

The Virgin Mary in Anglican Tradition

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Introduction

This background paper¹ will sketch the place of the Virgin Mary in Anglican tradition by concentrating on the classic texts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and then tracing developments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We shall say little about the place of Mary in popular devotion, since the Marian devotions of late medieval Catholicism were, at the advent of the Reformation, sharply excised, though they were to some extent restored in the era of the Caroline Divines and Non-Jurors and significantly reaffirmed by the Anglo-Catholic revival of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Further, we shall not attempt to explore, in any detail, the place of Mary in contemporary world-wide Anglicanism. The concern here is with the received 'shape' of Anglican tradition since the Reformation.

The term 'tradition' spans both official doctrine and popular devotion. With respect to popular Marian devotion even more than official teaching Anglican and Roman Catholic tradition has differed markedly. In the late Middle Ages there was in Western Europe a whole range of popular expressions of devotion to Mary (amongst other saints), warmly supported by the Roman Catholic Church. Liturgy, private prayer, the calendar, pilgrimage, iconography, imaginative lives of Mary, lyrical poetry and music were all

¹ The authors gratefully acknowledge the invaluable work contributed by Rev'd Paul Williams in the preparation of this paper.

interwoven in Marian devotions. There were Marian shrines; Marian prayers such as the *Ave Maria*, *Angelus*, and *Salve Regina*; Marian feasts; Marian statues; Marian guilds and societies. The Dominicans, who promoted the use of the Rosary, and the Franciscans, who supported the Immaculate Conception, each had their distinctive ways of promoting devotion to Mary. The extent to which such Marian devotion was complementary to devotion to Jesus Christ and the extent to which it took on a life of its own varied hugely. The English Reformers of the sixteenth century reacted strongly against what they saw as the excesses of Marian piety, supported by the Roman Catholic Church, and sought to prune away devotions which obscured the central place of Jesus Christ in Christian belief and practice.²

The place of Mary and the Saints in Anglican tradition was defined in part by reaction. The suppression of the guilds, shrines and prayers honouring Mary; the disbanding of the religious Orders which promoted Marian devotion; the pruning of the calendar of the feasts which had been occasions of Marian celebration; and the removal of most Marian statuary³ cauterised this area of affective Christian belief for more than a generation. Nevertheless, the place of Mary in Anglican doctrine was never in question. The emphasis upon Holy Scripture as containing 'all things necessary to salvation'; the reception of the Creeds of the Early Church; the reception of the teaching of four Ecumenical Councils (and for some Anglicans as many as seven); and the reception of the tradition of the early centuries of the Church ensured the place of Mary in the Anglican understanding of the scheme of salvation. In addition, the definition of

² For some choice examples, selected for purposes of the Reformers' polemic against unscriptural Marian devotion, see *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, new edition, illustrated (London: Morgan and Scott, 1881), Book XII, section vii, pp. 695-8, quoting 'Our Lady's Matins' and 'Our Lady's Psalter'. E. Duffy's *The Stripping of the Altars, Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992) provides a magisterial and sympathetic account of popular devotion in England at the time of the Reformation.

³ See the third part of the homily 'Against Peril of Idolatry', *The Book of Homilies* (London: SPCK, 1833) p. 267

Anglican doctrine by means of the Prayer Book and by Articles which simply set boundaries to doctrinal understanding in areas of contemporary controversy, left ample space for new growth and continuing variety in the Anglican tradition after the radical, politicised measures of the sixteenth century. Though the 1552 Prayer Book and the 42 Articles of 1559 may be striking for the severe limits they set to Marian devotion, and for their lack of explicit Marian themes, the seventeenth century saw the formation of a broader Anglicanism shaped by further reflection on the tradition of East and West, a process that was renewed and, for some like Newman, tested to the limit in the nineteenth. There was much to support this recovery: churches dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, Lady Chapels, popular shrines of 'Our Lady' held in folk memory, some Marian statuary, Marian imagery in stained glass windows, the Marian feasts in the Anglican calendar, such as 'Lady Day'. Anglican tradition, as it spread throughout the world, proved in many places open to much more in the way of Marian devotion than the severer of the Reformers would have tolerated, though there has always been in Anglicanism a reluctance to see that devotion expressed in doctrines and official formularies which would have proved fatally divisive. The place of the Virgin Mary in Anglican tradition is assured because of Mary's place in the Gospel tradition,⁴ but the way in which that place is celebrated by Anglicans has varied greatly and continues to do so.

The Influence of the Continental Reformers

English Reformers such as Latimer (c1485-1555), and Cranmer (1489-1556) were amongst the first of those to be influenced by the pioneering work of Luther and Zwingli. It was not, however, until the reign of Mary (1553-8) that English exiles came under the full force of Calvin's teaching, and since the reign of Elizabeth (1558-1603) there has

⁴ This is particularly evident in A.M. Allchin, *The Joy of All Creation: An Anglican Meditation on the Place of Mary* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1993).

been a tension in Anglicanism between the received theology of Cranmer which is indebted to the moderate Lutheranism of Bucer⁵ and, on the one hand, Puritans like Cartwright (1535-1603) and Perkins (1552-1602) who were indebted to Calvin and, on the other, traditionalists like Laud (1573-1645) and other Caroline divines in whom there was a strong sympathy for Catholic teaching and practice, whilst maintaining the characteristic Anglican rejection of Roman juridical claims. Since the time of Jewel (1522-71), and Hooker (c1554-1600), both of whom resisted Puritan demands for further reform after the model of the church of Geneva, the Calvinist (presbyterian) tradition was effectively marginalised in the Church of England, whereas the tradition of the Caroline Divines was more firmly integrated through the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and the continuing strength of the High Church tradition and the Oxford Movement.

Marian teaching did not, at least in the beginning of the Reformation, belong to the dividing issues. First generation Reformers, such as Luther and Zwingli, did not immediately question the Marian doctrine in which they had grown up though they rejected Marian devotion centred on the invocation of Mary to the exclusion of Christ. There were those like Erasmus⁶ and Thomas More⁷ who criticised the excesses of Marian

⁵ Cranmer's theological understanding underwent an evolution, and the expression of his views was always moderated by what was politically possible. The 'reading' of Cranmer has thus itself been a matter of controversy, to which the fine biography by Dermot MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer* (New Haven and London, 1996) makes an authoritative contribution.

⁶ Erasmus (1466/9-1536) visited Walsingham twice in 1512 and 1514. He criticised the Christians of his time because they never seemed to address themselves to God, but only to Our Lady and the Saints. Thus, in *The Shipwreck*, from his *Familiar Colloquies*, the sailors call on Mary, chanting the *Salve Regina*: 'They implored the Virgin Mother, calling her Star of the Sea, Queen of Heaven, Mistress of the World, Port of Salvation and many other flattering titles which Holy Scripture nowhere applies to her.' See, H. Graef, *Mary, A History of Doctrine and Devotion*, 2 vols. (London: Sheed and Ward, 1965), vol. 2, pp. 3-4.

⁷ Thomas More wrote in his *Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, 'The people in speaking of our lady: Of al our Ladies, saith one, I love best our Lady of Walsingham. And I, saith the other, our Lady of Ippiswitch. In whiche woordes what meneth she but her love and her affeccion to the stocke that standeth in the chapel of Walsingham or Ippiswiche? ... Doth it not plainly appeare that either thei trust in the images in Christes stede and our Ladies, letting Christ and oure Lady go, or take at the lest wise those ymages that thei wene thei wer verily the one Christ, the other our Lady her self.' Quoted, *The Two Books of Homilies* (Oxford: University Press, 1859), p. 224n.

devotion as fiercely as any Reformer who went out of communion with Rome. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession (1531), drawn up by Melanchthon, rejects the veneration of Mary and the saints.⁸ The Smalcald Articles (1537), drawn up by Luther and included in the *Book of Concord* (1580), attack the invocation of saints, but accept the doctrine of Mary as *theotokos* (following the Council of Ephesus, 431) and as *semper virgo* (following Constantinople II, 553).⁹ The Formula of Concord (1577) reaffirms the Lutheran belief in Mary as *theotokos* and *virgo in partu*.¹⁰

The Reformers' positive understanding of the place of Mary in salvation history is clear. There could for them be no doubt that Mary was integral to the Gospel and consequently to the Creed. In 1521 Luther wrote an *Exposition of the Magnificat*¹¹ in which he affirmed her perfect virginity, including virginity *in partu*, praising her humility and perfect obedience to God's will and criticising those who make an 'idol' of her. In a sermon on the Feast of the Conception of Mary (1527), he made it clear that he still believed in her immaculate conception, saying that 'one believes blessedly that at the very infusion of her soul [Mary] was also purified from original sin'.¹²

Zwingli believed that Mary was '*virgo ante partum, in partu et post partum*'.¹³ In 1522 he preached a series of sermons in Zurich on devotion to Mary. He made sure that the great Marian feasts of the Purification, the Annunciation and the Assumption continued

⁸ See Theodore G. Tappert ed., *The Book of Concord: the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), pp. 232-4. Compare Article 21 of the Augsburg Confession (1530), which rejects invocation of the saints without specifically mentioning Mary.

⁹ The Smalcald Articles, p. 292 n.3.

¹⁰ Tappert pp. 488, 595.

¹¹ *WA* VII, pp. 538-604; J. Pelikan ed., *Luther's Works* vol. 21 (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1956), pp. 295-358 (especially p. 302).

¹² *WA* 17.2, p. 288. Graef, (p. 11, n. 6) suggests that from 1528 Luther no longer believed in the Immaculate Conception, but acknowledges that this is disputed.

¹³ W. Hollenweger, 'Zwingli's Devotion to Mary', *One in Christ* 16 (1980), p. 64.

to be kept as public holidays in the reformed city . 'How do we properly praise Mary?', he wrote:

Not with elaborate and high (church) buildings, with processions where canons ride on beautiful horses, and dine with fine ladies ... but rather by using the money otherwise used for bricks and mortar for the welfare of poor daughters and women, whose beauty is endangered by poverty.¹⁴

In the subsequent generation, Calvin considered all prayers addressed to Mary to be contrary to Scripture: to ask her to obtain grace for us is no less than an 'execrable blasphemy', because God has predestined the measure of grace for every person from all eternity.¹⁵ To call her our hope, life, light and other similar names is to turn her into an idol and detract from God's honour, and to regard her as our 'advocate' is blasphemous, because she needed Christ as much as do all other human beings. Calvin recognised the theological legitimacy of the title 'Mother of God' but in practice never adopted it, unlike Luther and Zwingli who made frequent use of it for its Christological power.¹⁶ 'I am not able to disguise the fact', he wrote, 'that I find it wrong to have this title ordinarily attributed in sermons about the Virgin, and for my own part I would not think that such language was good or proper or convenient.'¹⁷ Nevertheless, he has the highest regard for the dignity of Mary's divine motherhood. He also teaches her perpetual virginity and wants Christians to venerate and praise her as a teacher who instructs them in the commandments of Christ. In his *Commentary on the Magnificat*, he accepts the Catholic term 'treasurer of grace', explaining that this is because Mary kept all the things about

¹⁴ Quoted by Hollenweger, p. 66.

¹⁵ Graef, p. 12, following K. Algermissen et al., *Lexicon der Marienkunde* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1957).

¹⁶ G. Miegge, *The Virgin Mary* (London: Lutterworth, 1955), p. 67.

¹⁷ Quoted by A.R. Mackenzie in 'Calvin and the Calvinists on Mary', *One in Christ* 16 (1980), p. 72.

Christ in her heart not for herself but for others. We must learn to praise Mary, but in the proper way, and to imitate her:

Let us learn to praise the Holy Virgin. When we accord with the Holy Spirit, then there will be genuine praises. ... But it is necessary also that with the praise there be the imitation ... For our part, let us follow her and understand that God has looked on her in pity; let us contemplate in her person, as in a mirror, the mercy of God. ... When we understand that the Virgin Mary is set before us as such an example, and confess with her that we are nothing, that we are worth nothing, and that we owe everything to the pure goodness of God, see how we will be disciples of the Virgin Mary and will show that we have retained her doctrine. And what honour are we able to do her greater than that?¹⁸

In England, the Reformation took a distinctive political and ecclesial form that produced a unique Anglican polity, but England was very much part of Catholic Europe and the theological critique of Marian devotion and teaching that developed in England was much indebted to that of the Continental Reformers.

The English Reformation

England's sixteenth century Reformers grew up in a world of rich, if at times overblown, Marian devotion. In their own preaching and devotion, Mary was no longer seen as the Queen of Heaven, the ready intercessor, or abundant source of grace for humanity. The piety they encouraged brought together two perspectives. In one, Mary was seen as sharing fully in human experience: she was a woman, she was a wife, she was a mother; she knew about the care of a household and the nurture of a child; she was rejected at the inn door and she suffered the loss of her son. She was a model of humility and obedience

¹⁸ *Ibid.* p. 74

to God's will. In the other perspective, Mary was seen as participating in salvation history: she was a humble, modest maid chosen to be the mother of the saviour, and thereby, a willing participant in God's redemption of the world. The Reformers of the English Church perceived Mary as a woman of humble obedience, called by God to an extraordinary role and rightly deserving of honour.¹⁹

Hugh Latimer, perhaps the most abrasive of the Anglican Reformers, regarded excessive devotion to Mary as dishonouring to her, since she never exalted herself above her Son:

But some are so superstitiously religious, or so religiously superstitious, so preposterously devout towards our lady, as though there could not be too much given to her. Such are zeals without knowledge and judgement to our lady's displeasure.²⁰

With reference to Luke 8:19-21, he was seemingly ready to assert that Mary had sinned:

On a time when our Saviour was preaching, his mother came unto him, very desirous to speak with him, insomuch that she made means to speak with him, interrupting his sermon, which was not good manners. Therefore, after St Augustine and St Chrysostom's mind, she was pricked a little with vain-glory ... And here you may perceive that we gave her too much, thinking her to be without any sparkle of sin, which was too much: for no man born into the world is without sin, save Christ only.²¹

¹⁹ These two perspectives are exemplified by the quotations from *The Book of Homilies* below.

²⁰ Hugh Latimer, *Sermons and Remains*, edited for the Parker Society by G.E. Corri, 2 vols. (Cambridge: University Press, 1985), vol. 2, p. 227.

²¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p 383; cf p. 515.

Latimer goes on to note²² that 'The school doctors say she was arrogant'. He himself argues that, since 'the very mother of Christ had sins, and yet was saved, we shall be saved too'.²³ His attitude was:

It hath been said in times past, without sin, that our lady was a sinner; but it was never said, without sin, that our lady was not saved, but a Saviour. I go not about to make our lady a sinner, but to have Christ her Saviour.²⁴

Yet he could argue, with some nicety:

They did belie me to have said [that our Lady was a sinner], when I had said nothing [so] but to reprove certain, both priests and beneficed men, which do give so much to our Lady, as though she had not been saved by Christ, a whole Saviour, both of her, and of all that be or shall be saved.²⁵

He is typical of the radical early English Reformers in that Mary is seen primarily as a humble and obedient agent of God in the redemption of humankind. Because of its Biblical provenance, the *Ave Maria* (in its Biblical form) was for him a legitimate devotion. So Latimer could write, :

As for the *Ave Maria*, who can think that I would deny it? I said it was a heavenly greeting or saluting of our blessed Lady, wherein the angel Gabriel, sent from the Father of heaven, did annunciate and show unto her the good-

²² Cf Thomas Aquinas, *ST* III. q.XXVII.4, where the authorities Latimer is referring to (Augustine and Chrysostom) are rehearsed. Augustine is quoted on both sides of the argument. Thomas' own opinion is, 'We should therefore simply say that the blessed Virgin committed no sin, either mortal or venial'.

²³ Latimer, *Sermons and Remains*, vol. 2, p. 117; cf pp. 157, 228, 358.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

²⁵ *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, p. 832. The usefulness of a source as polemical as *Foxe* has been disputed, but since *Foxe's* concern is to distance Latimer's from corrupt Catholicism, this lends strength to his record of the honour he says Latimer accorded to Mary. The passage goes on to say:

If she were a sinner, then she was redeemed or delivered, from sin by Christ, as other sinners be; if she was no sinner, then she was preserved from sin by Christ; so that Christ saved her, and was her necessary Saviour, whether she sinned or no ... forasmuch as now it is universally and constantly received and applied that she was no sinner, it becometh every man to stand and agree to the same, "and so will I," quoth I, "nor any man that wise is, will be the contrary. But to my purpose, it is neither to nor from, to prove neither this, nor that; or I will have her saved and Christ her Saviour, whether else she was,"

will of God towards her ... I did not speak against the well saying of it, but against the superstitious saying of it, and of the *Pater Noster* too.²⁶

In 1536, the Convocation of the Church of England agreed Ten Articles which were intended to put an end to the 'diversity of opinions' that had sprung up in the realm. They were 'the first official doctrinal formulary of the Church of England'.²⁷ In them, the 'Four Holy Councils' (including Ephesus at which Mary was proclaimed as *theotokos*) were commended, and images, especially images of Christ and Our Lady, were approved of as 'kindlers and stirrers of men's minds' - although warnings were given against 'censing of them, and kneeling and offering unto them'.²⁸ There was cautious encouragement for intercessions to the saints:

We may pray to our Blessed Lady, to St John the Baptist, to all and every Apostle and to any other saint particularly as our devotion doth serve us, without any vain superstition', but there is evidence within the text of the Articles of a struggle between those who wished to push forward with reform, and, on the other hand, of conservative resistance.²⁹

In 1535, William Marshall had published '*cum gratia et privilegio regali*' a primer, much indebted to Luther, which omitted the Litany of the Saints and attacked traditional primers 'which have sore deceived the multitude'.³⁰ Such was the outcry that a second

²⁶ Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, p. 833; cf Latimer, *Sermons and Remains*, vol. 2, pp. 228-9.

²⁷ Duffy, p. 392.

²⁸ In C. Hardwick, *History of the Articles of Religion* (London: Bell, 1876), Appendix 1, the Ten Articles are given in full.

²⁹ MacCulloch, (*Thomas Cranmer*, p. 162) show the text of the Ten Articles represents a compromise between the conservative views of Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, and Cranmer, to whom the last phrase here ('without any vain superstition') may be attributed.

³⁰ Duffy, p. 382. For the text, see E. Burton ed., *Three Primers put Forth in the Reign of Henry VIII* (Oxford, 1834). The other primers are *The Manual of Prayers or The Prymer in English* (1539) and *King Henry's Primer* (1545).

edition was published with the Litany restored, though Marshall insisted that he had made this and other omissions,

not of any perverse mynde or opinion, thynking that our blessed lady, and holy sayntes, myghte in no wyse be prayed unto, but rather bicause I was not ignoraunte of the ... vayn superstitious maner, that dyverse and many persons have ... used in worshyppyng of them.

Duffy calls Marshall's polemic 'as comprehensive an onslaught on the time-honoured forms of Catholic piety as had yet appeared in England'³¹ but it was one which had quasi-official sanction. Whole paragraphs of Marshall's *Primer* were incorporated into the *Bishops' Book* (1537) or *Institution of a Christian Man* which was intended to be an authoritative guide to the teaching of the Ten Articles for use in preaching and catechising. In the *Bishop's Book* the *Ave Maria* is discussed firmly in the context of the Incarnation.³²

In 1543, *The King's Book* or *A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man* was published. Once more, the *Ave Maria* is discussed in the context of the Incarnation. In *The Primer set foorth by the Kinges Maiestie and his Clergie* (1545), the *Ave Maria* (in its Biblical form, with no petitionary versicle and response) stands in its customary place at the beginning of *Matins*. As in other primers influenced by the reformed cause, it is clearly not an invocation of Mary. At Lauds, the '*Maria semper virgo*' is retained:

'Virgin Mary, rejoyce alway, which hast borne Christ the Maker of heaven and earth, for out of thy womb thou hast brought forth the Saviour of the world.
Thanks be to God.

³¹ Duffy, p. 382.

³² For discussion of *The Bishops' Book*, see MacCulloch pp. 185-93.

In 1544, the Litany, the first vernacular service, was authorised. The Marian invocation reads: 'Holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God our Saviour Jesus Christ, pray for us.' When the Litany was included in the Prayer Book of 1552, this invocation was removed, together with that of individual saints and biddings invoking 'All holy Angels and Archangels and all holy orders of blessed spirits' and 'All holy Patriarchs and Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and Virgins: and all the blessed company of heaven'.

In the Prayer Book of 1549 there was a commemoration within the Eucharistic Prayer, which ran:

And, here we do give unto thee most high praise and hearty thanks, for the wonderful grace and virtue declared in all thy Saints from the beginning of the world: And chiefly in the glorious and most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of thy Son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord and God and in the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs, whose examples ... and steadfastness in thy faith, and keeping thy holy commandments, grant us to follow.

In writing this paragraph Cranmer carefully adapted his two main sources.³³ The immediate source is the '*Communicantes*' from the Roman Rite:

In fellowship with ... and venerating above all the memory of the glorious ever-Virgin Mary, mother of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and also of your blessed apostles and martyrs ...

The Roman Canon goes on to list a number of saints individually. At this point Cranmer drew closer to the Great Prayer from the Liturgy of Saint Basil which asks:

... that we may find mercy and grace with all the saints who have been well-pleasing to you from of old, forefathers, fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles,

³³ F.E Brightman, *The English Rite*, 2 vols (London: Rivingtons, 1915), vol. 2, p. 690. See also, R.C.D. Jasper and G.J. Cuming eds, *Prayers of the Eucharist: Early and Reformed*, third, revised edition (New York, Pueblo, 1987), pp. 164, 120.

preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, teachers, and every righteous spirit perfected in faith; especially our all-holy, immaculate, highly blessed, glorious, Lady, Mother of God and ever-Virgin Mary ...

Cranmer simplified the doctrinal and liturgical expression to focus on what God does in his saints. He omitted the term '*semper virgo*' and, by breaking up the phrase 'Mother of God' to become 'Mary, mother of thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and God' he emphasised the Christological focus of the term '*theotokos*'. Three years later, in 1552, he removed the whole paragraph.

In the Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552, the Calendar was greatly simplified. Of the Marian feasts, only the Annunciation and Purification were retained. The Conception, the Nativity, the Visitation, and all mention of the Assumption were omitted. In the Calendar of 1561, the Conception (*sic*) of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Visitation were all restored to join the Annunciation and the Purification as Marian feasts. The conspicuous continuing omission was the Assumption, which disappeared from Anglican worship in 1549, only partially to return in some twentieth century Anglican calendars.

The second half of the sixteenth century was a austere period for the celebration of Mary in the Anglican tradition. In the Prayer Books (1549, 1552) the Purification was celebrated with a collect and gospel, to which an epistle was added in 1662; the Annunciation was celebrated with collect, epistle, gospel. In the Litany and the Eucharist there was no specific reference to Mary and the saints. The 39 Articles of Religion (1563)³⁴ sought to introduce clarity by teaching that 'Holy Scripture containeth all things

³⁴ The main steps towards the 39 Articles were: the Ten Articles (1536), the Bishops' Book (1537), the Six Articles (1539), the King's Book (1543), and the 42 Articles (1553). The 39 Articles of 1563 represented a slight revision of the 42 (1553).

necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of Faith, or be thought necessary to salvation' (Article 6); that Christ alone is 'without Sin' (Article 15);³⁵ that 'the Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping and Adoration, as well as of Images as of Reliques, and also invocation of Saintes, is a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God. (Article 22). Article 35 also specifically commended the both *Books of Homilies* as containing 'a godly and wholesome doctrine'.

The doctrine about Mary in the *Book of Homilies* is set out in four main passages. In the third part of the 'Homily Against Peril of Idolatry', the worship at Marian shrines is criticised:

And where one Saint hath images in divers places, the same Saint hath divers names thereof, most like to the Gentiles. When you hear of our Lady of Walsingham, our Lady of Ipswich, our Lady of Wilsdon, and such other, what is it but an imitation of the Gentiles idolaters' Diana Agrotera, Diana Coryphea, Diana Ephesia, &tc., Venus Cypria, Venus Paphia, Venus Gnidia? Whereby is evidently meant, that the Saint for the image sake should in those places, yea, in the images themselves, have a dwelling: which is the ground of their idolatry; for where no images be they have no such means.³⁶

In the second part of the 'Sermon Against Wilful Rebellion', Mary is commended as an example of civil obedience:

³⁵ There seems to be an indirect but clear reference to the Mother of our Lord, though authorities differ at this point. E. C. Gibson, *The Thirty Nine Articles* (1904), is strongly of the opinion that the Article does not refer to this subject. On the other hand C. Hardwick, *The History of the Articles* (1859), and H. Browne, *Exposition of the Thirty Nine Articles* (1850), take the contrary view. It is, at least, noteworthy that the earliest commentator on the Article, T Rogers, *The Catholic Doctrine of the Church of England: an Explanation of the Thirty Nine Articles* (1607), refers to the subject.

³⁶ *The Book of Homilies*, op cit, p. 244.

In the New Testament the excellent example of the blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of our Saviour Christ, doth at the first offer itself. When proclamation or commandment was sent into Jewry from Augustus the Emperor of Rome, that the people there should repair unto their own cities and dwellingplaces, there to be taxed; neither did the blessed Virgin, though both highly in God's favour, and also being of the royal blood of the ancient natural kings of Jewry, disdain to obey the commandment of a heathen and foreign prince, when God had placed such a one over them ... but, all excuses set apart, she obeyed, and came to the appointed place ... This obedience of this most noble and most virtuous lady to a foreign and pagan prince doth well teach us, who in comparison to her are most base and vile, what ready obedience we do owe to our natural and gracious Sovereign.³⁷

This ideological use of the example of Mary, culminating in the *double-entendre* ('natural and gracious Sovereign' could refer both to the earthly and the heavenly sovereign whom Christians ought to obey) captures for us exactly the political and theological flavour of the times.

While admitting that the saints in heaven might pray for us, a key passage, in the second part of the 'Homily Concerning Prayer' does not mention Mary by name, but once more reiterates the reformed critique of the invocation of the Saints, including, of course, Mary:

Let us not therefore put our trust or confidence in the Saints or Martyrs that be dead. Let us not call upon them, nor desire help at their hands: but let us always lift up our hearts to God in the name of his dear Son Christ; for whose sake as God hath promised to hear our prayers, so he will truly perform it. Invocation is a

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 623f.

thing proper unto God: which if we attribute unto the Saints, it soundeth to their reproach, neither can they well bear it at our hands.³⁸

Lastly, we need to note that the homily on 'Repentance, and true Reconciliation' records:

Jesus Christ, who being true and natural God, equal and of one substance with the Father, did at the same time appointed to take upon him our frail nature, in the blessed Virgin's womb, and that of her undefiled substance, that so he might be a Mediator between God and us, and pacify his wrath.³⁹

It should be remembered that *The Book of Homilies* is one of the authoritative Anglican formularies.

Richard Hooker's focus in *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* is such that he says nothing specifically about Mary (for Anglicans who look to Hooker's *Laws* as a major Anglican authority, a significant silence) and his discussion about the Communion of Saints (V.lvi.6-13) is a discussion about the communion of all Christians in Christ. In his 'Answer to Travers', however, he deals with the complaint from a Puritan critic⁴⁰ that Hooker is, especially since the Council of Trent, wrong to say of Roman Catholics, 'They acknowledge all men sinners, even the Blessed Virgin, though some of them freed her from sin' and, 'They teach Christ's righteousness to be the only meritorious cause of taking away sin, and differ from us only in applying it'.⁴¹ On the first, Hooker corrects Travers: he actually said, 'They acknowledge all men sinners except the Blessed Virgin'. He goes on to affirm, 'Although they imagine that the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 356.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 578

⁴⁰ When, in 1584, Walter Travers (c1548-1635) declined to receive Orders in the Church of England, he was passed over for the post of Master of the Temple, which went to Hooker.

⁴¹ See 'Travers' Supplication' in J. Keble ed., *Hooker's Works*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1888), p. 563 and Hooker's 'Answer to Travers', pp. 579-85.

were for his honour and by his special protection preserved clean from all sin, yet *concerning the rest they teach as we do*, that all have sinned.'⁴² In avoiding any further opening up of the question, Hooker merely follows Article 15, 'Of Christ Alone without Sin', but he does so in such a way as to leave open the possibility that there might be more to be said about the sinlessness of Mary. On Travers' second point, Hooker affirms that Roman Catholics 'teach as we do, that altogether Christ be the only meritorious cause of our justice, yet as a medicine, which is made for health, doth not heal by being made, but by being applied; so, by the merits of Christ, there can be no life nor justification, without the application of his merits: but about the manner of applying Christ, about the number and power of means whereby he is applied, we dissent from them.' Even today, this remains a useful corrective of exaggerated Mariology, and of exaggerated accounts of the gulf between Anglicanism and official Roman Catholic teaching, especially as Hooker's position represents the mature Anglicanism of the late sixteenth century.

The Caroline Divines and the Non-Jurors

The doctrine of the Incarnation, the union of the divine and human in Christ was at the heart of seventeenth century Anglican theology. From this conviction flowed the celebration of this mystery in the Church's liturgy, the notion that the whole of human nature, including the body, was redeemed, and consequently the place of Mary in the economy as understood by Anglicans was secured. After the 'beating of the theological bounds' in the sixteenth century, there was amongst Anglican scholars a growing recognition the place of Mary and the Saints in the early Christian tradition, and a willingness to contemplate afresh the significance of Mary for Christian tradition, which was expressed in sermons, devotional writing and poetry.

⁴² Our emphasis.

King James 1 (1688-1625) was himself a keen theologian. What he wrote about Mary sums up well the Anglican position at the beginning of the seventeenth century:

And first for the Blessed Virgin Mary, I yield her that which the Angel Gabriel pronounced of her, and which in her Canticle she prophecied of herself, that is, That she is blessed among women, and That all generations shall call her blessed. I reverence her as the Mother of Christ, of whom our Saviour took His flesh, and so the Mother of God, since the Divinity and Humanity of Christ are inseparable. And I freely confess that she is in glory both above angels and men, her own Son (that is both God and man) only excepted. But I dare not mock her, and blaspheme against God, calling her not only *Diva* but *Dea*, and praying her to command and control her Son, who is her God and her Saviour. Nor yet not, I think, that she hath no other thing to do in Heaven than to hear every idle man's suit and busy herself in their errands, whiles requesting, whiles commanding her Son, whiles coming down to kiss and make love with priests, and whiles disputing and brawling with devils. In Heaven she is in eternal glory and joy, never to be interrupted with any worldly business; and there I leave her with her blessed Son, our Saviour and hers, in eternal felicity.⁴³

Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626), bishop, preacher and author of the *Preces Privatae*, makes few references to the Blessed Virgin Mary in his sermons, though he preached regularly on the Nativity. In one of his *Two Answers to Cardinal Perron* he protested that Mary was not to be adored nor to be invoked, since each involved *cultus latrae*,

⁴³ From King James 1, *A Premonition to All Most Mighty Monarchs, Kings, Free Princes, and States of Christendom*, quoted in P.E. More and F.L. Cross, *Anglicanism, The Thought and Practice of the Church of England illustrated from the Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century* (London: SPCK, 1962), p.4. More and Cross's anthology is an invaluable source, but it does have important omissions (eg Herbert's poetry and Andrewes' *Preces Privatae*) and must be supplemented by other sources for a balanced picture.

which is proper to God alone.⁴⁴ However, the inclusion in the *Preces Privatae* of one brief passage, borrowed from the Liturgies of St Chrysostom and St James, clearly shows a warmth of Marian devotion:

*Sanctissimae, intemeratae, super caeteros benedictae,
Deiparae, et semper Virginis Mariae, cum omnibus Sanctis, memoria
habita,
Nos ipsos, et vicissim alios, et omnem vitam nostram,
Christo Deo commendemus.*

Commemorating the allholy, immaculate, more than blessed mother of God and evervirgin Mary with all saints,
let us commend ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ
God:⁴⁵

This was precisely the note of joyous communion with Mary and the saints that had been excised from the 1552 Prayer Book, and which Andrewes and other divines rejoiced to find in the liturgies of the East. For him, belief in Mary as '*deipara*' (*theotokos*) and '*semper virgo*' was expressed in private prayers, written in Latin, which were almost a commonplace book of quotation from the early Christian tradition. Andrewes, however, also publicly encouraged people to pray by:

making mention of all the holy, undefiled and more than Blessed Mary, mother of God, and ever virgin, with all the Saints.⁴⁶

In the formation of Anglican devotion and pastoral ministry, few influences are more powerful than the poetry and prose of George Herbert (1593-1633). In both, Mary is striking by her absence. Herbert's sense of the Incarnation as a hallowing of everyday tasks and objects and feelings ('Teach me my God and King/ in all things Thee to see') is pervasive. The participation of God in the everyday, especially through the sacraments,

⁴⁴ Here we are indebted to M.F. Reidy, *Bishop Lancelot Andrewes* (Chicago: Loyola, 1955), p. 116.

⁴⁵ F.E Brightman ed., *The Preces Privatae of Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester* (London: Methuen, 1903, p. 85, cf p. 59, where Mary is also called 'evervirgin'.

⁴⁶ Lancelot Andrewes, *Ninety-Six Sermons*, 5 vols, LACT, (Oxford: 1841-3), vol. 1, p. 6.

is at the very core of his devotion, but this is not a hallowing shared with the saints and Mary for they are in heaven and the temptation to invoke them by prayer is one which, in obedience to God's 'injunction', must be actively resisted:

Oh glorious spirits, who after all your bands
See the smooth face of God, without a frown,
Or strict commands;
Where every one is king, and hath his crown,
If not upon his head, yet in his hands.

Not out of envy or maliciousness
Do I forbear to crave your special aid.
I would address
My vows to thee most gladly, blessed Maid,
And Mother of my God, in my distress:

Thou art the holy Mine, whence came the Gold,
The great restorative for all decay
In young and old;
Thou art the cabinet where the jewel lay:
Chiefly to thee I would my soul unfold.

But now, alas! I dare not; for our King,
Whom we do all jointly adore and praise,
Bids no such thing:
And where his pleasure no injunction lays,
('Tis your own case) ye never move a wing.

All worship is prerogative, and a flower
Of his rich crown, from whom lies no appeal
At the last hour:
Therefore we dare not from his garland steal,
To make a posy for inferior power.

Although then others court you, if ye know
What's done on earth, we shall not fare the worse,
Who do not so;
Since we are ever ready to disburse,
If any one our Master's hand can show.

⁴⁷ 'To all Angels and Saints' from *The Works of George Herbert in Prose and Verse*, 2 vols (London: Bell and Daldy, 1859), vol. 1, p. 80. The sense of alienation from a heavenly world of colour and human warmth was reinforced by the revival of a somewhat austere philosophic Platonism in mid-seventeenth century Cambridge (see, for example, H.R. McAdoo, *The Spirit of Anglicanism*, London: A. and C. Black, 1965, pp. 81-155). It is expressed with great pathos in the poetry of Henry Vaughan (1621/2-95):

Surely, no other Anglican wrote an *apologia* such as this of pity and longing for the mother neglected because of the 'strict commands' of the Son! The ambivalent address to Mary, which is not quite addressed to her, expresses precisely that sense of something precious that has been lost and not quite recovered in Anglicanism ('holy Mine' perhaps alludes euphonically to the *pro me* of Protestantism) which the Caroline divines set to heal. The tension between the God of 'strict commands' and the God of the Incarnation is palpable.

For Mark Frank (1613-1664),⁴⁸ Master of Pembroke College, Cambridge, the rightful honouring of Mary is never to be confused with the worship due to God alone. He expounds a *via media*, criticising those who,

because the Romanists make little less of her than a goddess ... make not so much of her as a good woman: because they bless her too much, these unbless her quite, at least will not suffer her to be blessed as she should.⁴⁹

In one of his sermons for Epiphany Frank has a remarkable passage, typical of the seventeenth century in its rich development of novel imagery, alluding to the close connection between the Incarnation, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the homage of the Wise men, and the liturgy today:

Gentiles and all; hither they come to worship, hither they come to pay their offerings and their vows; here is the shrine and altar, the glorious Virgin's lap, where the Saviour of the world is laid to be adored and worshipped; here stands

They are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit lingring here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

See, H. Gardner ed., *The Metaphysical Poets* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1957), pp. 275.

⁴⁸ Allchin comments, 'Of all the Anglican preachers of this time, [Frank] speaks most fully about Mary' (*The Joy of all Creation*, p. 49).

⁴⁹ Mark Frank, *Sermons*, 2 vols, LACT (Oxford: Parker, 1849), vol. 2, pp. 35-6.

the star for tapers to give it light; and here the wise men this day become the
priests.⁵⁰

The sustained metaphor is typical of seventeenth century preaching and meditative poetry in the style of Andrewes and Herbert. The compression of the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Eucharist into a Marian image that vividly recalls, in the homeliest language, so many pictorial representations of the nativity ('the glorious Virgin's lap') invites the participation and the reflection of the hearers; it invites the hearers to make the Epiphany their own.

John Pearson (1612-86), whose commentary on the Creed was standard reading for generations of Cambridge students, wrote at some length on 'Born of the Virgin Mary'.

He was trenchant:

We believe the mother of our Lord to have been not only before and after his nativity, but also for ever, the most immaculate and blessed virgin. ... The peculiar eminency and unparalleled privilege of that mother, the special honour and reverence due unto that Son, and ever paid by her, the regard of that Holy Ghost who came upon her, and the power of the Highest which overshadowed her, the singular goodness and piety of Joseph, to whom she was espoused, have persuaded the church of God in all ages to believe that she still continued in the same virginity, and therefore is to be acknowledged the ever virgin Mary.⁵¹

Pearson continued, 'Far be it from any Christian to derogate from that special privilege granted her which is incommunicable to any other. We cannot bear too reverend a regard unto the mother of our Lord, so long as we give her not that worship which is due unto the Lord himself.'

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 280.

⁵¹ *Pearson's Exposition of the Creed* (London: Valpy, 1822), pp. 249-61.

In his *Life of Christ (The Great Exemplar)* of 1649, Jeremy Taylor provides a similarly lengthy meditation on Mary. He attempts, when discussing Mary's virginity, to avoid any slight on marriage:

When the eternal God meant to stoop so low as to be fixed to our centre, he chose for his mother a holy person and a maid, but yet affianced to a just man, that he might not only be secure in the innocency, but also provided for in the reputation of his holy mother ... And yet her marriage was more mysterious; for as, besides the miracle it was an eternal honour and advancement to the glory of virginity, that he chose a virgin for his mother, so it was in that manner attempered, that the Virgin was betrothed, lest honourable marriage might be disreputed, and seem inglorious, by a positive rejection from any participation of the honour.⁵²

In *Ductor Dubitantium* (1660), Taylor discusses the title '*theotokos*' together with Mary's virginity when he considers the authority of unbroken tradition for the establishing of doctrine:

So though the blessed virgin Mary be not in Scripture called *theotokos*, 'the mother of God,' yet that she was the mother of Jesus, and that Jesus Christ is God, and yet but one person, that we can prove from scripture, and that is sufficient for the appellative. ... The scripture no where says that the blessed Virgin was a virgin perpetually to the day of her death: but as therefore it cannot be obtruded as an article of faith, yet there are a great many decencies and probabilities of the thing, besides the great consent of almost all the church of God, which makes it very fit to be entertained.⁵³

⁵² *The Whole Works of Jeremy Taylor*, 12 vols (London: Longman et al., 1847), vol. 2, pp. 53.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, vol. IX, p. 637.

Thomas Ken (1627-1711) was one of the best known episcopal writers of this period, and a leading non-juror.⁵⁴ Amongst Ken's devotional verse is a long poem entitled *Sion or Philothea*, which includes a long section on Mary that appears to proclaim the Immaculate Conception. Ken writes of Mary's conception:

The Holy Ghost, his Temple in her built,
Cleansed from congenial, kept from mortal guilt,
And from the moment that her blood was fired,
Into her heart celestial love inspired.

He goes on, in verses which were taken into the *English Hymnal*:⁵⁵

Her Virgin-eyes saw God incarnate born
When she to Bethlem came that happy morn,
How high her raptures then began to swell,
None but her own omniscient Son can tell ...
As Eve, when she her fontal sin reviewed,
Wept for herself, and all she should include;
Blessed Mary, with man's Saviour in embrace,
Joyed for herself, and for all human race ...
Heaven with transcendent joys her entrance grac'd,
Next to his throne her Son his mother plac'd;
And here below, now she's of heaven possess'd
All generations are to call her blest.⁵⁶

Whilst George Hickes (1642-1715) was Dean of Worcester and before he was consecrated (as a non-juror) Bishop of Thetford, he published a pamphlet in which he attempted to defend a middle way. In *Speculum Beatae Virginis: A Discourse of the Due Praise and Honour of the Virgin Mary by a True Catholick of the Church of England* (1689), Hickes wanted to recognize the unique position of Mary within the Christian

⁵⁴ The non-jurors were members of the Church of England who, on conscientious grounds, would not take the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy to William and Mary after the deposition of James II in 1688, since they had pledged their allegiance to James. Nine bishops, including the Archbishop of Canterbury and Thomas Ken, were deposed. The non-jurors were Anglicans with a high view of the Church as a spiritual society in which the monarch's place as 'supreme governor' was established by 'divine right'.

⁵⁵ See, *English Hymnal* 217.

⁵⁶ 'Sion' or 'Philothea' from T. Ken, *Works*, 4 vols (London: 1721), vol. 4, pp. 367-73.

tradition but at the same time to avoid the cultus which existed in the Roman Catholic Church of his time:

It is our duty, who have the benefit of her example, to honour, and celebrate her name, and commemorate her virtues, and set forth her praises. If the names of the other saints are distinguished with miniature, hers ought to shine with gold. ...But then we must not let our respect for her commence into worship, not romance her into a deity ... We must not treat her upon the account of her singular relation to Immanuel, as if she were an infinite majesty, or as if her graces were indeed divine attributes ... We ought not to pay such homage and veneration to her under the character of the Queen as is only due to the King of Heaven ... lest transgressing herein, we should fall into those unwarrantable excesses and abuses which a great part of Christendom is too justly chargeable with.⁵⁷

The seventeenth century offers no further development of Anglican doctrine about Mary, but it offers a powerful recovery of interest in the Mary's place within the Anglican tradition. Clearly, theologians like Andrewes and Herbert are cautious about this, and the incautious promotion of Catholicism in ritual and devotion by Laud quickly excited anti-Roman suspicion. Anglican caution with respect to the place of Mary and the Saints continues to be reflected in mainstream thinking today, but seventeenth century Anglican preachers, well versed in early Christian thought, and in the Liturgies of the Eastern tradition, could not ignore the honoured place held by the *theotokos*. They remained allergic to invocation of Mary, sympathetic to talk about 'sinlessness', open to Mary being *semper virgo*. The heartland of Anglican devotion lies in wonder at the humanity of Mary, honoured by God in the bearing of divinity, and her attractiveness as an exemplar of obedience, humility and joy. It should not be forgotten that of the two invariable canticles at the daily Evening Prayer of Anglicans one is the *Magnificat*.

⁵⁷ George Hickes, *Speculum Beatae Virginis: A Discourse of the Due Praise and Honour of the Virgin Mary, by a True Catholick of the Church of England*, second edition (London: 1686), pp. 9-10.

The Oxford Movement

It was in the nineteenth century that Marian devotion was to come to fruition. Before we consider the Oxford Movement we need to note the work of Bishop Reginald Heber, (1783 – 1826) missionary, evangelist and hymn-writer. He was closely associated with the Evangelicals of his day, yet consciously disassociated himself from some of their Calvinistic theology. Inspired by the work of Thomas Ken he wrote:

Virgin-born, we bow before thee,
Blessed was the womb that bore thee,
Mary, mother meek and mild
Blessed was she in her child.

Blessed was the breast that fed thee,
Blessed was the hand that led thee,
Blessed was the parent's eye
That watched thy slumbering infancy.

Blessed she by all creation
Who brought forth the world's salvation,
And blessed they, for ever blest
Who love thee most and serve thee best.

Virgin-born we bow before thee,
Blessed was the womb that bore thee,
Mary, mother meek and mild,
Blessed was she in her child.

A M Allchin praises the author by saying, "There is something remarkable about this hymn which for all its apparent simplicity manages to say so much in so small a space."⁵⁸

The Oxford Movement's emphasis on patristic studies inevitably led to a fresh appreciation of the role of the *theotokos* within the Christian Tradition. In 1823 John Keble (1792 – 1866) had written the first stanza of his famous hymn *Ave Maria*. This poem was inspired by his mother's death and was published in his immensely popular *Christian Year*. In it Keble addressed Mary as the "Blessed Maid, Lily of Eden's fragrant shade...whose name, all but adoring love may claim". Interestingly, Keble's friends persuaded him to omit the following verse from a poem significantly entitled "Mother out of sight":

Therefore, as kneeling day by day
we to our Father duteous pray
so, unforbidden may we speak
an Ave to Christ's mother meek;
(as children with "good morrow" come
to elders in some happy home:)
inviting so the saintly host above
with our unworthiness to pray in love.⁵⁹

In 1832, thirteen years before being received into the Roman Catholic Church, John Henry Newman (1800 – 91) preached a sermon on the Annunciation in which he praised Mary's transcendent purity in such terms that he was accused of teaching the Immaculate Conception.⁶⁰ In 1843, in a sermon on "The Theory of Development in Religious Doctrine", for the feast of the Purification,⁶¹ Newman called Mary "our pattern of faith, both in the reception and in the study of divine truth", who "symbolises to us, not only the faith of the unlearned but of the doctors of the Church also, who have to investigate,

⁵⁸ Allchin, *op.cit.* p. 142

⁵⁹ John Keble, *Miscellaneous Poems* (Oxford:1870), pp. 256-9

⁶⁰ J Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, vol. 2, p. 132

⁶¹ John Newman *Oxford University Sermons* No. 15

and weigh, and define, as well as to profess the Gospel". Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that Newman rendered Mary no personal cult and, even three years before being received into the Roman Catholic Church, still regarded her public veneration as incompatible with the worship of God.

Newman was to become a correspondent of E B Pusey (1800 –82) who, in 1865, published his *Eirenicon: Certain Difficulties Felt By Anglicans in Catholic Teaching*.⁶² Pusey's *Eirenicon* was in the form of a letter addressed to Keble in which he considered, among other things, "the vast system as to the Blessed Virgin", as "the special crux of the Roman system" and one of the principle obstacles for reunion. In the *Eirenicon* Pusey attacked the recently defined dogma of the Immaculate Conception as a further obstacle to reunion. Pusey's chief objections are directed against the view that Mary is mediatrix of all graces whose intercession is in some way necessary to salvation,⁶³ that her mercy is opposed to Christ's vengeance, that she is Co-Redemptrix,⁶⁴ that she has authority over Christ⁶⁵ and that she produces Christ in souls.⁶⁶

In 1865, B F Westcott (1823 – 1901), J B Lightfoot and E W Benson visited the Marian shrine at La Salette. As Allchin records, 'it would be hard to think of more weighty representatives of nineteenth-century Church of England.'⁶⁷ Westcott recorded his experience and thoughts in a sixteen-page pamphlet entitled *La Salette in 1865*. He develops three lines of thought. First, an account of the story of the apparition and of the faith and devotion which it engendered; secondly, a reflection on the nature of that devotion; and thirdly a brief discussion of the last two points in relation to the spiritual life of the Church of England. For Westcott, La Salette

...gave expression to an instinct which claims to be recognized. It is perhaps not too much to say that the vitality of a religion may be measured by the intensity of

⁶² E B Pusey, *Certain Difficulties Felt by Anglicans in Catholic Teaching*, (London:1892)

⁶³ *ibid.* pp. 101-3

⁶⁴ *ibid.* p. 152

⁶⁵ *ibid.* p. 160

⁶⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁷ Allchin, *op.cit.*, p. 159

the belief in the immediate working of the divine power which it produces. This is not the place for theological discussion, but very little reflection will show that when the belief in the miraculous – in the action of a special providence as it is called – as an element in common life is destroyed, religion is destroyed at the same time, so far as religion includes the ideas of worship and prayer.⁶⁸

1878 saw the publication of the Bishop of Brechin's commentary on the Thirty Nine Articles. Bishop Forbes, in commenting upon article 15 has a remarkable passage concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary:

one's first thought with regard to her is a jealousy for the honour of the Lord God of Hosts. Anything that approaches him must be fended off. We cannot endure that the idea of any created thing, however great and holy shall be compared unto Him. He is supreme, and His honour we must not give unto another....But on the other hand, viewed rightly and in the analogy of faith, the great honour bestowed upon Mary, the recognition of her place in the order of grace, tends very directly to a proper understanding of the glory of God...estimate her pure as Eve at the moment of creation, add to that the miraculous fact of divine maternity, exhaust all thought and all positive language in the conception and expression of her august prerogatives, and yet, when you have reached the height, God is still infinitely greater. Thus she becomes a height of created nature, whence to rise to the Divine Humanity of her Son, and thence to the infinitude of God, and the higher ideal we have of her, the more complete is our all-perfect estimate of Him.⁶⁹

Concluding his commentary on the 1854 dogma, Bishop Forbes remarks:

Whether the interests of Christianity have gained by the increase of honour which hereby accrues to the Holy Virgin, and by additional prominence given to the idea of Suprasensual in the mystery of redemption, or have lost by the divorce in

⁶⁸ *ibid.* p. 164

⁶⁹ A P Forbes, *An Explanation of the Thirty-Nine Articles* (London:1878), pp. 226-227

sentiment between the past and present Church, by the dissidence between the Old Traditional Faith and the Developed Sentiment of the Living Church, is a question which suggests the gravest consideration, and excites the deepest anxiety.⁷⁰

The Twentieth Century

During the second half of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century the “ritualistic” phase of the Oxford Movement gathered pace. Through stained glass, banners, images and shrines, devotion to Mary was significantly revived. Many of the prayers used at this time were either adapted or culled from contemporary Roman Catholic sources⁷¹ and a number of shrines devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary were re-established.⁷² Several books on the Blessed Virgin Mary were written by Anglican theologians at this time - Bede Frost’s *Mystery of Mary* (1938) and the symposium *The Mother of God* (1948) edited by E L Mascall, who contributed the chapter on “The Dogmatic Theology of the Mother of God”. In this article, Mascall emphasises the traditional doctrines of Mary as the Mother of God and also of her as the Mother of the Church. Moreover he accepts Mary’s virginity *in partu* and *post partum*, her immaculate conception and her bodily assumption into heaven, though he does not think any of these doctrines ought to be imposed ‘as of faith’. T Parker, in his contribution on “Devotion to the Mother of God”, in the same work, considers that the Eastern Church has been more faithful to Mariological tradition than the West; the East stresses the honour due to Mary more than her power of intercession.

1976 saw the publication of *Mary and the Christian Gospel* by John de Satge. The significance of this book is that it is written by an Anglican Evangelical who, in

⁷⁰ *ibid.* p229

⁷¹ The Anglo-Catholic Prayer Book of 1931 contains the Rosary, the Angelus, the Regina Coeli, the Litany of Loreto and special prayers for Marian feasts.

accordance with Article Six, insists that the Holy Scripture is the norm of Tradition. Canon de Satge illustrates this by taking *solus Christus*, *sola scriptura*, and *sola fide* (*sola gratia*) as means by which to interpret the Marian dogmas. The first of these principles, *solus Christus*, means that any attempt to supplement Christ's sole mediatorship (Mary as Mediatrix or Co-redemptrix) is rejected as blasphemous; the second, *sola scriptura*, that the two later dogmas (Immaculate Conception and Assumption) are rejected as unscriptural; the third, *sola fide - sola gratia*, that any suggestion of Mary possessing any merits of her own which give her a special place and privilege are unacceptable.

It is Canon de Satge's belief that the bad press, which the two traditional doctrines (Virgin birth and *theotokos*), and to some extent the ancient tradition of the perpetual virginity have had among Protestants, in recent times, is due not to Reformation principles but to the corruptions of liberalism. Further, the later Roman Catholic dogmas (Immaculate Conception and Assumption) have been largely misunderstood by Protestants and are not really so contrary to Reformation principles as they sound. So, Canon de Satge sets out in his book to examine the Marian dogmas and doctrines from the Reformation point of view and to bring them to a sympathetic understanding and appreciation. Because of the importance of this work it might repay us to examine more closely Canon de Satge's work.

Canon de Satge contends that the virgin birth has, in recent times, been questioned by those liberal Protestants who wish to stress Jesus' 'brotherness' over and against his "otherness". This abandonment of traditional christology, Canon de Satge suggests, is contrary to the Reformation writers who completely accepted this belief. Canon de Satge notes that while the *theotokos* doctrine is primarily christological in nature it also has mariological implications. Following Newman, de Satge argues that because of the perfect humanity of Jesus there are areas of human life in which we feel we cannot identify with him:

⁷² The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Our Lady of Willesden, Our Lady Undercroft in Canterbury Cathedral and Our Lady of the Pew in Westminster Abbey to name but a few.

But it is not so with Mary. She who gave human birth is yet completely human. She is a sinner who is redeemed. It is with her that we may fully identify. It may be for certain reasons due to her uniqueness as the mother of God that she has reached the fullness of human potential sooner than the rest of us, but though she has made the journey more quickly she has still had the same path to tread, a path different from that of the sinless Saviour.⁷³

Equally, for de Satge, the *theotokos* doctrine safeguards God's free choice of Mary to be the human mother of the eternal *Logos* and Mary's free acceptance of that choice. Likewise in considering the perpetual virginity of Mary, Canon de Satge sees nothing to invalidate the generally accepted tradition of both East and West. Instead of undermining the Reformation bulwarks of *solus Christus* and *sola gratia*, Canon de Satge suggests that the dogma of the Immaculate Conception re-enforces these reformation principles. For Mary's immunity from original sin was granted as a gift of grace in prospect of the redeeming work of Christ:

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception does not suggest that, in itself, Mary was sinless. It was not her merits but those of her Son which were, so to speak, applied to her in advance. As much as any other Christian she was saved by the blood of Jesus⁷⁴

Noting the lack of direct scriptural authority and maintaining the importance of Article 6, de Satge rejected the idea that the dogma of the Assumption is necessary to salvation. However, Canon de Satge does maintain that it is "congruent" with Scripture, and specifically with St. Paul's formula, "those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified" (Romans 8:30).

⁷³ J de Satge, *Mary and the Christian Gospel*, SPCK, London:1976, p. 51

⁷⁴ *ibid.* p. 69

In his closing chapters de Satge turns his attention to those beliefs, currently developed in theology and devotion, about the Virgin Mary which have not been defined as dogma. De Stage explores the Eve-Mary typology as well as Mary as *mater ecclesiae*. Perhaps the most startling suggestion, coming as it does from an evangelical, is the hospitality shown to the idea of Mary as mediatrix. De Satge points out that Christ commonly exercised his mediatorship through subordinate human mediators. Converts are normally won to Christ, and Christ's work is continued in believers, through the witness and intercession of other human beings. If we can see them as mediators under the one true Mediator, why not also the Blessed Virgin?

Is not the assertion of even a subordinate mediatorship on Mary's part an unwarrantable infringement of the unique mediatorship of her Son? I believe that it is not. My reasons spring from the fact that Mary's mediatorship arises from the ministry she has been given and not from her own virtues. Her role,, is to point not to her self but to her Son. In that respect Mary stands in the line of all genuine Christian ministry. For the fact remains that, though there are notable exceptions to which the Bible Societies especially bear witness, in most cases it takes a human being (or a collection of human beings gathered in a 'church') to mediate Christ to those who have not previously realised him as be of any vital concern to themselves. Christ is indeed the only mediator between God and man; but Christian experience shows no limit in the number of mediators needed between Christ and man.⁷⁵

Father Edward Yarnold SJ has suggested that it is a characteristic of the Anglican approach to Mary that it prefers the poetic image to the abstract concept. Conceptual clarity is not something to be despised but, in this area in particular, there are many things which can be said in images both verbal and visual which can hardly be conveyed in prose. Here, perhaps, is a point where Anglicans have something in common with the East. This particular understanding is taken up in A M Allchin's *The Joy of All Creation; an Anglican meditation on the place of Mary* (1993).

⁷⁵ *ibid.* p.118

The twentieth century has been marked by a number of revisions of the Anglican liturgy. In the Calendar of the 1662 Prayer Book, December 8th is marked as the “Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary”. In Anglican terms this is a “black letter day”, a day for which no liturgical provision, through readings and collect, is provided. In the ill-fated revision of 1928, a collect only is given. It is, however, worded in quite general terms. We have already noted that August 15th was dropped from the 1549 Prayer Book. It has only recently made an appearance in Anglican Calendars. The American, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand Books have made August the 15th a principal feast, a trend that seems to have begun with the South African Prayer Book of 1954. The South African Prayer Book describes the feast as “The Falling asleep of the Blessed Virgin Mary” and provides a collect that is unmistakably one of Dormition. (The 1960 Prayer Book of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon also has a feast of this name.) Some⁷⁶ might argue that since Prayer Books are not only liturgically, but theologically normative for Anglicans, it seems that in a number of provinces of the Anglican Communion, the Dormition now enjoys the status of official teaching.

In the new Common Worship *Calendar, Lectionary and Collects*, of the Church of England, readings are given for the Blessed Virgin Mary under the ‘Common of the Saints’ and a collect and post communion prayer is provided for the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on the 8th December. A collect and readings for the 15th August are provided under the title of “The Blessed Virgin Mary”. Further, we need to note that Anne and Joachim, Parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary, are commemorated on 26th July with collects and readings. Mary is mentioned by name in the third Eucharistic Prayer of Rite A in the Alternative Service Book and in Prayer B and G in Common Worship. Further, Common Worship provides an opportunity to remember particular Saints by name in the Eucharistic Prayers B, E, F and G.

⁷⁶ A Williams, unpublished paper, *The Language of Reality: The Mother of God in the Anglican Tradition*, for ARCIC II (Mary) 432/99

ARCIC

Alberic Stacpoole, OSB, in his article "Mary in Ecumenical Dialogue"⁷⁷ reminds us of an important paper prepared by Dr. R J Halliburton on "The Exercise of Authority: an Anglican Approach to the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption" for an Anglican/Roman Catholic sub-commission on 'Church and Authority' in 1970. Dr. Halliburton begins by saying that Anglicans, on hearing of the Papal pronouncements, suspected Rome of a further corruption of the primitive faith. He continued by noting that Anglican Mariology had the tendency to either stand as a protest against the seeming corruption of the Middle Ages or adopt, wholesale, the Roman theology of Mary. This resulted, he believed, in too much "extra-ordinary", and not enough "ordinary" devotion. Halliburton hoped that the modern return to the study of the patristic age might lead to a reappraisal of Mary as a type of the Church, of Mary as the beginning of our redemption and of Mary as prefiguring, in the salvation of her soul and body, all the redeemed. With this approach, Dr. Halliburton judged, that a large measure of ecumenical agreement in faith could be reached. All it required was that theology be taught first so that faith may be aroused.

The Vatican's response to the Final report of ARCIC said that "...the Commission has not been able to record any real consensus on the Marian dogmas." It is true that the Final report states:

...the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption raise a special problem for those Anglicans who do not consider that the precise definitions given by these dogmas are sufficiently supported by Scripture. For many Anglicans the teaching authority of the Bishop of Rome, independent of a council, is not recommended by the fact that through it these Marian doctrines were proclaimed as dogmas binding on all the faithful. Anglicans would also ask

⁷⁷ In *Mary's Place in Christian Dialogue*, (London: 1965) ed. A Stacpoole pp.57-78

whether, in any future union between our two Churches, they would be required to subscribe to such dogmatic statements.⁷⁸

But is this the whole picture? At the outset we need to acknowledge what has been agreed! First, ARCIC affirmed Mary as *theotokos*, in fact the Commission makes this more precise, by adding “Mother of God Incarnate”. Secondly, the Final Report places Mary’s role within the work of Christ and his Church. Thirdly, this leads ARCIC to acknowledge the “grace and unique vocation of Mary” and “that she was prepared by divine grace to be the mother of the Redeemer; by whom she herself was redeemed and received into glory.” Lastly, Mary is a model of holiness, obedience and faith for all Christians as well as a prophetic figure of the Church before as well as after the Incarnation. This statement is further amplified by a footnote which bears repeating in full:

The affirmation of the Roman Catholic Church that Mary was conceived without original sin is based on recognition of her unique role within the mystery of the Incarnation. By being thus prepared to be the mother of our Redeemer, she also becomes a sign that the salvation won by Christ was operative among all mankind before his birth. The affirmation that her glory in heaven involves full participation in the fruits of salvation expresses and reinforces our faith that the life of the world to come has already broken into the life of our world. It is the conviction of Roman Catholics that the Marian dogmas formulate a faith consonant with Scripture.⁷⁹

The *Emmaus Report* was a preparation document for the Lambeth Conference of 1988. Whilst discussing the notion of ‘reception’, the report states:

A particular instance of the problem of ‘reception’ in a divided church is the case of the two Marian definitions of the Roman Catholic Church. Several Provinces drew particular attention to this problem.

⁷⁸ ARCIC, The Final report, (London, 1982), p. 96

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

The Southern Cone said:

ARCIC accepts that the Marian dogmas are a problem for many Anglicans and says that it should be specifically stated whether the recognition of papal primacy automatically implies subscription by Anglicans to both the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of our Lady.

The USA noted that the problem concerns both the *content* of the definitions and their *authoritative* status:

To pose this question is not to deny that some Anglicans believe the Marian dogmas already as *doctrines*. Further work can and should be done to render them as intelligible as possible to the Anglican Communion as a whole. To restate these doctrines as possible *theologoumena* however, does not obviate the dogmatic issue. We would raise the question of the status of these dogmas in the hierarchy of truths recognised by the Roman Catholic Church.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ The *Emmaus Report*, A report of the Anglican Ecumenical Consultation 1987, ACC, 1987, p. 68f