the larger reality of the model of Mary's fiat, and it leads to greater intensity in Marian spirituality. Consequently, Mary's fiat connects various aspects of Christian life in the journey to perfection; enhances the spiritual journey to holiness, helps in the development of new and distinct focus in Christian living. It equally enhances an appreciation of the spiritual nature of the Christian call and the fact that modelling one's life after the fiat of Mary makes the journey to holiness of life less cumbersome.

This article argues that Mary's fiat is a model for developing a spirituality that unites one with God as the ultimate reality the soul desires. The article looks at spirituality in general, Mary's spirituality, delineating devotion to Mary from Marian spirituality, Marian devotion as a catalyst for Marian spirituality, the relational dimension of Marian spirituality and conclusion.

2. Spirituality

Spirituality derives from the Latin word *spiritualitas* and refers generally to a state or nature of being spiritual. It can also refer to a human attitude towards what is held to be sacred or holy. Furthermore, it can be applied to "the ethical or moral codes or standards or values or the norms observed in society for the sake of common good." [1] Nonetheless, it is an experience molded in both prayer and practice and "can be used to illuminate the combination of praying and living." [14] In its variations, the Latin words '*spiritus*' and '*spiritualis*' have their Greek equivalence: πνεύμα (*pneuma*); πνευματικός (*pneumatikos*) and were used by the Apostle Paul to refer to 'spirit' and 'spiritual' respectively. In Pauline parlance, 'spirit' (πνεύμα) is at war with the 'flesh' (Greek: σάρξ; Latin: *caro* and what is 'spiritual' (πνευματικός) is at war against what is 'fleshly,' 'carnally' or 'sensually' (Greek: σάρκικός; Latin: *carnalis*)². This refers to that 'animal part of the human person' which is at war against the soul/mind (ψυχικός)³. So, for Paul a spiritual person is one who is totally ordered and led by the Spirit of God (Πνεύμα Θεού)⁴, whereas a person who lives by the flesh opposes the Spirit of God [10].

Spirituality is a lived experience: a conscious task of building a relationship with an ultimate value one identifies with. This experience leads to self-transcendence. According

to Schneiders:

Spirituality as a lived experience can be defined as a conscious involvement in the project of life of integration through self-transcendence towards an ultimate value one perceives. When the horizon of ultimate value is the triune God revealed in Jesus Christ and communicated through the Holy Spirit, and the project of self-transcendence, is the living of the paschal mystery within the context of the Christian community, the Spirituality is specifically Christian and involves the person with God, others and all reality according to the understanding of these realities that is characteristic of Christian faith⁵.

But one thing that should be made clear here, is that the above definition is not limited to Christian spirituality and that "Spirituality is not a doctrine or simply a set of practices, but an ongoing experience or life project and its ultimate purpose is life integration." [23] As a process that leads to self-transcendence, it does not admit narcissistic self-absorption even in the quest for a personal perfection. It abhors selfish, conceited and egoistic tendencies and focuses on a project of life that is oriented towards an ultimate value, life of perfection, integration, transcendence, transformation, and flourishing of humanity. [23] It is this striving towards the ultimate value and to perfection that generates the horizon of spirituality. In Christianity, this project of life generates the union of the human person with God as revealed in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. This is the reason it must be a personal experience in which a person will personally live out in daily life, the paschal mystery within the context of the Church. And as a project of 'self-transcendence', a person would be led into a deeper relationship with God, with human persons and with all reality, within the context of Christian faith. [23] Herein, the model of Mary's fiat positions Christians in developing a spirituality that unites them with God as the ultimate reality. And with "a tight union (*strettaunione*) between spirituality and dogma."⁶ Marian spirituality finds a place in theological research and reflections. Even outside Catholicism, Mary is "widely viewed as an intermediary between God and humanity, and... in due course influenced the theological opinions of those who subsequently elaborated a theological rationale for the florid Marian piety of the Late Middle Ages."⁷

3. Mary's Spirituality

Mary's spirituality is an offshoot of her fiat: that total submission to the will of God. Her fiat finds fulfillment in her spirituality. Her fiat led her to live a spirituality that is experiential. Her spirituality is flourished in her total submission to God's will. She integrated her will into God. Her fiat generated the spirituality that helped her to integrate her will into God. Such spirituality guided her to make it evident in the context of real-life situations.

Mary's spirituality is buoyed by humility, simplicity, holiness of life, openness to God's will, understanding and,

readiness to suffer for her faith in God. Her life was oriented towards love of God and love of neighbour. Her spirituality guided her to follow the divine directions in her life. Her spirituality also expressed her intimate union and affinity with her Son, Jesus Christ. Such closeness made her understand her Son, Jesus Christ, with openness of heart and mind. Such understanding was exhibited at the wedding at Cana in Galilee, when she directed Jesus' disciples to "Do whatever He (Jesus) tells you" (John 2: 5). The result of her knowledge of her Son led to such directive, that brought succor to the groom who had run out of wine. Her spirituality exudes and conveys love in practice.

Mary's spirituality has a deep influence on her role in the life of the Church. The Church models her spiritual life via Mary's fiat and expresses that in relation to the mystery of Christ. Mary's spirituality is, therefore, a model for Christians. She lived what she believed. Her spirituality is the manner she expressed her faith in prayer, in realities of life commitments and in daily living. Her spirituality resonates in the historical experience and the lives of very many saints and teachers of spirituality which was also incorporated into various Christian communities⁸. [13] Mary's spirituality has a rich and specific content drawn from the biblical image of her and her continuing care for the Mystical Body of Christ. It is a spirituality that ennobles and encourages Christians in the life of discipleship to Jesus Christ. Her spirituality corroborates the bond between her and the Church. The Church finds in her a model and prototype that reveals the nature and purpose of the Church.

Furthermore, Mary's spirituality is a way of life that integrates Christian living. It is a genuine expression of faith in God that is action-packed. Her spirituality involves a lived experience and an integration of virtues into personal life and her place, role and influence in the economy of salvation. Her spirituality is all about living in practical ways, in a more intensive manner in the daily real-life situations, what she believed. In the Orthodox Church she is represented as an iconic maternal figure who communicates awe and compassion, humility and glory. [22]

Mary's spirituality shows that her life was one filled with positive affection for the environment and for those around her, not minding her own situation at the time. It is a life filled with personal experience. The Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) emphasized her positive affectivity and personal experience⁹. The Commission said:

Mary came widely to be viewed as an intermediary between God and humanity, and even a worker of miracles with powers that verged on the divine, this popular piety in due course influenced the theological opinions of those who had grown up with it, and who subsequently elaborated a theological rationale for the florid Marian piety of the Late Middle Ages. [24]

Mary's spirituality which has fully found a place in contemporary liturgy, has been given a place in votive Masses in her honour and Christians are encouraged to develop union

with her.¹⁰ She is a "Mother and Teacher in the Spirit."¹¹ Truly, her spirituality is a model for Christian holiness. And devotion to her should be part and parcel of Marian spirituality.

4. Delineating Between Devotion to Mary and Marian Spirituality

Delineating the devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary¹² from Marian spirituality is not simple. There is a tiny line differentiating between the two. In fact, people use the two interchangeably. But what is more important is that devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and Marian spirituality are not antagonistic to one another. Rather, they complement one another. They demonstrate proximity in respect to human response to God's call which is fundamental to Christian spirituality. Marian spirituality is experiential, pragmatic and has the propensity to flower in relationships. Devotion to the BVM is not against a flowering relation between the devotee and her. Rather, devotion to her can lead to a devout life and spirituality. And when it does, it becomes a Marian spirituality because it flows from imitating Mary's model of fiat. Thus, both devotion to her and Marian spirituality are but various ways in which Christians nurture a relationship with her, through which a profound relationship with her Son, Jesus Christ will ensue. They are not opposed to one another but complement each other. Nonetheless, the question of whether the two are the same has been clarified by Beinert thus:

Marian devotion has pastoral and existential worth when it reflects this end and is capable of achieving it. We can thus pose the problem of Marian spirituality in this way, which may not please everybody. The formula is this: Marian piety is not identical with devotion to the Virgin; renewal of the latter will not automatically renew the former. Marian piety does not in the first place consist of pilgrimages, images, litanies, Marian hymns. The essence of Marian spirituality is truly found not in the fact that a person prays to Mary, but rather that a person prays like Mary. Mary is never the goal but only the model of Christian existence; in that she cannot be replaced.¹³ [4]

Piety has an advantage over mere devotion because it inspires faithfulness to the practice of Marian virtues in Christian life. So, Marian spirituality comes from the practice of Mary's virtues rather than mere devotion to her or praying of the Holy Rosary. There are fundamental virtues of hers which Christians should imitate and make their own: her purity, ardent charity, simple obedience, heroic patience, divine wisdom, lively faith, profound humility, mortification, and constancy in prayer. Louis Maria de Montfort believed that the love the BVM, unceasingly leads us to Jesus Christ. So, devotion to her should be a stimulating factor to imitate her. By imitating her, one truly loves her and what she loves and allows her to lead the person to a greater love for, and closer relationship with her Son, Jesus Christ. [18]

5. Devotion to Mary as a Catalyst for Marian Spirituality

Devotion to the BVM is important in the Catholic faithful because it can spark the desire to imitate her virtues and turn that into a consciously lived experience for devotees. In the words of Roten,¹⁴ “there is nothing better than true devotion to Mary, conceived as an ever more complete following of her example, to introduce one to the joy of believing.”¹⁵ So, true devotion to her must lead to imitating her virtues. This is what makes Marian devotion become a spirituality. Marian spirituality is a lived religious experience demonstrated through life of virtues, and not just the reciting of patterns of prayers.

Devotion to the BVM remains an essential aspect of Christian spirituality.¹⁶ It is still valid and “the reality of her myth is not over, nor has the moral code she affirms has been exhausted”¹⁷ [27]. In fact, “A recent sociological study reached a different conclusion: ‘with the weight of the history firmly supporting the following conclusion that Marian devotion will continue’”¹⁸ [28]. Marian devotion, therefore, does not contradict that faith in Jesus Christ is very supreme in Christian spirituality. “Marian devotion and spirituality will be with us as long as there exists faith in Christ and his Gospel. Recognizing Christ as the central figure of the Gospel, we will be able to discover in Mary the first Christian, first in time and first as to the quality of her faith. ‘We need not imagine where Mary is... she is at the heart of the Gospel’.” [20]

The life and actions of Mary show that she was part of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. She is also an integral part of Christianity heredity. Devotion to her is thus intimately related to the various expressions of the Church’s life in relation to her both now and in the future. [22] It leads to an appreciation of her role in the salvific mission of Christ and in the mission of the Church in the world. Therefore, the Church as the family of God’s people takes her as the Model of Christian spirituality. This will be achieved through being truly devoted to her and asking for her maternal intercession. The devotion inspires the Church to value her relationship with Jesus Christ and to nurture such relationship with Christ.

Marian spirituality goes beyond praying of the Holy Rosary or other Marian devotional prayers. Rather, it involves consciously taking her as a model in the journey of faith and being a disciple of Jesus through a model of life that is Marian in nature. It is also entrusting her to mold one to be like Jesus. Mary was the first disciple of Jesus. Her “Yes” (cf. *Luke 1: 38*) was followed up with actions: she was with, and for Jesus right from the moment of the incarnation till his crucifixion, death and burial. She was with the Apostles on the Pentecost Day. She had the deepest and most intimate relationship with Jesus both as her Son and her Lord. She submitted to God’s will, and her whole life was centered on Christ. She first of all bore Christ in her heart. Paul possibly may have mirrored himself from Mary’s whole life and history, that he would say: “It is no longer I who live, but rather Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2: 20). Indeed, “Mary’s nearness as a Mother would

have been of no profit to her, had she not borne Christ in her heart after a more blessed manner than in her flesh.” [3]

Marian spirituality thus means following Mary’s Model of discipleship. She is the archetype of the Church, the “New Eve,” the woman Elizabeth greeted and as a woman of faith who believed that the promise of God to her will be fulfilled (*Luke 1: 45*). Marian spirituality therefore implies becoming like Mary by meditating on her life, deliberately cultivating and nurturing a friendship with her. It is becoming what one loves in Mary. It is following her model of discipleship so as to understand the mystery of the Church as a Mother and the Bride of Christ. Thus, Marian spirituality is the way to recognize Mary as the elect of God, one so highly favoured by God; one who is the Mother of God’s Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ (*Luke 1: 28-38*).

Furthermore, Marian Spirituality comprises imitating the humility of Mary, who, though highly favoured, remained an epitome of humility. Humility strengthened her obedience to God and energized her life of charity. She was not carried away by her becoming an elect of God and the Mother of the Son of God. When she learnt that her cousin Elizabeth was pregnant, she put behind all that the Angel Gabriel announced to her about herself and went to rejoice and stay with her. Even Elizabeth also recognized her as a blessed woman who believed that what was spoken to her by Gd will be fulfilled (*Luke 1: 45*). So, “as ‘full of grace, Mary has been eternally present in the mystery of Christ, [and] through faith she became a sharer in that mystery in every extension of her earthly journey [13]. Thus, Marian spirituality is a sharing in the mystery of Christ through Mary’s model of life.

Also, Marian spirituality is a life of contemplation and action. It is a spirituality nurtured through learning how the BVM deepened her relationship with God and with Jesus. She was totally open to God. True devotion to her should lead to a life of total openness to God, a life of action and contemplation, of listening to God and doing his will. Marian spirituality is a life of charity in action that manifests in response to the needs of others as Mary did for her cousin Elizabeth (cf. *Luke 1: 36ff.*). Therefore, Marian spirituality is both active and contemplative as it involves a life of interior relationship with God, which must manifest in exterior life of the individual.

On the other hand, devotion to the BVM becomes Marian spirituality when like her, one lives out the Marian humility, simplicity and obedience in one’s daily life and activities, treasuring the word of God in one’s heart and trusting God as Mary did and centering one’s life on Christ. Marian devotion ought to lead to holding on to Mary as a great teacher, a model of Christian discipleship and a facilitator of relationship with Christ Jesus. So, true devotion to Mary is when one learns from her, to become a good disciple of Jesus Christ, a good teacher and mediator for others. In other words, true Marian devotion is to lead to a spiritual life that leads to how the BVM expressed her maternal love and care, and above all her love for God.

6. Relational Dimension of Marian Spirituality

Marian spirituality is relational. Though it has both devotional and experiential dimensions, it is deeper than Marian devotion. Like other Christian spirituality, it responds to God's call for a deeper friendship with God and with Mary, the mother of the author of salvation. This friendship is experiential and flowers in personal relationship with Mary. And because it is deep-seated in personal friendship, it is relational, experiential and practical. Actually, Mary's spirituality as it derives from Scriptural images of her, is theological, ecclesiological, liturgical, anthropological and psychological. Her maternal mediation is leveraged in personal relationship with her: a friendship of profound affiliation. The evangelical figure of the BVM, her presence in the Church and her maternal mediation is not in doubt. These show her as a caring mother, an advocate, a mediatrix and a teacher.¹⁹ [9]

Developing a personal relationship with Mary involves understanding that like any other woman, she lived on this earth. However, she was exceptionally outstanding in docility to God's will. Her spirituality was defined by her election – a woman chosen by God from among other women to become the Mother of the Son of God. Her spirituality is deeply rooted in an attitude of total submission to God's will. Imitating her virtues, means becoming open to God's will. This is how to develop intimate relationship with God. By her docility to God, she became the instrument through which God's promise was fulfilled. As she built her spirituality upon great faith and understood that she was God's handmaid, so would Christians, through developing a relationship of personal friendship with her, develop a Marian spirituality.

Marian spirituality is developed through imitating Mary's relation with God through faith, prayer, contemplation and action. These are what helped her build an intimate relationship with God. Through her fiat she demonstrated unwavering faith that should be a model for Christians in advancing in faith-walk, that not only honours her, but also would in turn lead those who imitate her to union with her Son. Thus, relationship with Mary implies following her life pattern of the one who is *anaw in* (the poor of Yahweh), so that one can become like her in standing in solidarity with the poor, the needy and the suffering in the society. So, Marian spirituality begins with developing an attitude that includes Mary's selfless service to others; which placed her at the pinnacle of charity. For this reason, she is a-woman-for-others (*la mujer para los demás*) who spent her life in service to others. In fact, her selfless service to others is inspirational and leads the way to climbing the rungs of the ladder of spirituality. These are great images of Mary and are sources of spiritual strength. O'Donnell wrote:

The idea of the images of Mary... show how Mary responded to God. We can see her, firstly as God's servant following the great lines given by Isaiah (42; 49; 50; 53). Like the Servant of Yahweh, she was 'chosen and called by God';

she remains faithful despite distress. If we are invited to see ourselves conformed to the image of the Servant of Yahweh, we can surely see Mary mirrored in this prophetic figure. Her loyalty has led to the enrichment and salvation of all God's children. Mary is the servant. [15]

Mary's life was an active-contemplative. Marian spirituality invites one to an intimate relationship, imitating her active-contemplative life, reception and pondering of the word of God in the heart and proclaiming it through actions (cf. *Luke 1: 28-55, 2: 1-20*). She preached the word of God by her actions and her contemplation of the word. "In the course of her Son's preaching she received the words whereby, in extolling a kingdom beyond the concerns and ties of flesh and blood, she declared blessed those who heard and kept the word of God (Mark 3: 35, Luke 11: 27-28)." [27] No wonder Saint Augustine said that "it means more for her [Mary], an altogether greater blessing, to have been Christ's disciple than to have been Christ's mother." [2]

Mary, a woman of great faith, believed against all odds, that the message of God to her will be fulfilled (*Luke 1: 45*). She manifested her faith at different levels of her relationship with her Son: at the wedding at Cana in Galilee and at Calvary when Jesus, her only Son was crucified (cf. *John 2: 5; 19: 25-28a*). She is foremost among "those who hear the word of God and keep it" (*Luke 11: 27-28*). She is a quintessence of the spirituality of the *anaw in*,²⁰ and this enhanced her relationship with her Son, Jesus. This formed an integral path of Marian spirituality. In fact:

Marian spirituality can only be understood as authentically Christian when it is an integral part of the life of faith, [a spirituality that] invites the believer to deepen his or her relationship to Christ, to become incorporated into the community of the Church, and to seek a harmonious balance between the active and contemplative dimensions of a faith expressed in prayer and social action. [23]

And since Marian spirituality involves a lived experience and an integration of the virtues of the BVM into one's personal life, Christians can only attain a deep relationship with her if they recognize her place, role and influence in the economy of salvation. An awareness of these, and a followership that leads to personalizing her qualities of life and actions, are helpful in developing a Marian spirituality and in living that same spirituality daily in a more practical and intensive manner. So, her role in the life of Christians should not become "something of an appendix [but] a key element in the spiritual life."²¹ [19]

7. Conclusion

The fiat of Mary is a 'yes' from the depth of her heart. It is her affirmation of total faith/trust in God. By her fiat she developed a spirituality that is deeply rooted in total submission to the will of God. She was totally committed to the affirmation of her faith/trust in God not only in prayer or contemplation, but also in actions. She is model of humility,

simplicity, obedience and docility to God. All this set her apart as a special model for Christian spirituality. And it is by following her model of life that Marian spirituality is developed. Marian spirituality is a means of forming oneself into the likeness of Mary. It is a spirituality that leads to true discipleship of Jesus Christ, who like the BVM, will stand at the foot of the Cross, to contemplate Him. Marian spirituality helps one to learn to remain with Christ, no matter the situation in life. There is so much Marian Spirituality can offer as far as being Christians, who must prove their faith by words and actions. It is a spirituality that helps one adopt “a set of values, attitudes, and activities that help us to respond to God’s plan for us and to insert us into the relationship with Mary that Christ wants for us.” [23] In the words of O’Donnell, “The concretization of the elements of such spirituality will... demand contemplation of her, as well as communion and identification. It will involve taking up the characteristic of her life.” [16] Invariably, it “should give rise to an epiphany of Mary in the life of the Church, so that we too bring forth Jesus in the Church.”²²

Finally, Marian spirituality integrates Mary’s fiat as model of Christian spirituality. It shows that the role of the Blessed Mother in the life of Christians is a key element in Christian journey.²³ Hence, to develop Marian spirituality must involve a lived experience that integrates the virtues of Mary into personal life in a more intensive and practical ways. Marian spirituality which is fully supported in contemporary liturgy has the votive Masses that honour her and show that there is union of the worshipper with Mary,²⁴ and as a “Mother and Teacher in the Spirit.”²⁵ She is a model for Christian holiness and by imitating her life, one is drawn to holiness of life. For, “nothing can be dangerous for us; neither Satan nor the world, nor sin – if there is in us the power of Christ in the Marian way.” [12]

Abbreviations

BVM Blessed Virgin Mary

Author Contributions

Okechukwu Cajetan Ani is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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1 Sandra M. Schneider's article focuses on definition of Christian Spirituality, Methods, and Types.

2 See Galatians 3: 3; 5: 13, 16-25; 1 Corinthians 3: 1-3; Romans 7: 14-8: 14.

3 See 1 Corinthians 2: 14-15.

4 Cf. 1 Corinthians 2: 12, 14.

5 For other details, see Walter H. Principe's article, "Spirituality, Christian" in Michael Downey (ed), *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, 931.

6 This is the proposition of E.G. Farrugia, as found in the "Spirito Santo e teologia orientale" in *Dizionario dell'Oriente cristiano*, Rome: Pont. Inst. Orientale, 2000, 722.

7 This strong assertion was made by The Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC), *Mary, Grace and Hope in Christ*. ARCIC Agreed Statement, London - Harrisburg: Morehouse, 2005, n. 43, pp. 40-41. See also, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ*, February 2, 2004, n. 43. In http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/angl-comm-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20050516_mary-grace-hope-christ_en.html. Accessed 3rd December 2024.

8 Pope John Paul II speaks of the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the life of the Pilgrim Church.

9 This is an agreed statement on the Blessed Virgin Mary by The Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) which speaks of Mary, Grace and Hope in Christ. See also, *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ*, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, February 2, 2004, n. 43, in http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/angl-comm-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20050516_mary-grace-hope-christ_en.html. Accessed 30th January 2024.

10 Collection of Masses on the Blessed Virgin Mary, 2 vols: Sacramentary and Lectionary, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992. In Vol. 1, "General Introduction," n. 13, the idea of the worshipper being in union with Mary comes from the 1986 collection of votives Masses in honour of the BVM in which the General Introduction draws from the Marialis Cultus and liturgical texts to speak of such union.

11 Collection of Masses on the Blessed Virgin Mary, 2 Vols: Sacramentary and Lectionary, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992, n. 32. Vol. 1: Mass Texts 249-25 1, Preface n. 32, p. 148; Vol. 2: Readings: Proverbs 8: 17-21, 34-35 or Isaiah 56: 1, 6-7 with Psalm 15 and Gospel of Matthew 12: 46-50 or John 19: 25-27, or General Appendix III, 19 - Mark 3: 31-35. This is based on the Carmelite feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

12 From henceforth, it will be referred to as BVM or simply as Mary.

13 Wolfgang Beinert, in pages 13-15 refers to Marian piety as Frömmigkeit and distinguishes it from devotion to Mary (Marienverehrung).

14 Father Johann G. Roten, S.M., is a director of the Marian Library/International Marian Research Institute (IMRI) at the University of Dayton. He also teaches in the IMRI programme and is closely involved with the exhibits and activities related to the Marian Library/IMRI's Art Gallery and Museum.

15 Johann G. Roten, 52nd "Annual Meeting of the Mariological Society of America, May 30 – June 2, 2001", *Marian Studies*, 52, 2001, See also, Congregation for Catholic Education, "Circular Letter concerning Some of the More Urgent Aspects of Spiritual Formation in Seminaries" Rome, 1980, part II, section 4.

16 See, Congregation for Catholic Education, "The Virgin Mary in Intellectual and Spiritual Formation: Letter from the Congregation for Catholic Education", March 25, 1988, Dayton, Ohio: The Mariological Society of America, 1999, no. 36. See also, J. G. Roten, *Marian Studies*, 52, 2001.

17 See also, J. G. Roten, *Marian Studies*, 52, 2001.

18 See, J. G. Roten, *Marian Studies* 52, 2001.

19 See, Jesus Castellano Cervera, "La espiritualidad mariana", Cervera, "La espiritualidad mariana" 85. This is found in B. Coccia (Ed). *Sassone Seminar*, June 2001 "In Communion with Mary: Our Heritage and Prospects for the Future." Rome: Edizioni Carmelitane, 2003.

20 See, B. Buby Mary the Faithful Disciple, New York - Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985, 71. Buby notes that Luke is the evangelist of the Holy Spirit and of the anaw ın. See Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, 55. See C. O'Donnel, Carm., <http://www.carmelites.ie/MarySpirituality.pdf>, Accessed 15 October 2024.

21 Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk of Cincinnati speaking at the 52nd Annual Meeting of the Mariological Society of America which took place at the University of Dayton, from May 30 to June 2, 2001.

22 O'Donnel. Fiftieth Anniversary Edition, Darien Illinois: Carmelite Press, 1986, 33-34, 59. The theme was developed by Titus Brandsma, O. Carm., (d. 1942) in various places, e.g. *Carmelite Mysticism: Historical Sketches*.

23 Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk of Cincinnati highlights the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the 52nd Annual Meeting of the Mariological Society of America which took place at the University of Dayton, from May 30 to June 2, 2001.

24 There is a Collection of Masses on the Blessed Virgin Mary, 2 vols: Sacramentary and Lectionary, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992. In Vol. 1, "General Introduction," n. 13, the idea of the worshipper being in union with Mary comes from the 1986 collection of votives Masses in honour of the BVM in which the General Introduction draws from the Marialis Cultus and liturgical texts to speak of such union.

25 Collection of Masses on the Blessed Virgin Mary, 2 Vols: Sacramentary and Lectionary, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992, n. 32. Vol. 1: Mass Texts 249-25 1, Preface n. 32, p. 148; Vol. 2: Readings: Proverbs 8: 17-21, 34-35 or Isaiah 56: 1, 6-7 with Psalm 15 and Gospel of Matthew 12: 46-50 or John 19: 25-27, or General Appendix III, 19 - Mark 3: 31-35. This is based on the Carmelite feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.