

Presentation for Diocese of Harrisburg Cursillo School of Leaders

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Lumen Gentium (The Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)

Promulgated by His Holiness Pope (Saint) Paul VI on 21 November 1964

Chapter VIII—*The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God in the Mystery of Christ and the Church*

Selected Quotes

LG 8, 52 – “Joined to Christ the Head and in the unity of fellowship with all His saints, the faithful must in the first place reverence the memory "of the glorious ever Virgin Mary, Mother of our God and Lord Jesus Christ".

LG 8, 53 – “Redeemed by reason of the merits of her Son and united to Him by a close and indissoluble tie, she is endowed with the high office and dignity of being the Mother of the Son of God, by which account she is also the beloved daughter of the Father and the temple of the Holy Spirit. Because of this gift of sublime grace she far surpasses all creatures, both in heaven and on earth. At the same time, however, because she belongs to the offspring of Adam she is one with all those who are to be saved.”

“She is "the mother of the members of Christ . . . having cooperated by charity that faithful might be born in the Church, who are members of that Head." Wherefore she is hailed as a pre-eminent and singular member of the Church, and as its type and excellent exemplar in faith and charity.”

LG 8, 54 – “Mission Statement” of this Chapter of Lumen Gentium

“Wherefore this Holy Synod,... intends to describe with diligence both the role of the Blessed Virgin in the mystery of the Incarnate Word and the Mystical Body, and the duties of redeemed mankind toward the Mother of God, who is mother of Christ and mother of men, particularly of the faithful.”

(It was not the intention of the Council Father (the Pope and Bishops) to try to solve every theological question or controversy concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary.)

LG 8, 55 – She is prefigured in the Genesis 3:15 (Will crush the head of the serpent.) (Protoevangelion (Gr.) Protoevangelium (L.)

Son of God took His human nature entirely from her. He always, from all eternity had and has the divine nature (fully God). He took His human nature from Mary. Saint Joseph, as great as he is, had nothing to do with the conception of Jesus. But Mary had very much to do with it.

LG 8, 56 – Speaks of Mary's Immaculate Conception (filled with grace from the first moment of her conception in St. Anne's womb and free from original sin from the beginning of her

existence). Also, the document speaks of her total cooperation with God's will..."Let it be done to me according to your Word."

"For, as St. Irenaeus says, she "being obedient, became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race." Hence not a few of the early Fathers gladly assert in their preaching, "The knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience; what the virgin Eve bound through her unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosened by her faith." Comparing Mary with Eve, they call her "the Mother of the living," and still more often they say: "death through Eve, life through Mary."

LG 8, 57–59 – "This union of the Mother with the Son in the work of salvation is made manifest from the time of Christ's virginal conception up to His death..."

Goes through her life, even covering the Four Marian Dogmas – 1) Divine Maternity (Mary is the Mother of God); 2) Perpetual Virginity; 3) Immaculate Conception; 4) Assumption (followed immediately by God crowning her "Queen of all things."

LG 8, 60 – "For all the salvific influence of the Blessed Virgin on men originates, not from some inner necessity, but from the divine pleasure. It flows forth from the superabundance of the merits of Christ, rests on His mediation, depends entirely on it and draws all its power from it."

LG 8, 61 – "...she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in the work of the Saviour in giving back supernatural life to souls. Wherefore she is our mother in the order of grace."

LG 8, 62 – "This maternity of Mary in the order of grace began with the consent which she gave in faith at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross, and lasts until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this salvific duty, but by her constant intercession continued to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation..."

LG 8, 63 – "As St. Ambrose taught, the Mother of God is a type of the Church in the order of faith, charity and perfect union with Christ. For in the mystery of the Church, which is itself rightly called mother and virgin, the Blessed Virgin stands out in eminent and singular fashion as exemplar both of virgin and mother."

LG 8, 64 – Analogy between Mary as Mother and the Catholic Church as Mother – "By her preaching she brings forth to a new and immortal life the sons who are born to her in baptism, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of God."

LG 8, 65 – Mary has reached perfection. The Church, with Mary as her example, is still striving for perfection through "fits and starts". Mary is the exemplar for the Church, and the shining star of what the Church shall be when she reaches her full perfection at the end of the age. "But while in the most holy Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she is without spot or wrinkle, the followers of Christ still strive to increase in holiness by conquering sin."

LG 8, 66 – The faithful are called to greatly venerate (honor) Mary with true devotion (hyperdulia), even above the honor we give to all other Saints (dulia), because of the unique

privileges that God has accorded her and because of her perfect cooperation with His grace. However, her privileges and cooperation are themselves a gift and grace from God. We honor her because God does, but we do honor her, we do not give her the worship that is due to God alone (latria). Great as she is, Mary is still a creature, and still had to be saved by God. Jesus is God and did not need to be saved. Jesus IS the One Savior. He is the great I AM.

LG 8, 67 – “But it (the Council Fathers) exhorts theologians and preachers of the divine word to abstain zealously both from all gross exaggerations as well as from petty narrow-mindedness in considering the singular dignity of the Mother of God.(23*) Following the study of Sacred Scripture, the Holy Fathers, the doctors and liturgy of the Church, and under the guidance of the Church's magisterium, let them rightly illustrate the duties and privileges of the Blessed Virgin which always look to Christ, the source of all truth, sanctity and piety.”

LG 8, 68 - In the interim just as the Mother of Jesus, glorified in body and soul in heaven, is the image and beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected in the world to come, so too does she shine forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come, as a sign of sure hope and solace to the people of God during its sojourn on earth. “

LG 8, 69 – “It gives great joy and comfort to this holy and general Synod that even among the separated brethren there are some who give due honor to the Mother of our Lord and Saviour, especially among the Orientals, who with devout mind and fervent impulse give honor to the Mother of God, ever virgin.(24*) The entire body of the faithful pours forth instant supplications to the Mother of God and Mother of men that she, who aided the beginnings of the Church by her prayers, may now, exalted as she is above all the angels and saints, intercede before her Son in the fellowship of all the saints, until all families of people, whether they are honored with the title of Christian or whether they still do not know the Saviour, may be happily gathered together in peace and harmony into one people of God, for the glory of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity.”