

Rome

International conference reignites debate on Corredemption

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Wednesday 7 October marks the start of the International Marian Conference '*De Maria numquam satis*', which will feature two days of theological reflection on the theme *The Most Blessed Virgin Mary in dogma and devotion*. The event concludes tomorrow and

is being hosted in the lecture theatres of the prestigious Augustinianum Patristic Institute in Rome, a venue which has taken on particular significance since Augustinian Robert Prevost was called to lead the universal Church.

The conference aims to remind us that one can never say enough about the mystery of Mary. Although she is not divine by nature, the Most Holy Virgin Mary has been endowed with such grace and raised to such heights that she is intimately associated with the redemption of mankind. Eternity itself will not suffice to exhaust our understanding of this singular creature, whom God chose as his and our mother.

Over the two days of the conference, which will open with an inaugural address by Cardinal Raymond Leo Burke and feature a presentation by Cardinal Gerhard Ludwig Müller, there will be talks from prominent figures such as Father Wojciech Giertych, a Dominican theologian in the Papal Household; Father Manfred Hauke, Director of the Institute of Mariology at the Faculty of Theology in Lugano; Monsignor Rudolf Michael Schmitz, editor of the theological journal *Divinitas* and Vicar General of the Institute of Christ the King; and Father Thomas Crean, a Dominican lecturer at the Holy Apostles College and Seminary in the USA.

The recent Doctrinal Note from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Mater Populi Fidelis*, came as a shock to all devotees of Our Lady. Not only does it reject the title of *Co-Redemptrix*, which became firmly established in the 20th century thanks to the 'magisterium' of the saints, but it also rejects the very concept of Mary's co-redemption and mediation. This concept has been developed by numerous theologians, and particularly by popes such as the Venerable Pius XII and Saint John Paul II. Objectively, this constitutes a step backwards and an unjustified deviation from the path guided by the Holy Spirit.

The date of the conference is no coincidence: 7 October is not only the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, but also the date on which the dicastery's note was promulgated (and subsequently presented on 4 November 2025). Exactly one year later, the Roman conference returns to reopen the debate. It does so by entrusting the opening address to a distinguished speaker: Cardinal Burke.

Entitled 'Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Kingdom of Christ the King: the mission of the Co-Redemptrix and the co-redeemers', the address is offered here in full translation courtesy of the organisers. In it, Cardinal Burke mentions the title of Co-Redemptrix more than twenty times, which is significant in the context of the Dicastery's edict. However, Cardinal Fernández later clarified that the ban would apply

'only' to liturgical texts and official documents.

After clarifying what Mary's co-redemption entails, Cardinal Burke explained that her unique cooperation in the work of Redemption forms the basis of our own: 'The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, participated in a wholly unique way in the Mystery of faith, in the Mystery of the redemptive Incarnation, and is rightly called Co-Redemptrix. In the same way, to the extent that we unite our hearts with her Immaculate Heart and the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, we participate in Christ's salvific mission. And we may rightly be called co-redeemers'. The uniqueness of her co-redemption lies in her ability to participate in the Redemption in the first act: the acquisition of the graces of salvation through Christ's sacrifice, to which she was intimately united. This unique participation subsequently made her the mediatrix of all graces, both in intercession and in the distribution of those graces.

Together with her, we too can be co-redeemers, as Saint Paul says in the Cardinal's address: by making up what is lacking in Christ's sufferings and participating in his redemptive offering in our own flesh. While it is not possible for us to live out co-redemption in the first act, we are called to live it out in the second act, albeit not with the universal scope that characterises the mediation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Cardinal Burke illustrates this co-redemption through the lives of two saints particularly linked to Our Lady of Guadalupe: Blessed Fr Miguel Pro, a Jesuit priest who was martyred on 23 November 1927 during the anti-Catholic persecution by the Mexican government in the 1920s; and the young Cristero saint José Sánchez del Río, who was also martyred on 10 February 1928 in the same context.

The truth of Mary's co-redemption and universal mediation lies at the heart of the consecration to Mary, which was strongly advocated by Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort (1673–1716) and Saint Maximilian Kolbe (1894–1941) and embraced with great devotion by Christians. However, the idea that Our Lady is Co-Redemptrix and Mediatrix is also evident in the history of the apparitions at Guadalupe.

By quoting extensive passages from the *Nican Mopohua*, a text compiled by Antonio Valeriano based on Juan Diego's first-hand account, the cardinal demonstrates how this Marian apparition — recognised by the Church and which shaped the destiny of an entire continent — is the embodiment of these two Marian titles. The text also reveals the *Co-Redemptrix's* call to her co-redeemers: a call to do whatever the Lord asks of us so that salvation may reach everyone, and an assurance of her support and protection in completing what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ in our lives.

After strongly urging Saint Juan Diego to fulfil his mission for the benefit of many, the Virgin of Guadalupe comforts her protégé with the assurance of her presence: 'Do not let your heart be troubled or be anxious about anything. Am I not here, I who am your Mother? Are you not under my protection?' In fact, Mary's mediation is her constant and active salvific presence amongst all those who have been redeemed by the Blood of Christ and who participate in the bloody sacrifice of the Cross. This enables them to share in the work of Redemption and act as mediators amongst their brothers and sisters.

'Listen, my little and most beloved son. There are many of my faithful servants to whom I could entrust the task of conveying my message. But it is absolutely essential that you, and no one else, go, and that through your mediation, my desire is fulfilled and my will is carried out." Our Lady said this to Juan Diego. The 'you and no one else' began with the unique and unrepeatable calling of the Blessed Virgin Mary to become the Mother of the Redeemer and share in the salvation of the world. This calling continues in a different way in all Christians, who are called to be co-redeemers with the *Co-Redemptrix* until the end of time.