

SPIRITUAL RESPONSIBILITIES¹

BY

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HAVE been asked to speak to you about your spiritual responsibilities. Better than anyone you know the weight of them, and very specially at a time when the religious life is suffering from some disrepute, from reproaches, attacks, even from a recruiting crisis. The misunderstandings, the calumnies even, which circulate among people of the world, whether practising or not, are hardly worth considering. On the other hand, what does deserve attention is the opinion of those Christians, priests or layfolk, who seem to be the active elements of what His Eminence Cardinal Suhard calls 'the springtime of the Church'.

Increasingly nowadays priests, and holy priests of good judgment and experience, hesitate to recommend the religious life to their penitents. On their side, many young girls, apparently called to evangelical perfection, seek something other than the religious state, in so far at least as they are able to know it.

What is the reason for this?

One of these young girls told me it very clearly. A recent convert, she came to see me to confide in me that, reading in the Gospel the words of our Lord: 'Come, follow me', she had understood that the invitation was addressed to herself. 'But', she told me with vehemence, 'I don't want to be a nun!'

'And why not?' Listen to the reply: 'It is too far from the Gospel!' Too far from the Gospel! A state of life sanctioned by the Church to make the practice of the evangelical counsels as easy as possible!

When souls both generous and in good faith make such paradoxical, such scandalous criticisms, it is our duty to pull ourselves up for a moment in order to try to understand. Do not believe that I have come here to join in the chorus who run down the religious life. I believe in it, on the contrary, with all the faith that is in me;

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am I not myself a religious? I know that the Church thinks too much of this state of life for a Christian to be able to question for a single instant the good founded on this institution which will last until the end of the world.

Nevertheless, we must face those words: *It is too far from the Gospel!* There are, above all, those multiple problems with which you come in contact on all sides regarding the recruitment and the formation of your novices, regarding the care of their sanctification and of the apostolic efficacy of your works. . . .

First of all, in a few words, here is a general principle which will throw a light upon the whole of this statement. You are accused—men religious as well, but that is not my subject—of being too far from the Gospel. To the extent that this reproach has some foundation, the problem that you have to solve is, in the first place, spiritual—evangelical. Let the religious of whom you have charge be in fact what they are by title, let them really practise the evangelical counsels, to which their vows publicly oblige them, let them be really consecrated to God, to whom they have made profession of belonging, and your Institute will fulfil the whole of its function in the Church. In one stroke it will find itself magnificently adapted to the present day situation and its recruitment will pass your hopes.

Re-read the Gospel and take care to conform yourself with it completely. Be living Gospels: that is your vocation.

That, it seems to me, is the concrete problem you have to solve, and all the others are functions of this one. Let us pause first of all for a moment on what I might call the roots of the problem.

I.—THE ROOTS OF THE PROBLEM

I distinguish three of them:

1. Your responsibilities are those of every Superior of a religious community. The Superior is charged with directing (from outside and according to well established means) the members of her Institute towards their essential end, the salvation of their soul, and their secondary end, the salvation of their neighbour.

2. You are women, charged with the government of women. That complicates the problem.

Man, in fact, seems to be more suited for government. Both nature and revelation teach us that the man is normally the head: the head of the human couple, the head of the home, the governor of the city. The woman, on the contrary, normally finds her happiness in her attachment to her husband, in her motherhood, in the cares of her home. Please do not regard this as a manifestation

of misogyny, or masculine pride. Men have their defects and they are not small ones! And to say that woman is complementary to man is in no way to diminish her importance. . . .

To be a religious does not mean to be less a woman. And, moreover, the vow of chastity leaving conjugal and maternal affection without an object, the psychology of a religious can be, for herself as for her Superior, a big source of difficulty.

Quite apart from anything else one must realise, without any dramatising, that the sanctification of the woman religious must come precisely through this affective asceticism and through all these difficulties.

Now, your congregations have generally received their Rules from a founder, or from a foundress depending very much on the masculine mind of a priest adviser. You run the risk of taking these rules and practising them in a way that impoverishes them to some little extent of their creative genius. Your fidelity in observing them, excellent as it may be in intention, runs the risk of over-stressing their details and of making the letter prevail over the spirit. Now, it is this which is foreign to the Gospel.

It is, in fact, in respect of your feminine nature that one must explain those defects with which you are so often reproached—that multiplicity of detailed prescriptions in which your absolute and tremendous gift to God is lost and disfigured, in a word, an unconscious pharisaism. Most certainly, feminine psychology has a greater need of a precise and firm framework to sustain it than masculine. It is precisely this which will help to neutralise its excess of sensibility. But it must not be to such an extent that the letter stifles the spirit.

We will bear in mind, then, this second remark that feminine psychology renders particularly difficult the always precarious balance between the letter and the spirit.

3. This balance is rendered still more difficult by the rapid evolution of the present day mentality of the young girl. The contemporary young girl, even if she lives in the most sheltered environment, has the cumulative effects within her of a twofold crisis: that of the general mentality today and that of the emancipation of woman.

(a) The present day mentality stirs up life to a bursting point, in its concrete reality, in its irrational elements, in its imaginative inspiration rather than in any rationally constructive effort.

As for Christians, they go straight to the essential and 'authentic' as they say, to the sources of the faith: the Bible, the Liturgy,

the Fathers of the Church; and to the essential object of faith: God attained in and by the ecclesiastical community of the Mystical Body. All that is not essential, all that is concerned with methods, practices, established institutions, devotions—such things are called in question once again. They see formalism everywhere. They want to re-discover everything for themselves. And it is there that the danger lies; a danger which must not, however, hide from us a magnificent *élan* and, it seems, an evident springtime in the Church: that gift of love of God which is the very essence of our Christian life leads many of our Christians to retire into the desert in order to adore in silence. Others, in the name of this same gift of love, plunge themselves into the midst of 'the masses', as they are called, in order to save them. Clearly there are a generosity and a call from God from which the religious life ought to benefit. Still more clearly, it must not reject them.

(b) The present day young woman is in the very midst of a *crisis of emancipation*. She is no longer under age. She no longer wishes to be under man's protection or inferior to him. Denying in a measure her nature (and it is that which is dangerous and vain), she wishes to be independent and autonomous, equal to man as regards culture, calling, the government of her life, her civic responsibilities. In a word, she wants to be of age.

Not everything is bad in these two tendencies, in this double crisis. And you must take into consideration not only the bad, but also the good, although differently, to ensure your recruitment and to govern your Institute with a care to adapt the religious life to a psychology less feminine, more virile perhaps, but—and I insist very much upon this—at the same time with an infinite care against 'coming down from the Cross' in a state of life based upon sacrifice.

And that introduces me to the second part of my statement.

II.—THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SOLUTION

1. *Your responsibilities with regard to the sanctification of your Sisters.*

Christian perfection is measured according to charity; but at present it is above all important to recall that this sanctification comes about and can only come about through the cross. Christians today have to resolve an acute crisis in order to arrive at sanctity: they have a tendency to search for it not in the renunciation of the cross but in the fullest human development.

Most certainly, the divine life does not destroy the man in us. Man without God is no longer a man; it is God who gives him back

to himself. But we read in the Gospel that 'he that loveth his life shall lose it' (John, 12, 25); and that 'Whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it' (Luke, 17, 33).

Now, the whole question is to know exactly what this life is that we must lose and sacrifice to the Lord.

One remark may be interposed: the sacrifice of a spiritual creature is not a suicide; it is a birth, a re-birth to another life. A spirit like an angel and a man is not sacrificed to the Lord like the animal which the priest of the Old Testament killed on the altar of Yahweh. A spirit sacrifices itself by giving itself to the Lord, by loving with a total and gratuitous love: that is what it is to lose oneself, to give oneself. And that is why to lose oneself is to find oneself: it is the law of spiritual love.

For example, what gives the martyr his eminent value is not the body which is offered for death, it is the love which is shown by the offering. And at such a moment our spirit reaches the apogee of vitality. What gives the cross its redeeming power is not the fact that the Son of God died upon it; it is that he should love to such a point, to the point of dying. Where shall we find more love, and consequently more life, than in our Lord dying on the cross? Therefore, we must never forget that the work of our sanctification consists in directing everything (up to the annihilation of all the rest, if need be) to this life according to the spirit which is a gift of love to our heavenly Father.

It follows that the religious life, the official school of sanctity instituted by the Church, rests essentially on the Cross and on sacrifice.

I hesitate to use those words: cross, sacrifice; because too many Christians, even religious, make such a verbal exaggeration, such a flaunting emotional unreality of them! But the reality is there, it is of the reality of the cross lived and not dreamed that I speak.

There is in every sacrifice the matter of the sacrifice and the priest's act of offering. Every baptised person is marked with the sign of the cross. He must share in the Cross of Christ, and he shares at the same time with Christ, victim of the one sacrifice acceptable to the Father, and with the priest offering the one sacrifice. In the religious life it is the use of exterior possessions, of our body, of our will which is sacrificed by the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. That is the matter of our sacrifice. But who will offer it in union with the priestly offering of Christ? Ourselves, in the depth of our personality, in a gift of love so much the more intense and total as our liberty and our power of loving are more alive. Those are therefore the faculties that the religious

life, because it is essentially a sacrifice, ought to exalt and not to destroy. For if they were destroyed there would be no longer a sacrifice since there would be no longer either an offerer or an offering. What would the bread and wine be if there were no priest to offer them? What would happen to our poverty, our chastity, our obedience, if our love did not offer them to the Lord?

Thus, by reason of your charge, you have to take care not only that the matter of the sacrifice remains integral, but also that this matter be really offered by the most intense, the most personal, the greatest possible gift of love. Once again, it is love, it is charity which produces and which is the measure of sanctity. That then is the end that you are pursuing. By what means can you who are Superiors help those under you to attain this end? Here are a few principles.

(a) *A good Superior will take great care that the personal sacrifice of each sister is made to God and not to herself.*

That is a point where the exercise of government is particularly difficult in a feminine environment. More rich than man in affection, as I have reminded you, the woman religious (who moreover sees herself deprived of the masculine support of which she normally has need in order to maintain her psychological balance) unconsciously seeks a compensation for this sacrifice by transferring to her superior or her novice mistress the unused affection.

Paul Claudel has written wickedly in *The Satin Slipper*: 'There is nothing a woman detests more than her liberty'. To love is, for her more than for a man, to hand herself over; to think, to act, to live as the one whom she loves thinks, acts and lives. The gift of self that nature has likewise demanded of man is that of his activity; woman gives her heart. That is her greatness, but it is also a difficulty, for in giving herself in this way it is also herself that she is seeking, the joy that she finds in giving herself.

Now, it is this unconscious search after self in the gift of obedience that you must discern in the soul of your sisters so as to discourage it. A great temptation to every Superior is to govern by these affections; it is a temptation to an easy way, for herself and for her subordinates. For herself, not only because her maternal instinct here finds its object (not to speak of her vanity), but also because it is easier to govern infatuated subordinates.

It is also a temptation to an easy way for the subordinates, above all when they are women: it is so natural to them, and consequently so agreeable, to act through affection. It is so easy to obey a Superior in order to please her! But what remains then of true

religious obedience and of its supernatural motive? We see very well in the drama which is produced sometimes by a change of Superiors.

Of course all this is generally unconscious; the emotional attachment and the flattery which surround certain Superiors are not deliberate or organised. But that only makes it the more serious and the more dangerous, because in this way we continue to call obedience and sacrifice to God what are in fact no more, either wholly or in part, than an emotional attachment and a sacrilegious transfer of a right to a creature. And the more brilliant and good the Superior the greater the danger, particularly for her subjects.

I quite understand that the sacrifice made by the religious in obedience passes through the Superior, but it is to God that it is offered, and it passes through her only to the extent that she embodies and interprets the rules and constitutions. The Superior is an instrument which acts only from the outside, as we have already noticed. You must regard every person as sacred, above all every person who is baptised and called by the Holy Spirit to union with God. Each soul is created immediately by God, without intermediary; it is consequently ordained immediately to him, and there can be no one between it and God. We can only intervene from without, striving to give to the souls confided to us the most suitable means to advance them in the way of sanctity; but it is God who leads them. 'Only God can deify', said St Thomas. Consequently the Superior is only a servant: a servant of souls, a servant of the Holy Spirit in souls: 'Ecce ancilla Domini'. The sanctification of each of her religious is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit, and entirely, though on another plane, that of the liberty of each sister. That is why, like John the Baptist, the Superior is only the friend of the Bridegroom: 'He must increase and I must decrease'.

It may be that feminine psychology makes the thing particularly difficult because of the affective complications of which I have just spoken. But must we say that the Superior should strive to suppress all affection in herself and in her subordinates? Surely not. Charity is cordial or it is not charity. What must be suppressed is what would hinder the gift of God, what would turn aside towards the Superior the sacrifice which is to be made to God.

I am going to take an example borrowed from the life of St Theresa of the Child Jesus, whose prioress exercised some little 'affective tyranny' over the community. I will read you the text of the deposition of Sister Martha of Jesus at the process of beatification: 'At the beginning of my life at Carmel, I was myself attached to our Mother Prioress by an affection which I believed

to be true and good, but Sister Theresa of the Child Jesus, who was a little saint, saw at once that my affection was too human and was doing much harm to my soul. On 8th December 1892, an unforgettable day for me, she drew me to her and said to me: 'You are causing much grief to our Lord because you seek after our Mother too much; your affection is too natural, and that is not only a great obstacle to your perfection, but puts your soul in great danger. If you are always going to behave like that, you would have done better to have stayed in the world!' So speaks a saint! 'If our Mother sees that you are troubled, you can very well tell her all that I have just said to you. I would rather that she sent me away from the Monastery if she wishes, than fail in my duty to warn you of it for the good of your soul.'

A good Superior does not tolerate being loved as Sister Martha of Jesus loved her prioress. She would be the cause of a sin of idolatry, setting up herself as the idol. It is a direct sin against God, and especially in regard to persons called by him.

To be sure, a Superior ought to love her inferiors and take care to be loved if possible. To be sure, a Superior ought always to be ready to receive the confidences of her sisters, but in certain cases she must refuse them or cut them short. Above all, she must not impose them or solicit them directly or indirectly.

You know the express will of the Church on this point: a superior ought to exact obedience, but not according to her own whims, to her own personality, to her own judgment, but to the Holy Spirit, particularly as he expresses himself in the Rules and Constitutions, which she has only to apply. That demands much detachment, much discretion, and, above all, much charity.

The technique of your asceticism and your mysticism as Superior should be based upon these points. I wish to pause an instant to consider two of these qualities: a great spirit of faith and great objectivity.

A great faith. A Superior needs very much of it in order never, never to forget that it is not herself who is obeyed, but God. She needs much faith to believe at each instant and in all circumstances in the action of the Holy Ghost in souls, to see the sisters as God sees them, if possible, in order afterwards to love them as God loves them. She is really at the service of God and the sisters, and not contrariwise. The scene of the washing of the feet is the charter and, as it were, the sacrament of superiorship.

She needs also much objectivity. I mean that she must see things and persons as they really are and not as she would like them to be, nor as she is accustomed to see them. And that is very difficult.

Detachment from self and charity will help very much towards it, but also good general and religious instruction.

There are two ways of judging: by intuition and by knowledge. Since you are women, above all do not trust too much to your intuitions; control them, or see that they are controlled; have a solid knowledge of theology, of Canon Law, of psychology, which will give your judgment the objectivity which it needs in order to be equitable and rid yourself of your own subjectivity.

(b) Second principle: *A religious does not sacrifice herself to the Rule, but to God*, or more exactly, to God through the Rule. The Rule is only a means guaranteed by the Church. God is the end. All the rest is but means of attaining him.

Now, the weight of human nature tends to entangle us in these means, so that we attach ourselves to them, lose ourselves in them, serve them instead of their serving us. That is a particularly feminine defect.

The Superior must not weary of reminding her subjects that they entered religion because God called them to himself, that everything else is only a means to that, that all the prescriptions of the Rule are ordered to that, that they are only fruitful if one passes through them in order to go to God. A means is only useful in so far as it leads to its end; otherwise, one takes it as being itself the end. And that is a fresh idolatry—the idolatry of the Superior, and the idolatry of the Rule.

It is the duty of the Superior to take care that the means provided by the Rule really accomplish their function as means, that is to say, that they lead to God. And in order to do this she must have the end—God and charity—always in view and show how all the means lead to that. For example, show how our vow of poverty leads to God by the uprooting that it exacts, the daily abandonment to Providence, etc. . . . It is necessary to say it, and above all it is necessary to live it.

The Superior ought thus to show how each point of the Rule is connected with the evangelical counsels, and consequently leads to God. For it is not sufficient that the Rule should be observed to the letter; what use would these Constitutions be, if they were not also observed according to the spirit?

To keep the spirit without the letter is only an illusion and a farce: 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me', our Lord has said. (John, 15, 21). But the letter without the spirit is dead. The Superior ought therefore to see that the Rule is observed according to the letter and the spirit. Bear in mind our Lord's condemnation of the pharisees because they left the

weightier things of the law, judgment, and mercy, and faith. Thus, the spirit of the Gospel does not despise the Law even in the little details. On the contrary, it gives it its soul and its fruitfulness from within, in order that the exterior may also become pure. The Gospel is crystal clear on all these points.

Therefore, between the pharisaism of a letter impoverished of its spirit, even contradicting it, and the illusion of a spirit freed entirely from the letter, the true medium is difficult to discover and to follow, above all in our own times. It is one of the heaviest of your spiritual responsibilities. Depend upon God, the Holy Spirit and the Church, who will not fail you if you are faithful to them.

(c) Finally notice this: *the aim of the Superior is not to promote the sanctification of children under guardianship, but of grown-up people, mature people, each day knowing a little better what they are doing, each day willing it with a stronger and freer will.*

Consequently, she ought to set to work to develop the personality of each one. St Thomas says that the greatest of the moral virtues is prudence, that virtue which allows us to judge of the means for attaining the end. And it is not difficult for him to show that without it no virtue is possible, for a judgment dictated by prudence intervenes in each one. Consequently, the Superior ought to strive to give occasion to her Sisters, without departing from obedience, to exercise their own prudence. There are cases in which the Sisters must be left alone to their personal conscience, after having enlightened them by all means, and, in case of need, directing them; but let each one take her responsibilities courageously, like an adult, which she is or which she ought to become. At all events it is thus that the sister will increase in the virtue of prudence, and consequently in all the other virtues. It is thus that she will reach maturity and that her gift to God will be greater and more worthy of him. A religious who habitually obeys unreflectingly without exercising her own prudence cannot avoid weakening herself morally and psychologically. God is the God of the living and of rational beings, not of the dead and of automatons—of robots, as they say nowadays.

A priest of sound judgment recently confided to me that, on his advice, several young girls had entered religion. 'After a few years', he told me, 'I meet them again stifled, some of them literally block-heads'—forgive me, it is his word—'with no deep and personal supernatural life.' And he concluded: 'I no longer dare direct my penitents towards the religious life'.

There lies, believe me, one of the causes of your failure to recruit. I know how difficult it is to distinguish the true personality from

the false; the caprice and independence of every daughter of Eve from the true liberty of the daughter of God, and that it is no less difficult to bring out the latter than to destroy the former. But I do not believe that the right solution lies either in confining them like wild animals or in treating them as mental defectives.

St Thomas distinguishes seniors and juniors in the faith. The seniors, he says, are those whose faith is precise and well-informed; the juniors are those who believe through the faith of the seniors. The latter is the faith of the coal heaver, who believes what his parish priest believes. That is not the ideal. The more seniors there are in the Church, the greater it will be and the more God will be glorified.

It is to some extent the same in the religious life. The more your Institute is composed of seniors, the greater and the holier it will be, and the sacrifice made by each one of your Sisters to our Lord will be nobler and more worthy of God. I know well that all your Sisters are not called to this spiritual majority. The duty of the Superior, however, above all in our times, is to encourage this 'coming of age' in the spiritual life of her Sisters.

2. One last word on the secondary end of religious life, the active works. From this point of view you are responsible both with regard to the Sisters and to the neighbour whom they succour.

The social service that you render society by your works of charity is relatively secondary—before being a social service it is a witness to Christ and to the Church. You bear witness to the love of God for men. Consequently, if possible, each work of mercy of your subordinates should be, for themselves as for their neighbour, a divine act, something like a transfiguration; that Christ should be suddenly there and that people should see him through them. For this you must watch carefully the theological value, the faith, hope and charity, of your Sisters, the devotedness, failing which it would be philanthropy, praiseworthy but without supernatural value either for the neighbour or for the Sisters.

Now, it is difficult to love one's neighbour out of charity. One can love him in so many other ways, noble in other respects, but which do not proceed from the love of God, from genuine charity. The feminine heart notably, so maternal by nature, inclines spontaneously towards her neighbour's wretchedness in order to relieve it. That is good; but it is the duty of the Superior to see that the Sisters rise above this natural plane. Religious must love their neighbour for the love of God, and not for the joy—equivocal—of giving themselves. It is not a question of giving oneself; it is a question of giving God, and is quite another thing. It is a question

of loving the neighbour for God, in order that he may love God. He must be loved, not only through duty, but through seeing God in him and him in God. To love him means to love him in the depth of his personality, in his vocation, with a sacred respect for his liberty and the Holy Spirit's action in him.

Now, that is impossible without a great love of God, which cannot be conceived without a life of intense and personal prayer. It is important consequently that the Superior should watch with care over the life of prayer of her Sisters and the use that they make of all the means of sanctification; she ought to take care notably not to overwork her religious, so that they are able to draw real profit from their exercises of piety, spiritual reading, retreats, etc.

The multiplicity and the urgency of the tasks that summon you, aggravated for some of you by the lack of vocations, often places you in very difficult situations. It seems to me that your duty is clear: do not seek the quantity, but the apostolic and spiritual quality of your works, and in order to do that give an absolute priority to the real life of prayer of your religious, to their solid spiritual formation, to all the means useful for their sanctification.

Of course you often meet with such violent and imperative appeals that you dare not refuse them. Let me tell you a little anecdote I heard recently: a teaching congregation found themselves obliged to close a house for want of religious to keep it going. The Bishop of the place—and one can well understand it—formally opposed this action, for it meant a church-school would disappear. But the Superior replied: 'My Lord, I will leave the house open if, before our Lord, you will be responsible for the salvation of the religious of my Institute'. And the Bishop did not insist.

Understand then, first of all, that you must safeguard the quality of your apostolic activity. Most certainly the sanctification of your Sisters, begun, first of all, in intimate prayer, ought to be followed by devotion to the neighbour. The active side of your vocation consists in sanctifying yourself by devotion to your neighbour, but that is only possible by a genuine charity, and, consequently, only if you have, first of all, a genuine interior life, a true love of God. That is why, in watching over the quality of this charity, the Superior assures in one stroke both the sanctification of her religious and the apostolic value of their activity.

And with the grace of God such a community, when it thus radiates the presence of God, recovers the grace of its foundation; it inherits its original promise, and it accomplishes its rôle in the Church.

It is on this optimistic note that I want to conclude. Your spiritual responsibilities above all at the present hour, are crushing; but the grace of God is the grace of God; and at an hour when the Holy Spirit seems to be giving to the Church a renewed youth, how can we doubt but that through you he will infuse into the religious life the sap of a new spring time?

For myself, at least, I believe that with all my heart. May he grant to all to be faithful to their inspiration, and the religious life will know new life and vigour.

THRONE OF WISDOM

BY

JOHN TODD

I. THE WOMAN WHO WAS POOR: SPOUSE AND MOTHER.



S the first, original sin was committed through the sinful mediation of a woman, so it was through a woman's consent and just mediation that we were redeemed from the guilt of this sin. Conceived without the stain of original sin, our Lady was the second Eve. She was the perfect tabernacle of God, simply the mother of Jesus, because she was utterly selfless, because in an old metaphor of the Fathers revived in a recent book, she was like a pipe which waits for the air to blow through it to make music, the Reed of God.

Our Lady was the throne of Wisdom because she can be perfectly described as the Woman who was poor. Here at last was the complete gift of self, the unconditional sacrifice of the creature which God looked for in Adam and Eve, and looked for in vain. So our Lady became infinitely rich, *Sedes Sapientiae*, and entered upon the earthly motherhood with that perfection which she carried on to her eternal motherhood wherein she dispenses to man the same Wisdom whom she mothered in Palestine.

In this article historical facts and theological conceptions are combined in a sacramental way for we are considering the Gospel. In the gospel everything is historical; in the gospel everything is theological. Here is our Lady, living the perfect life; here is our Lady living as the Mother of Grace. Here is our Lady, the perfect spouse of Divine Wisdom; here is our Lady, the Mother of divine Wisdom. Here is the centre of the Marian mystery, unfathomable—in fact two mysteries, incomprehensible apart and