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Fr. Joseph Kentenich

Marian Education

Excerpts from

Marianische Erziehung

Schoenstatt, May 22-26, 1934

translated by Mary Cole,
edited by Fr. Jonathan Niehaus, 2006
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Preliminary translation of Conferences 8 to 12 by Mary Cole.

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Introduction

The excerpts in this partial translation comprise about the last third of the educational conference given by Fr. Kentenich May 22-26, 1934. The conference was held at the *Bundesheim* Retreat House in Schoenstatt, Germany. The participants included both priests and lay educators.

Since the Nazi take-over of the German government in 1933, an increasing oppression was beginning to spread against religion. Fr. Kentenich's answer to this was to encourage Schoenstatt to declare 1934 a "Marian year of the people," bringing love of Mary and the picture of Mary to as many parts of Germany as possible. When he speaks here about "Bolshevism," a catch-phrase in his vocabulary not only for Soviet oppression, but for all forms of collectivistic systems and world-views, he is helping his audience face the increasing peril of living in the "Third Reich." But the meaning is not limited to Naziism. As the translator indicates in two footnotes, Fr. Kentenich also saw Western style mass-mindedness as part of this trend, and so his thoughts remain very relevant today.

The translation of the eighth to twelfth conferences was done by Mary Cole. In this section I have slightly edited the text and added a very few footnotes. Subtitles are not original to the text; Mary Cole has translated them as found in the published edition. I have added in braces { } the page numbers of the published edition in German – *Marianische Erziehung* (Vallendar-Schoenstatt, 1971) – so that one can easily compare with the original German text.

Fr. Jonathan Niehaus

Third Conference

(...)

{72} Marian devotion and life¹ provide an answer to the drives and longings of the people for an enlightened, exulted view of land and nation. But one must not overlook that the religious people is not satisfied with thinking it; the people is always close to life. Hence, if I myself, as educator, am religious, I am also capable of grasping the people's desire for life. The people is for a practical everyday sanctity. The people wants to see its religious zest made tangible in its surroundings. Hence the strong drive: the people wants to see its land, its possessions somehow take on a religious hue.

Here, too, Marian devotion and life is near and dear to the heart of our people. We do not want to go into the philosophical reasons for this now, but only see the fact: Marian devotion and life is deeply in the hearts of the unpolished people. The people wants to see Our Lady connected with the land. On the level of the psychology of the people one sees here the psychology of pilgrimage places at work. But that must not confuse you in your faith. Let me tell you how it impresses me that grace always comes down on the side of the healthy psyche of the people. Those who only see half of the picture and not the whole organism of nature and grace, will be inclined to reject this and say: It is all grace. But we say and assert: It is {73} *also* nature². God always adapts to nature. Nature gives him the direction. For now I only want to touch on these facts; later I want to lead all of this back to the final principles.

Does it amaze you that our districts and areas generally connect

¹ German: *das Marianische*.

² For instance, the common faithful in a certain town might have great trust in asking St. Anthony to help find lost items, even to the point of having a wayside shrine in St. Anthony's honor where they can come with their need (and their gratitude). And he helps. Is it only grace? Or is it not also connected in God's wisdom with the little wayside shrine?

with a particular Marian pilgrimage place?¹ Behind this is the Marian instinct. The people, rooted as they are in the land, wants to have good ground under their feet by connecting their religious instincts in a vital way with the land. As a result, we must always see the final principles, but also see the positive potential for our own work.

May I take a moment to pass through other areas? Yesterday we said that we stand in times when everything is pushing to find its way back to the basic drives, to the ultimate basic forces and underlying sources of life. You can study this in the lifestreams that come to the surface here and there. They claim that all the old forms of culture were not helpful; let us push aside everything and find our way back to the primordial principles, so that the original thinking can assert itself again. And if you feel out this thinking and test it, you will find that the underlying principles and most basic drives reach in three directions: in the direction of attachments to persons, places, and ideas.

These ultimate and final principles are often buried under much debris because they have – as one can easily prove through history – produced false shoots. They have taken the form of organizations, forms to which they stubbornly adhere. Life has progressed, but they remained stuck in these forms. And today the danger is great {74} for people who do not know how to think abstractly that they become comfortable in the forms and neither return to the final principles nor have the energy to create new forms based on these principles. In our thinking we must go back [to the principles], not help destroy the forms! We must have the ability to create in the background, based on these final principles, a new world, so that we have new forms in readiness for such time as when the penultimate things – the organizations and institutions – are destroyed and can form a new world again based on final things. Without forms it won't work. The question is only: Which forms may be destroyed and how do we come to new forms based on the underlying principles and drives and forces? But here it is of importance that we, when we may and must

¹ In Germany, as in much of Europe, nearly every local area has its own Marian pilgrimage place.

hold fast to forms – and we must do this as long as we simply can – nonetheless know how to build up a new world from the final principles. How shall I put this in words?

The Drive to Personal Attachments

First, the personal drive. Our attitude was often such that we clung slavishly to persons or created general institutions to replace the persons. But today the person is so important! I do not dare to slip into commentary on the other side¹. I think that these currents are so generally visible today that you can easily – I say in quotation marks “very easily” – think it through for yourselves. The leadership principle is something very healthy; but don't exaggerate! Modern culture has been so uprooted that vast numbers of modern people needed a dictator. I know that this is strong thing to say. But for many people – and we Catholics among them – it is true that the connection to the land is so strong that we cannot come to terms with things without a dictator in the worst sense of the word. Other great {75} numbers of people need a dictator because they are so totally without roots.

And when I say the things so clearly, this means we must make certain demands of ourselves as educators: I must demand the highest standards of myself! When we afterwards present in positive outline a modern, pedagogically coherent Mariology, we will see this still more clearly. If God has given me the task to be a leader, then I must also be a leader whose will and personality embody in concentrated form the collected will of my followers. But don't become a commandant! The leader belongs to his followers; it is a living connection. A true leader must have the strength to give his last energy for those entrusted to his care.

These are the original principles, but in many ways they have been shaken and buried under much debris. It used to be that we saw

¹ Namely on the Nazis with their principles of attachment to the dictator in the person of Adolf Hitler. Fr. Kentenich is interpreting the Nazi “leadership principle” as a false answer to a genuine need that needs to be addressed in souls who suffer so much uprootedness because of modern conditions.

authority as very far off; but the personality [of the authority] has its place in the midst of the people. You see, if what some people fear actually happens, if the mass of the people can no longer be served through the intermediary of an organization, then I [as leader] stand immediately before my people with the appeal and strength of my entire personality. My personality must then provide what used to come from the organization. You will tell me that this is an exaggeration. No! I must formulate it metaphysically. Practical life will dilute it anyway. We must not see these things as a law, but a task. The demand on myself [as leader]: I must expect not only that the intermediary stages will be lost, but also that the mass of the people will come under a centrifugal influence; not only indifferent, lacking an intermediary, but destructively oriented from what the other side does. How must the strength of my personality look in order to keep such centrifugal elements from flying off – not to hold them bound, but to lead them through my leadership to a uniting task, to God, to the Triune God?

Many of us who think mechanically and mechanistically have a strong aversion against putting the personality of the leader so much at the center of attention. It is one thing if the leader is made into a false god, and another when he is an image of God. We must reject idolization and being raised to the status of a god; but what if the leader is God's representative? And even if God takes away from you God knows how many things, one thing cannot be taken from you: your personality anchored in God which, the more that other means are swept away, can and must always unfold elemental strength.

Fifth Conference

(...)

{109} The objections often raised against Marian devotion and life as an expression of elite piety, and against Marian education as a means to educating the elite, generally focus on the “essence” and are argued from the necessity of not losing sight of the “essential.” We are dealing here with a very specific train of thought that deserves an answer. It always objects to Marian education by arguing it is not “essential.” If this objection were sustained, it would of course mean the death of Marian education. We admit to all of this. A time like ours, which is in such upheaval and so prone to turmoil, must focus – at least in the short term – on what is essential.

Let's take an image for this: When a forest is hit by a great storm, the trees focus all their energy on deepening their taproot. The same is true of our religious edifice, of our religious drives. {110} The storms of times today demand the strengthening of the deepest source [of resilience] – the taproot. Or another image: The same storm shakes the forest. The birds do not feel safe perched out on the limbs, but press their frail bodies close to the tree, to the trunk, where they are safe. Again, an image for what I am trying to say.

People today are largely concerned about ultimate realities and seek greater and greater clarity in the ultimate principles. In such times to say that Marian education fails to connect with the essence is a damaging argument against it. Upon closer examination, we find that this critique has three parts: first, Marian education fails to connect with the essence of religious education. Secondly, Marian education fails to connect with the essence of ethical education. Thirdly, Marian education especially fails to connect with the essence of education girls and women.

I will give response to each part in such a way that I mention the core but leave aside the other related details. Whatever remnant of emotional and intellectual difficulties still remain, may dissipate tomorrow or the day after when we start to discuss the structure of Marian education in systematic fashion. We are on the defensive,

especially now and in this. Hence, in each case I will first need to listen to how the objections are formed in order to give my answer.

Objection 1: Marian Education Fails to Connect with the Essence of Religious Education

Let us listen to the first objection-complex: Marian education fails to connect with the essence {111} of religious education. What is meant here? What *does* connect with the essence? Apparently liturgical education. This is the train of thought: not Marian, but liturgical education connects with the essence. What kind of response can I give? I want to answer as objectively and clearly as possible, but still in such a way that the connection to life is still maintained. I may give a twofold answer: the first tries to strengthen the case of the objection, the second tries to rebut it.

I want to strengthen the case of the objection by mentioning what some essential elements of liturgical education. You must not expect me to discuss the meaning and purpose and task of liturgical education. Perhaps a later congress can discuss the method of liturgical education in more detail. But we now presuppose these things; for we want to integrate Marian devotion and life in the total organism, just as liturgical devotion and life does!

What is at the center of liturgical education? Its protagonists and defenders say: Its ultimate aim is Christocentric. But this is not entirely true! Seen dogmatically, Christocentrism is not the center of Catholic education, although one can say it approximately is. What does it mean that Christocentrism is at the center? It is the *Christus mysticus* [the mystical Christ], that is, our membership in Christ, our communion of being with Jesus. The liturgy wishes to {112} accomplish this communion of being, this *unitas quasi physica*¹ between us and Christ in a very specific way. Ontological and vital unity with Christ is very important for our times today. After all, we must come in contact again with him who is the Alpha and the Omega (Rev 1,8; 22,13), with Christ the God-man, to whom belongs

¹ A “quasi-physical” union, term from German dogmatic theologian J.M. Scheeben intending to describe how close our ontological union with Christ is.

our undivided love. We must bring modern humanity in touch again with the God-man. This is truly something valuable. And we want to work on this with both hands.

But this is not yet the ultimate reality. What is the guiding idea of the liturgical movement? *Per Christum ad Patrem in Spiritu Sancto* [Through Christ to the Father in the Holy Spirit]. Not only belonging to Christ: the Father is the goal! Not only St. Paul, but also St. John has a word to say. The Father is at the center. If I may put it in the form of a foreign word which we will have heard: liturgical education is Christomystical and Patrocentric. I deliberately strengthen the objections and argue from the solid ground of the liturgical movement. At the center is the Father; and therefore the experience of baptism, the awareness that I am a child of God, must permeate all education. I must stress this quite strongly; we cannot otherwise understand the liturgical texts if we do not understand this centering in the Father. After all, all the prayers are addressed to the Father. The Father is the ultimate, not the Son and not the Spirit. Through Christ to the Father in the Holy Spirit. Therefore Christomystical, Patrocentric – {113} I don’t know if I may also add the other expression from the early Church – Spiritipheric [filled with the Spirit]. These are central truths, final truths which ultimately connect with the center. Do you see what I want? I want to strengthen the case of the objection. And now I will rebut it.

Toward this end I can say: First, the goal of Marian education is exactly the same as that of the liturgical movement. Secondly, Marian education is an excellent way for securing and popularizing liturgical education.

First answer: The meaning of Marian education is exactly the same as that of the liturgical movement. I must naturally repeat what I have already said several times – you must not reduce Marian education to education to a few acts of Marian devotion. What is the meaning? I can already tell you today what I will present to you in more detail tomorrow: Marian attachment and attitude. I must acquire Mary’s attitude and her attachment.

I am attached to Our Lady, to her person with every fiber of my heart – this is the purpose of a deep, enlightened Marian devotion.

Now we do not claim that rough-hewn Marian devotion [automatically] connects with the center; but [that] it too must become enlightened as a form of devotion.

Look at the attitude of the Blessed Mother! She stands there as the perfect ideal of the Church. She is the personified attitude of the Church: Through Christ to the Father {114} in the Holy Spirit. And Mary is the most excellent type of the Church, is a Church in her own right. Do you notice how the attitude of Our Lady must be the attitude of the Church?

Expressed dogmatically: See how in Mary the incorporation in Christ is realized! She is the Bride of Christ. See how being a child of God has interiorly formed her being! She is the daughter of the eternal Father in an outstanding manner. And see how she is the vessel of the Holy Spirit – again in a singular manner. Marian attitude is liturgical attitude! I can therefore say that the meaning of Marian attitude and attachment is the same as liturgical attitude. Where is the opposition?

Second answer: I can go still farther and say that Marian attachment is also and simultaneously an outstandingly excellent means to form others to attain this attitude – whether you call it liturgical attitude or Marian attitude no longer makes a difference, first on the level of intention and then on the level of life.

Here you must clearly see the psychology of love and attachment. Love has a singular power to unite and transform. This was already known to the old philosophers of the Aristotelian mold¹. If I become attached to someone it means two things: I am interiorly united with him – harmony of heart and attitude – and become more like him. So, if I develop a strong attachment to the Blessed Mother, the effect is that I become like her; I adopt {115} her attitude – always the same great context.

I have claimed still more: that the goal on both sides is not only the same, but that Marian education is a valuable means for securing and popularizing liturgical education. Why for securing? It would

¹ See for instance Dionysius the Areopagite, *De Div. Nom.*, cap. 4: “*Amor est vis unitiva et concretiva*” – love is a uniting and fusing force.

be enough for me to repeat what I just said about attachments: If I am truly attached, I must acquire Mary’s attitude, that means the attitude of the liturgy and the attitude of the Church. Hence, Marian education is an excellent means of promotion; for we can sense that the people is not satisfied with individual abstract thoughts – incorporation in Christ, communion of being with Christ, and whatever all the terms may be – the people wants to see them personified, and this it sees in the person of Mary. But we must clarify Marian devotion and life. After all, this was the mistake of the previous Marian education which did everything in too one-sided a manner¹. We were strongly infected by mechanistic thinking; we were all too little organic! Marian education wants to see and strive for Marian life in the correct organism. This is the great world on which we must and may unite from our different points of view.

Dostojevsky once showed how it should be done. Imagine a hiker who must find his path in the dark. What can one do to help the hiker safely find the path? One way is to theoretically explain to him the path and let him go his way. In other words, one can explain to the people theoretically again and again – about being a child of God, a member of Christ, being filled by the Spirit, and so on – and then let them go their way alone. {116} A second method: I give the hiker a light; then he can surely find his way. For our people this light is Mary. The light of her image is a powerful illustrative lesson. We must only see to it that we also explain things this way. Our Lady wants to stand before us objectively. We must see to it that the order of being is also the order of action. Then Marian devotion will be an illustration and a means of popularization for liturgical formation and education.

¹ In a way that separates a formation of actions from the formation of attitudes. The previous Marian education had insisted on certain formulae and devotions, but did not sufficiently form the interior person.

Sixth Conference

(....)

{145} We have discussed three essential moments needed if we want to more deeply penetrate Marian devotion, namely:

- first, Marian attitude,
- second, Marian attachment,
- and third, the relationship between the two moments.

Marian attitude

We begin with Marian attitude. What is it? The attitude of our dear Blessed Mother. It is her attitude toward God, toward life, and toward herself. Later, after I have brought together for you what we need to know, we will want to see these same things from the vantage point of lifestyle. You must notice that this is the same, though using a different word, as the attitude of Our Lady.

Which attitude does Sacred Scripture reveal about her life? First, her attitude toward the Blessed Trinity.

Sacred Scripture proves how her life was an outstanding, singular [act of] standing in the divine stream of life. Her attitude toward the Triune God: *filia aeterni Patris admirabilis, sponsa aeterni Filii admirabilis, vas aeterni Spiritus admirabilis* [admirable daughter of the eternal Father, admirable bride of the eternal Son, admirable vessel of the eternal Spirit]. As Mother Thrice Admirable she stands before us in her fundamental relationships with the Blessed Trinity.

{146} What is the aim of Marian education? To form this attitude, also in myself. Do you sense how profoundly Marian education wants to shape life? I must acquire the attitude of Our Lady. And I can acquire it very easily; then it is the same attitude which we mentioned yesterday as the liturgical attitude: *per Christum ad Patrem in Spiritu Sancto* [through Christ to the Father in the Holy Spirit]. Healthy Marian education must raise this attitude, otherwise it remains something incomplete. No pronounced Marian education of the faithful can sidestep this goal, otherwise it will have failed its purpose; it will not be distinctive, only remain common and rough-hewn. It is

not necessary that this be known consciously, but it must be attained, at least by those of us who are educators of the faithful, as those who feel responsible for a great Catholic movement of faith.

Her relationship to God. And not only the strong standing in the divine stream of life, but also in divine light, in divine confidence and power, that is: the activation of the divine life, of her self-surrender to the Triune God by deeply activating the three divine virtues of faith, hope, and love. She stands before us thus: “I am the Mother of fair love, of holy hope, of faith, of insight” (Sir 24,24)¹. Notice again: attitude. And this is the specific character of the divine life in us, this pronounced divine lifestyle of putting in practice the three divine virtues. In this way the divine life in us fulfills its function with toward God, not only toward our divine level of being. And if I want to truly educate in a Marian way, I must educate to this attitude toward the Blessed Trinity, then my soul must put into practice in a distinctive way the life of faith, hope, and love, indeed as [part of the] supernatural life. Do you sense {147} how profound the goal of Marian education is that stands before us?

¹ As found in the Vulgate. Modern biblical research has determined the “mother of fair love” verse to be found in only a few of the Greek manuscripts, so most current translations omit this verse (numbered variously as v. 18 or v. 24). It would be necessary to insert this verse in the New American Bible, for instance, between verses 17 and 18: “I am the mother of fair love, of fear of God, of knowledge, and of devout hope. In me is all grace of the way and of the truth, in me is all hope of life and of virtue.” See J. Kentenich, *Mary, our Mother and Educator*, p. 48, 85, 132, 183.

Eighth Conference

(....)

Marian education and the anthropological heresies

{191} We are now faced with individual considerations. We will have to reach somewhat more deeply and pick out individual points from the vast world of truths. Allow me to remind you once more - if you don't find just the point you would like to hear, it is because it is impossible to deal with everything in the almost unlimited values contained in all that pertains to Mary.

I would like to pick out just one point. It is the significance of Marian education, of the Marian education of the people, for overcoming the present-day heresy that is just appearing over the horizon. What heresy is meant? There is only one, big heresy which is the collecting tank for a whole host of heresies, the so-called anthropological heresies¹. We have heard about Christological, Trinitarian and Eucharistic heresies. And if we allow the Liturgy to lead us to pray: *Omnes haereses tu sola interemisti*², we have {192} to apply these words to all those heresies. However, the time will surely come when we will be able to write a chapter in the history of dogma and religion: "You have also overcome the anthropological heresies of the twentieth century".

The anthropological heresies refer directly to human nature. They try to deny the essence of human nature, to infect it and attack it. Let me repeat, this heresy is appearing over the horizon. No, to a great extent we are living in the midst of this heresy. Humanity is attacked. Human freedom, the whole structure of human nature as it has been

¹ Father Kentenich gives the term 'anthropological' his own meaning. It implies anything to do with human beings. He is not using it in the sense of the scientific discipline.

² Antiphon: "Rejoice, Virgin Mary, by yourself you have crushed all heresies in the whole world" (Common of feasts of B.V.Mary). See also Lesson 3 of Saturday Office (The Hours of the Divine office, Liturgical Press, Collegeville 1964).

created by God, should increasingly be ruined, so that as time goes by the cultured world should suffer under a mass-psychosis.

So you will say: We have to see the Mother of God more as the great Woman, we have to see her in her genuine and natural femininity, and her genuine and natural humanity. You have overcome all heresies through what you are: through your truly human and feminine being. In this way, besides being the Mediatrix of Grace and Suppliant Omnipotence, you should help to overcome these heresies. You will say: Should not our Lady be seen far more than until now as the graced human being? Yes, this is how she should be seen. You must see the organic connection between nature and grace far more strongly. We have to bear in mind that the graced being must also be a truly human being. The supernatural person must be the most natural person of all. This is how the Blessed Mother should help us to overcome the great heresies of the future.

{193} Don't you think this is a great task, one that is worth the exertion of the most noble-minded people¹, a task for which we should offer ourselves as instruments, so that God can use us to carry it out with the Blessed Mother? I see that our Lady has been given a share in the redemption and liberation of humankind today. She should overcome the present-day and coming heresies, and so I offer myself to her to be her instrument. Most probably there are very few people who do this. However, the more I offer myself to her as an instrument, the more I may suppose that this offer is accepted. Then those words apply: "*Qui elucidant me, vitam aeternam habebunt*"². Those who place me in the right light, so that I become the great light, will experience my special, motherly care, so that precisely on account of what they do, they will attain eternal light through my intercession.

This places us before a tremendous task. I want to show you the present-day heresy in detail, as well as our Lady's activity in its regard, via two big lines of thought. Or, to put it another way, I must first of

¹ There is a direct reference here to the First Founding Document.

² Those who explain me shall have eternal life (see Sir 24,22).

all show you the present-day *Lebensraum*¹, and then move on to the picture of Mary that has to be painted into this present-day context. This gives us an answer to all the thoughts I have already touched upon. Our present era feels the need for a new picture of Mary. We must attempt to place this modern and yet so old picture of Mary into our present-day context.

The crisis of living today

{194} How can we describe the world in which we are living today? It is marked by a very profound crisis of living - instead of speaking of an anthropological crisis, let us use crisis of living. And this shows in three ways:

this crisis of living is a crisis of marriage and the family;

this crisis of living is a bolshevistic² crisis;

this crisis of living is the crisis of the sexes which shows up so strongly today.

What can I say to you to explain this threefold crisis?

A crisis of marriage and the family

We all know the crisis of marriage and the family. We suffer under it. I would like to exclude it from our discussions at present. Those of you who always come here know that the crisis of marriage and the family should actually be the subject of this year's congress. We have held a congress on marriage pedagogy a number of times. If we nevertheless refer once again to the congress on "Marian Education for Married Life" it is only because we have proclaimed this year a "Marian Year for the People"³ and a Marian congress simply fits into this year of the people. Later we will come back to the question as to how we can help to mitigate the crisis of married life and the family

¹ German: living space. At the time it was used politically by the National Socialists for their expansionist programme. Father Kentenich took up many such terms and gave them a completely different meaning.

² Or, collectivistic.

³ Father Kentenich's response to Hitler's take-over was to try to spread devotion to the MTA as widely as possible. See Second Founding Document.

as the great crisis of our present times. You can build everything into its organic context.

It is most important that we leaders should always have ultimate thoughts to hand, and that we do not set things side by side and try to overcome the crisis of living. It would be worth our while to show how the Holy Father directed his Encyclical¹ totally towards this crisis of living. All these documents aim at overcoming the modern crisis of living in its roots. That is the reason for his concern that religion should increasingly become life - also for another reason: We are not so much attacked by the Party as such², as by its power, its brutality, {195} and it is only possible to withstand this with strong and vital life. Living in and from God must be the subject of our teaching and our profound striving. I don't want to talk about the crisis of the family. What is left is the bolshevistic crisis and the crisis of the sexes.

The bolshevistic crisis

Bolshevism is often misunderstood.³ We see things wrongly if we think that bolshevism only wants to create a new economic order. It goes much deeper. It wants to create a new type of human being. The thought is this: Until now human society has built everything on the foundation of personal, human freedom. And what has been achieved? You can see it in the World War and its consequences. So if we want to overcome the need in the world, we have to take away the personal freedom of the people.

How can we oppose the educational ideal of the bolshevistic person? What is his ideal? The depersonalised person who has been radically freed from within from all God-willed bonding. That is the new type of human being. And you will see, this new type of human being will flit through the world. The danger today is bolshevism, and

¹ Pope Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, December 31, 1930.

² The Nazis.

³ By bolshevism Father Kentenich meant all collectivistic ideologies, hence also the Nazi ideology. Since it was too dangerous, even then, to oppose the Nazis directly, he used the term bolshevism instead. His listeners knew what he was talking about.

as long as we live we will not escape from this danger! Some people tried to tell the Holy Father what had been done to conquer bolshevism. He remarked that it wasn't true; {196} it was possible that bolshevism had been banished from the public streets, but it would continue to work in the side streets. That was said half a year ago.

Bolshevism is the danger threatening the world today, not just in the European countries, but also beyond. Let the missionaries tell you about it! We have to see the great danger threatening our times, even if only so that we can integrate our little discussions in this great context. This is why we have to see things clearly and set to work courageously and firmly. The ideal of the bolshevistic person is the depersonalised person who has been freed in a radical way from within from all God-willed bonding. The bolshevistic person is Godless, because God is the protector of personal freedom. The bolshevist cannot acknowledge God, because if they do the human personality is protected. I talked about this in detail last year. Just register these thoughts and take only the one key thought home with you. You can see what the bolshevistic person is like. And that is the anthropological heresy - the person is destroyed in an extreme way, because the most essential thing, personal, God-given freedom, is taken away. That is one of the great dangers of our present times.

The crisis of the sexes

The second danger is the crisis of the sexes. We don't want to talk about the crisis of marriage and the family, we only want to dwell on the crisis of the sexes. Please don't confuse it with the sexual crisis. The sexual crisis is the chaos that has arisen in the relationship of the sexes to each other. This chaos is the result of the uncertainty of the sexes about their true nature. Once the {197} sexual crisis has reached a certain level, it finds expression in the crisis of the sexes, but there is a formal distinction between the two.

In the time that is left to us - my aim is to give you many thoughts in a brief space of time - I want to show you the crisis of the sexes from an historical, a cultural philosophical and cultural psychological point of view. This will depict the present-day context, so that in the next conference we will be able to try to draw a new picture of Mary

into this context.

An historical point of view

You know that there is a strong and very widespread pessimism in the Western world today. People are afraid and expect the destruction of the West¹. There are not a few groups which trace this back to what we call the crisis of the sexes. There is a book by Eberz "On the Rise and Fall of the Masculine Epoch"². What thoughts form the foundation for this book and similar trends? The initial premise is this: It is a fact that the epochs documented by history are characterised by the dominance of man. Now, so they aver, there was also an epoch prior to written history, the epoch of the matriarchate. This is an epoch that cannot yet be proved conclusively, but it is certain that there was a time in which woman held sway and man had to obey. Is there any truth in this? I don't know. One thing is true {198} - as far as one can study it - even today there are cultures in which agriculture and animal husbandry predominate, and these could well be matriarchies. Among the nomads, the rights of the man are extremely strong. We can understand that here man has more rights, while in an agricultural society woman could have more rights. However the influence is more an accidental shift in emphasis. Now it is said that our present times are marked by the dominance of man.

Man has given expression to his nature to an extreme, everything has come to a head. Therefore the rational and selfish qualities in man find expression in such a way that his rational qualities become an all-destructive intellect, and his selfishness high-handedness. (Some of you are smiling; it could apply to the married people present.) This situation is all the more dangerous, because this intellectualisation and

¹ See Oswald Spengler (1880-1936), German philosopher. His most famous work, *The Decline of the West* (1918) argued that nations and cultures have a natural lifespan and their rise is inevitably followed by their eclipse. His ideas appealed to the German fascists, since he emphasized the individual's duty to obey the state (the Macmillan Encyclopedia, London, 1987).

² Subtitle: Thoughts on the bisexual being, Breslau 1931; essays on this subject by Eberz appeared in the periodical "Hochland" between 1928-1931.

high-handedness of man in our present-day culture have concentrated themselves on the scientific world, and that in a state which has until now not been organic, but mechanical. It is even more dangerous for our present-day culture because woman has followed in man's wake. Instead of woman introducing laws in keeping with her nature into our culture, she has acquired the exaggerated ways of man and strives for them as though for an ideal. And what is the consequence? Our present-day culture - I say this in opposition to those who are of the opinion that it is a feminine culture - has in fact become a masculine culture.

The situation today can be described in this way: Since everything has come to a head, and since woman has copied the exaggerated ways of man, the relationship of the sexes can be characterised very briefly by the word {199} - a hotchpotch of the sexes. What does that mean? I want to show you three elements:

- firstly, the sexes have been alienated from their true nature;
- secondly, isolation - woman has been deprived of her erotic nature and man has fostered the individualistic side of his nature in such isolation that it has become completely exaggerated;
- thirdly, the blurring of sexual differences.

You must see this clearly, because this hotchpotch of the sexes is encouraged in every way. If we want to create the type of person of the future, we have to help to solve the crisis of the sexes. It is not right when women today strive to become like men. They have the same value, but not the same nature. With that we have looked at the crisis of the sexes from an historical point of view.

A cultural philosophical point of view

Now comes cultural philosophy and indicates where future developments should take place. There are intellectual trends which hold that our culture will continue to develop as until now and woman will become far more like man than until now. Once this has taken place to a certain degree, and woman has deprived man of his weapon in the battle of the sexes, she will then direct this weapon against man and culture. Such people proceed from the thought that woman's nature, which is very vital, will nevertheless be able to mobilise so

many sound elements in this hotchpotch of the sexes that she will be able to stand her ground. Once this time has arrived, woman will remember her true nature, turn the weapon against man and set up a matriarchate. May I trace this back to a single principle? It is said that a patriarchate will be followed by a matriarchate. We consider this opinion wrong, not merely because we are Catholic, but also because we know human nature.

{200} Let me put it this way: What should we aim at? Not the theory of replacement, but of complementarity. We have to go into this properly. If we don't do so, we won't have clear concepts. But we can't chop and change all the time. What is meant by the theory of complementarity? I don't want to talk about the effects of a masculine or feminine culture, I would far rather remain with the ontological basis, that is, with the level of nature or being. God created the two sexes according to their own nature, so that they should be dependent on a certain complementarity, a two-in-oneness. You can picture this to yourselves in this way: You don't have a circle, but an ellipse, which has two foci - the nature of man and woman. I am not talking of the polarizing effect, but of the structure of being.

Masculine and feminine nature have been deliberately created in such a way that they are dependent on mutual complementarity to form a two-in-oneness. May I prove this? Look at the creation account: "Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner'"(Gen 2,18). This means that the man is able to complement another being, and that he is by nature in need of complementarity. Look at what is said in the marriage encyclical¹. It defines the ontological structure of the two sexes. Both should be at the heart and centre of the family: the husband's leadership is that of governing, the wife's leadership is that of love; the man is the head, the woman the heart - hence together they form a two-in-oneness. And when you look at everyday life - we are not talking about the togetherness of the sexes, but only of their ontological structure - you will find the same thing. Think of the Span-

¹ Pius XI, *Casti connubii*, December 31, 1930.

ish philosopher {201} Donoso Cortés¹ who said: If a man renews himself radically in world history, not just in his outward activity, it happens because he sees life from a woman's perspective and hence flies into the ocean of life. This is absolutely true. You must now take "woman" not as an individual person, but as the feminine principle, and "man" not as an individual person, but as the masculine principle. So if the masculine principle renews itself, it is through the feminine principle. Whoever has taken part in the course on "General Pedagogics" will recall what was said. We showed there that the ontological structure of woman is simple service². The symbol of man's nature is the arrow, the symbol of woman's nature is the circle, which returns to itself. It shows how woman is bonded with nature. Extreme masculinity is shown in the arrow, which aims at infinity. If masculine nature is to become complete from the root up, it can only happen if it is inwardly formed by a feminine principle.

In this context we have to consider the significance of Marian devotion for the education of men and boys. Educators are struggling to overcome the danger of single sex education, and so they try to create home-like schools³. However, woman's influence on man's nature is secured by the influence of Marian devotion. It has a tremendous influence. I am speaking merely from a cultural philosophical standpoint. However, it also applies to us who are celibate. If we priests want to be complemented on the ontological level, we will not find it through contact with the other sex, but through becoming more perfect on the ontological level. It is not possible for us to look for woman's influence in a definite person, we have to {202} find a fundamental, ontological complementarity. And we will find it if we give ourselves to our Lady. You may find these things somewhat strange as I have put them, but please think them over. We now have

¹ Juan Maria, Marquis de Valdegamas, Spanish politician, diplomat and philosopher, 1809-53.

² "Magdtum" is untranslatable! It is derived from our Lady's response at the annunciation: I am the handmaid (Magd) of the Lord!

³ Catholic boarding schools in which the boy's enjoyed the influence of a 'mother'.

the crisis of the sexes before us, seen from the cultural philosophical point of view.

From the cultural psychological point of view

And we are told by the cultural psychologists that this mix-up of the sexes is more dangerous to our Western culture than the lost war¹. Is that true: worse than the lost war as a whole? What an influence the lost war had! And this is said to be worse! If we manage to overcome this mix-up of the sexes, if we manage to ensure that masculine and feminine nature mature ontologically, existentially, to become a real two-in-oneness, we will have offered a healing factor to our Western culture that is without compare.

I have now discussed the bolshevistic crisis and the crisis of the sexes as they exist today. In our next conference I will try to show you the Mother of God as the one who can save and redeem us from this profound crisis of living.

¹ First World War 1914-18.

Ninth Conference

Overcoming the crisis of living through Mary

{203} We want to study the value of devotion to Mary, of Marian education, and hence of the Marian education of the people, with a view to the anthropological heresies of today. We have essentially characterised the heresies and their context. Now we have to ask ourselves: Which of Mary's features should help to overcome these heresies?

We have already stated that we want to leave aside the crisis of marriage and family life. I want to go into this in a special course and show how Mary overcomes the crisis of marriage¹. So what is left over is the crisis of the sexes and the bolshevistic crisis. *Omnes haereses tu sola interemisti in universo mundo*. She has overcome and will overcome all heresies through her being and through her fullness of grace, her omnipotent supplication. How does the Mother of God overcome the two crises through her being? She overcomes the crisis of the sexes by her actual and perfect femininity, and the bolshevistic crisis through her genuine humanity. Please understand that I am basing what I say on the foundation of psychology, the psychology of nature, and only touch upon the psychology of grace here and there.

Mary overcomes the crisis of the sexes

We will now have to dwell on the crisis of the sexes and how it is overcome. The Blessed Mother helps to protect and save the ideal of true womanhood by representing the radiant and grace-giving Marian ideal. The crisis of the sexes is overcome because she helps to save the ideal of woman. We want {204} to see how she does this by following up three main thoughts step by step.

The first thought: A conference on the ideal of woman in the light of cultural philosophy. Second thought: the ideal of woman in the light of Mary as our ideal. Third thought: the way the Marian ideal works. If you connect this train of thoughts correctly, you will realise that we

¹ See *Marian Education for Marriage*, 1933.

are here presented with a whole organism of truth and reality, a great and coherent world, the philosophy, psychology and pedagogy of devotion to Mary. Who in addition has studied the dogmatic devotion to Mary will have a whole compendium of devotion to Mary. We want to dwell in particular on the second train of thoughts: the ideal of woman in the light of Mary as our ideal.

The ideal of woman in the light of cultural philosophy

We want to look at the ideal of woman in the light of cultural philosophy. We have to do this in order to acquire a firm foundation, so that we are not swayed back and forth in our judgement of the right ideal of woman. I have already said that the contrasts are exceptionally strong: from total adulation to absolute rejection. This has always been the case. The ideal of woman has fluctuated strongly in the way humanity has been viewed in the course of history. Look at how much the evaluation of woman has changed overnight and the ideal of woman has dropped very low. Or, if it is lifted on high, it sinks again in a crass and hurtful way, so that woman is seen as a merely natural apparatus for reproduction. I think you have to see these things clearly. We will find it easier to arrive at clarity on the subject because there is a constantly growing literature at our disposal. I am thinking, for example, of Karrer's book *Die Seele der Frau* (The soul of woman), or of Weber's book {205} *Aufstieg der Frau* (The ascent of woman)¹. It would be good to take a look into both books; but it is even more valuable to see things clearly for ourselves.

It will be worth our while to follow up two trains of thought: firstly, to define our standpoint, a firm and secure standpoint, from which we can work out the God-willed essence of woman's nature; and secondly, from this vantage point define her originality as clearly as possible. That is to say, we have to work out our standpoint and then see the originality of woman's nature.

¹ Otto Karrer: *The soul of woman, Ideals and problems of womanhood*, Munich 1932; M. Weber: *the Ascent of Woman, a fundamental reflection and cultural-pedagogical evaluation*, Freiburg 1935.

Working out our standpoint

What is our position? You can feel where the opposite values of the ideal of womanhood come from, because the standpoint from which they proceed is completely opposite to ours. First of all let us describe the false standpoint and then work out the only correct one.

False concepts

To start with a false concept is that woman has to be measured against and essentially evaluated in relation to man's nature; man's nature is seen as the norm for judging woman's nature and woman's originality. This is a false concept which has often been put forward in the course of the centuries. I am thinking, for example, of Aristotle. He defined woman as simply a '*mas occasionatus*'¹, a woman is purely accidentally a mutilated man. Can you see how wrong this position is? Here woman is measured against man.

{206} We have to ask ourselves: How did our Lord, how did the Church, judge woman's nature? We can only point to ultimate principles. Our Lord did not formulate the principles in detail. He merely bore witness through his example to the very high regard he had for woman. When you have to talk about this, you should add a chapter on our Lord's relationship to woman - on the way he respected and ennobled his mother. Even if he had done nothing else than choose such a mother from mankind, he would already have shown a very profound respect for woman. Let us rejoice and try to feel in much the same way about woman as our Lord did.

From here you could consider with how much respect our Lord approached women in the Scriptures, with how much respect he treated the sinners in particular. Think of how he accepted the services of women, but also of how wrongly some texts have been traditionally explained in order to propagate a false asceticism with regard to the position of woman. This is often what happens today when, for example, the meeting between our Lord and the woman at Jacob's well is discussed. On their return the disciples were surprised about it. We

¹ Aristotle, De generatione animalium, 3,2: Woman is an accidental man.

can be sure it was an extraordinary situation. So, some people conclude, it means that he normally avoided women. But when we read about the customs of that time, we will be able to prove the opposite. At the time it was contrary to custom when a teacher spoke to a women in public. Our Lord broke with this custom, he encountered women quite naturally.

{207} There is another passage which is wrongly interpreted. After the resurrection Mary Magdalene wanted to touch our Lord. "Mary!" (Jn 20,16) He addressed her thus only once. And she wanted to embrace him. He does not allow it: Stay away from me, stop it! On the other hand, John was allowed to rest on our Lord's breast (Jn 13,23). There we have it! But you have to see the context. Our Lord had allowed Mary Magdalene to wash his feet with her tears and dry them with her hair (Lk 7,37f). What does that mean? Stay away from me? We are told that in the original text it says: Do not keep hold of me; I won't remain here, you will be able to meet me often after this. You must see how simply and naturally our Lord dealt with women. He also had a favourite place in Bethany. This doesn't mean we also have to have one. But we have to see the objective reality of these things. You can feel how our Lord had a really spontaneous, reverent and sublime relationship to woman.

The principles of the Catholic Church with regard to woman, which have developed in the course of the centuries, are based on these actions of our Lord. Right from the beginning the Church worked out the principle of the personality, the principle of holiness and the principle of virginity.

Please note what this means. It is simply tremendous. Woman was regarded as a chattel, as something without a soul. Our Lord and the Church, on the contrary, base themselves strongly on the truth: the most important thing is the soul. The principle of the personality is a strong defence of woman's nature. "For what will it profit them {208} if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life?" (Mt 16,26). The Church has always maintained the principle of holiness. Also woman can become holy, she has been elevated to the honours of the altar. And how strongly the Church respects woman's greatness, woman's originality!

Finally, the principle of virginity. It is something really great. The Church recognizes that woman is not orientated absolutely towards marriage, that she is not simply a sexual being, but that she also has the ability to be anchored in God and independent of giving expression to her sexuality. As a result the Church shows that woman is to be valued so highly that she can be elevated to the nobility of the Church. The Church as such has not represented the false standpoint. This does not however mean that individual representatives of the Church have not acted differently. It is even maintained that St Thomas upheld the false standpoint¹. However, for us it should be sufficient to know that the standpoint is wrong - no matter who upholds it - that woman has to be measured against man as the norm. People have even tried to prove that during a Provincial Council some bishops denied that woman has a soul. It doesn't matter. You have to see these things, especially when you notice how woman is treated in other cultures. The Church always places woman in the right light.

A second false standpoint. Woman is seen as a means to supply sexual pleasure, as a means to intensify man's sexual pleasure. If I allow woman's nature to be seen solely in this way, it is a false standpoint. Man is also {209} guilty in this regard, because through his whole way of thinking he has shown that this is the highest priority in his scale of values. Doesn't what is shown in films and newspapers prove that man is looking for these values everywhere? And isn't it natural that woman thinks that the ultimate meaning of her life is to exemplify these values? So it is necessary that not just woman, but also man, has to be involved in the re-birth of the sexes.

Since we have mentioned the crisis of family life, and since so many family weeks are being conducted at present - and justifiably so - let us listen to the words of a Russian thinker: The problem of woman is fundamentally resolved in the marriage chamber. If the husband learns to treat his wife with real reverence in the bedroom, the problem of woman has been solved. However, let us not overlook that woman herself has to make a big and strong contribution to the re-

¹ cf Thomas Aquinas, S.th., I,Q.92, art. 1; I, q. 99, art 2.

valuation of this false evaluation. She may not, on the other hand, present herself so easily as a sexual riddle. Woman has to see to it - we will later see which sources she has to draw from - that her spiritual-intellectual qualities are held in greater esteem in marriage, as well as in public and private life. We have now dealt with both false points of view.

The correct concept

What is the correct concept? It is the theory of complementarity. The two sexes do not have the same nature, but they are equal in value. They have been created by God with their nature in order that they can complement each other in their nature, but they are nevertheless equal in value: different in nature, but equal in value.

The original quality of woman's nature

Our task will be to show in the light of cultural philosophy what is the original quality of woman's nature. We can follow two {210} main trends of thought, the first being more superficial, the second digging more deeply.

Firstly, let me put it this way: By nature woman's originality consists in the fact that she is strongly directed towards the personal, the spiritual and the maternal. She is strongly person-directed - man is strongly down-to-earth; woman is more attuned to the spiritual, man to ideas; woman is more maternal, man more project-oriented. You can see the differences, but you may also say: the differences interpenetrate. It is difficult to say: so far and so far. In the one you will find a strong tendency in one direction, and in another a stronger tendency in the other. If you want to see things clearly, you should not say: woman and man, but the feminine and masculine principles¹. That is seen purely in cultural-philosophical terms.

¹ That is to say, masculinity and femininity are the two extremes of a continuum, and the individual man or woman has a place somewhere on this continuum. Some men have decidedly more "feminine" traits and some women more "masculine" traits.

Emphasis on the personal

In how far is this true? We want to liberate ourselves from the sexual chaos of our days, so we have to foster a marked consciousness of the sexes. Unfortunately it is necessary to reflect on these things today - it shouldn't be necessary, we should grasp them instinctively. I need to tell myself: I am proud to belong to this particular sex. You may tell yourselves: There are so many who are embarrassed because they are women, not just because they cannot become priests. In the background there is the feeling: I am ashamed of being myself, of being aware that I belong to this particular sex. We have to emphasise the opposite more strongly. The same has to be said of the other side: that the young man is proud to be a man. So awareness of one's sex! That is why we need to be properly taught and educated, or we need a sound instinct in this regard. If I do not instinctively show reverence for my own original worth, I must constantly reflect on it. It is not so much {211} a matter of language, but of the way in which we live in practice that makes the difference. And if this is not the case, I should not feel embarrassed! If I notice that my (sexual) drive is somewhat stronger than in man, although the difference is not so big, I have to acknowledge it and not oppose it. There is a far stronger urge in woman's nature to do this, but also a far stronger faithfulness in the sense of personal bonding.

On the other hand, we may tell ourselves that woman's urge towards personal bonding contains a great danger. The mind can be confused, imagination and emotions can be invaded. Only, we must tell ourselves: If a woman becomes attached to me, I am presented with a great task. Think back on what we have discussed about the creative force of personal bonding. It is a dangerous weapon. The whole community which has become attached to me, stands or falls with me. It is either dragged down with me to its ruin, or it is drawn upwards. The more God has designed me as a leader, the greater is my responsibility to become more spiritual, to become what God wants those entrusted to me to become. The knowledge about these things does not dispense us, we have to reckon with them, and this all the more at a time in which the personality again comes to the fore. So don't just cut and send away, but take these laws into account! But first

of all become the sort of person that others experience as a living *Sursum corda*¹. The more I may be a leader - I preside over a parish, I am a leader - the more I must serve through a wholly selfless and spiritualised leadership - education towards a very definite awareness of belonging to one or the other sex - educate girls {212} to be proud that they are women - but also indicate the dangers. In particular, however, when I am myself an educator, when I have fatherly or motherly rights, I must see my responsibility very clearly.

Emphasis on the spiritual

In addition, by nature woman is strongly directed towards the spiritual, man to ideas - also in this regard you need to see things clearly - at least this is how it should be. It has been said that if a man furnishes a room and has everything to hand, he may work and work, the room will never be welcoming. A woman needs only to look at it, she moves a thing here or there, and it becomes homely. Man wants it, but it never gets that homely touch. Woman looks at it, and it is there. This is woman's disposition, only it is not highly developed today. We need to stress it.

Emphasis on the motherly

Woman is directed towards motherhood, towards becoming creative, and wants to serve life.

When I say we need to be aware of our sex and our mission in order to overcome the chaos of the sexes, I would, as a woman, be proud of my qualities. As a priest I have to see that I serve her original nature and ensure that the corresponding qualities in those entrusted to my care increasingly find expression in a genuinely womanly way.

I can only talk about a strong plus or preponderance, because all the values in woman are also to be found in man. Vice versa, we are only dealing with a plus.

A plus in intuition

¹ Latin: Lift up your hearts (From the preface dialog of the Mass).

By nature woman is more strongly given to intuition. It would be worth the while of those who want to go into these questions to follow up these trends in modern philosophical thinking. {213} It is particularly important today. Present-day trends are very irrational. No matter how masculine they consider themselves, these trends are extraordinarily feminine. That is the irrational. This raises the question about the nature of present-day thinking. Feminine thinking is strongly intuitive, masculine thinking strongly reflective. Of course, we have to say that there are men who are more strongly intuitive than women, and vice versa. We may not generalise. Only the tendency is stronger. I have only to see how the disposition should develop.

Today the laws of masculine logic apply in philosophy, not feminine logic. Masculine logic is pyramidal logic. The typical man sees a truth and sets one block on another to form a pyramid. These have been the laws of logic since Aristotle. Feminine logic is often called circular logic or eternal logic. In practice I prefer to see this as a joke. Scientific investigation has a vast field of study in this regard. Today one is prepared for everything. Intuitive, emotional life and endeavour must *also* contain a germ of truth. Today people work harder than before to define the laws of feminine logic, and some think there are two laws: the law of co-ordination and the law of opposition. These things can so easily be misunderstood. We find ourselves on very unsteady ground. The law of co-ordination and integration. My attitude to life is such that I may consider true and right whatever is in keeping with it - but in how far is another question - everything else is wrong. Today it is said: Whatever serves life is right. However, there may {214} be no contradiction between masculine and feminine logic!

For us educators this means that we have to form feminine thinking. In the education of girls and women we have to lay great emphasis on the education of a purified feeling. We gladly admit that in her thinking, in her natural and supernatural sense of the fitting, woman often has a far deeper and finer yardstick than man. That is the cardinal question: If woman's way of thinking is to help to overcome extreme masculine logic and individualism, we have to work with great fervour at teaching women to ask with their whole being not

"What is sin?" "What has to be done?" but, "What is finer, more fitting, more suitable?". That is the cardinal question if we are to solve the crisis of the sexes, in as far as this has to do with the education of woman and woman's nature. It is also most important that in the education of girls and women we educate them to think with masculine logic, but only temporarily, so that they learn to regulate things and also think reflexively. In the long run it is not possible - it would do violence to them - but for a time it is important.

This should only provide you with a few insights for your work. If we were to manage to overcome the crisis of the sexes by helping both sexes to become fully aware of their own sexual identity, what a blessing this would be for our entire culture and for our home country! So, look at the laws of being! We are faced with a great task in our communities and associations. We have no time to lose! We should influence world events as a whole through working out a solution on a small scale. So: Woman's nature has a plus with regard to intuition.

A plus in spiritual love

{215} She also has a plus with regard to spiritual love, the spiritual element in love. In woman's nature love is primarily spiritual in nature. Masculine love is by nature primarily more robust, it is primarily expressed through the body, it is directed towards the physical, the unspiritual. And here we have a great task. If we have to educate girls and women, please do not think: We need a new generation, so we should give in and ensure that we have a lot of people who have something to eat. Do not offend against the laws of being!

Do you know why woman's nature has this plus? For two reasons: Firstly, because by nature woman is more strongly influenced by the feeling of modesty, secondly because she is more strongly directed towards altruism. If this is really part of her nature, we should be proud of it. An awareness of our sexual identity! Don't be afraid: I am prudish! On the contrary, be aware that you have a task: I should exemplify woman's nature with classic purity! My education must be in keeping with this goal. Don't simply say: I shall go along with the mix-up of the sexes, it looks so good, I look so "with it", etc. Can you see how wrong this is?

Genuine education should lead to a marked awareness of one's sexual identity, to a sense of modesty! Can you feel how we increase the mix-up of the sexes if we do not educate women to have this extremely fine sense of modesty? Here you would have any amount of material for long discussions and self-examination. It is quite wrong to ask constantly: Is this or that a sin? No, we must try to discover the laws of being and behave in this or that way because of a sound, inner awareness. It is part of a girl's inner, spiritual awareness to have an all-embracing sense of modesty. I have now told you {216} about the importance of woman's feeling of modesty, in particular with a view to saving marriage.

If woman has not already been spoiled, which is often the case today - I am describing things, not as they are, but as they are germinally laid down in nature - woman is by nature endowed with a feeling of modesty and is directed towards altruism. Both are natural to woman if she has remained unspoiled. Let me give you an example. Two young people want to marry. The young man thinks: I want to see whether I will be happy; the young woman thinks: the important thing is whether I can make him happy. It is wrong for the young man to give in to his inclinations, just as it is for the young woman. However, both sexes have to cultivate their nature and develop what is germinally present in each. An awareness of our sexual identity! I may be proud of being what I am and need not try to acquire a masculine nature. Thanks be to God, I behave the way things are!

A plus in motherliness

Let us look for other qualities. What is hidden in woman's nature? A plus in spiritual and creative forces; that is to say, a plus in motherly tendencies. The reason for this is, if a woman has remained unspoiled, that woman has an unlimited ability to suffer. Woman's greatness is to be found in her ability to suffer. Her entire riches are to be found in her ability to suffer, in her readiness to suffer and in her joy in suffering. Whoever does not take this into consideration may bring up childish people, but not the people we need. They will not educate the mothers for our people whom we need today. We may not bring up dolls, toys. We must educate real, genuine women. And this can be

measured by her ability to suffer, her readiness to suffer and her joy in suffering.

Tendency to relate to life

{217} Woman has a plus in her nature with regard to her relation to life, already on a psychological level. She is close to life, she is the one who begets life. This is true even merely intellectually. So woman has - although this is no longer the case today - a much stronger feeling for personal understanding. Man is more inclined to understand things objectively. Personal understanding includes absorbing the life-rhythm of another person, believing in the mission of the good qualities in another person, and affirming all that is genuine and good through kindness and understanding. These are all qualities that are germinally present in woman's nature. Don't you think it would be better for us to bring out these qualities in woman, rather than allowing her to be attracted to man's ways too quickly?

The essence of woman

How can we describe the essence of woman's nature very succinctly? As virginal motherliness. The essence of woman is virginal motherhood. I can say this to you after observing life for a long time. Virginality and motherhood - the tendency towards virginality is to be found in every woman, including those who have married. Motherliness is part of the essential nature of the virgin, the woman religious. A genuine characteristic of woman is virginal motherhood.

This provides us with a starting-point for discovering the world of devotion to Mary. The Mother of God, seen merely from the dogmatic point of view, is the physical Mother and the unique, spiritual Bride of our Lord - virginal motherhood, Virgin-Mother.

This principle, when applied to the essential nature of woman, means: virginality implies self-preservation, motherhood, self-giving. Self-preservation means being a "garden enclosed" (Song of Songs 4,12), closed {218} where I should be closed, and yet open in order to give myself to others. I only want to mention this briefly in the light of modern trends.

All that we have discussed about virginal motherhood, serving and helping, has prepared the ground for the thoughts to be presented tomorrow: What is the ideal of womanhood in the light of Mary as our ideal? How are the two organically connected - virginity and motherhood? Is motherhood essentially connected with virginity, is virginity an essential part of motherhood? You need to have vital clarity on these matters and to strive for them with great fervor.

Tenth Conference

The ideal of woman in the light of Mary, our ideal

{219} We are searching for the value of Marian devotion, of Marian education, of a Marian education for our people, from the point of view of overcoming the crisis of living today. We have described the context, and hence the crisis today, as a crisis of the family and marriage, a bolshevistic crisis and a crisis of the sexes. Since we have reserved the subject of the crisis of marriage and family life for a special course, we can and may now show how the Blessed Mother is the one who is to save us from the crisis of the sexes and of bolshevism. In this conference we want to consider how she saves us from the crisis of the sexes. Or, if you prefer to see this in another context, we said yesterday that once we had looked at the ideal woman in the light of cultural philosophy, we wanted to look at it in the light of Mary as our ideal.

To sum it up we can say that the Mother of God wants to save us from the crisis of the sexes by exemplifying the ideal of woman in a classic way, and by forming and mauling the ideal of woman. This provides us with two points: The Mother of God exemplifies the ideal woman, the Mother of God forms and molds the ideal woman.

Mary exemplifies the ideal woman

We have looked at the ideal of woman from the cultural historical point of view as an expression of virginity and motherhood - a serving virginity, as self-preservation and self-giving. Now we have to see how the Scriptures take a stand to this cultural philosophical achievement. We must naturally borrow paint and paintbrush from a {220} picture of Mary that is in keeping with God's intentions: from the Bible, from tradition and from history. In the spirit and at the service of our course I want to paint two pictures of Mary that complement each other. The first picture borrows paint and paintbrush more from history. We may give this picture the title: Radiant picture of feminine dignity, nobility and beauty. The second picture will be painted more with the colors of the Bible. We can and may give it the title: virginal giving, virginal service.

The radiant picture of feminine beauty and dignity

To start with let us look for a picture drawn for us by history. "A woman clothed with the sun" (Rev. 12,1). It shows us the Mother of God as the radiant image of feminine beauty. That is how I see her. The sun concentrates all light and warmth in itself. However, the sun allows some of these rays, this light, this warmth to fall on other created things and creatures. This is also how we have to understand our Lady. She embodies every possible form of feminine dignity, nobility, greatness and beauty and concentrates it in a single focal point, as it were. Whatever we see as feminine greatness and nobility is a ray emanating from the wonderful glories of the blessed among women.

May I quickly paint the picture of the Blessed Mother in this context? It might be a good idea to highlight other, contradictory truths, that is, to first paint the dark background against which the picture of the blessed among women is set apart in a most wonderful way.

The dark background

{221} The dark background leads us far back into the history of the world and mankind, it leads us to the beginnings of the world and humankind. How did God envisage the relationship between man and woman in Paradise? The two should walk hand in hand through the world like a king and queen, they were meant to be equals, they were meant to lead each other upwards and also serve their posterity. However, woman misused her influence on man. She sinned and drew man downwards into the abyss, into the cesspool of sin. She was to pay dearly for this. Her punishment lay in the direction in which she had failed. In a formal sense, original sin depended on Adam's behavior. However, since Eve misused her influence on the head of human society so badly, she was also drawn into the curse of Adam, and very strongly so.

So we see how God banished not just man, but also woman. Eve, who was meant to be man's queen, now became his servant: "He shall rule over you" (Gen 3,16). She was allowed to remain his associate, but she was the associate of his weaknesses, the associate of his

suffering. She was to remain the "mother of all living" (Gen 3,20), but this motherhood was to be surrounded by a crown of thorns, by suffering: "in pain you shall bring forth children" (Gen 3,16). And the conception of children was combined with the curse, the suffering, the continuation of sin. The mother of all the living - yes, this should continue, but at the same time she became the mother of death and the dead. There you have the first effects of God's banishment.

{222} People, as you well know, remodel everything according to the desires and wishes of their hearts. Woman's situation would have been more bearable, she would have remained the queen, at least within the family, if man's selfishness had not changed and misinterpreted God's banishment so strongly in the course of the centuries. So we see how Eve's posterity increasingly became the slaves of man. Man's equal became man's slave. And so a cry has gone out through the centuries, a whimper and cry from Eve's children. If only it had remained like this!

The saddest and most tragic part is that woman gradually got used to the yoke of slavery, she had a feeling of well-being in it. Woman is enslaved to man throughout her life. When she is a girl, her father can do whatever he likes with her, he can even expose her to the elements. Once a woman is married, she is totally dependent on her husband. If her husband dies, the sons can do what they like with her. There have been outstanding women in every culture and epoch who have bitterly lamented this state of affairs, as we can read in Euripides' tragedy: "Medea". However, this is very rare. In general women have come to terms with their slavery and adopted the attitude of slaves.

Here you can see the second effect of God's banishment. Whoever has some understanding of the great cultural context will realize that the lowly position of woman is at the same time the norm, the yardstick and illustration of the {223} culture of individual countries and centuries. So woman, as she stood and stands in the shrine in her degenerate state, cannot liberate man's sensuality and lead him upwards. On the contrary, she becomes the object of his lust and exploitation. And the child of such a woman, who has been not just outwardly, but inwardly, degraded, must imbibe a similar attitude as time goes by. If we recall that the position of woman in a culture is a

decisive mark of its superiority or degradation, we will be able to deduce the depth of the decline of morality and a culture.

In order to illustrate these great truths, we do not need to look back into ancient pagan times. The new paganism of our times offers us sufficient examples. We need only think of how woman is regarded in the civilized countries today. The cult of woman is at bottom the cult of Venus. And the wail of the unborn children, the murder of children - look at how the executioner goes through the civilized European countries! A child is no longer seen as a gift from heaven, but as an extremely burdensome byproduct of sensuality. This is the dark background against which we want to see the radiant image of Mary.

The restoration of the original order

We can well understand that if God wants to redeem the world, the grace of redemption has to be given largely to woman. Woman was strongly infected by sin, by the consequences of sin, because she is profoundly important to the organism of the world as a whole. And so we see how the God-Man highlighted a member of the feminine sex as the most perfect fruit of redemption {224} - the Mother of God, the blessed among women.

Yet this was insufficient to uplift the position of woman in the world as a whole. He again re-introduced the original, pure laws of marriage that existed in Paradise. We can sympathize with and enter into the objections of the apostles when they responded to our Lord's commands and directives in this regard: "If that is the case, it would be better not to marry!" (Mt 19,10). If you are to be bound by the purity, unity and indissolubility of marriage to one woman, it would be better not to marry. From this you can conclude that our Lord's main concern when he re-introduced the Paradisal marriage was his high regard for woman. He wanted to secure the nobility and dignity of woman.

Nevertheless he still wasn't satisfied. He elevated marriage to become a sacrament and commanded: "Everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Mt 5,28). Notice how our Lord is concerned here with restoring the noble position of woman.

Finally, he elevated virginity to the state of nobility in the Church. Now it should be easier for man to allow himself to be drawn upwards to God, to this nobility, by a woman who has been ennobled in this way. It should also be easier for children to look up to their mother, who is so ennobled.

However, these laws are on such a high level, they are so profound, that we who know life are inclined to say: It is Utopian! The ideals of woman and of marriage are so high! Where will we find people who are prepared to set out on pilgrimage to such ideals? This applies not just to the ideal {225} of marriage, to the ideals of womanhood, it applies to all Catholic ideals - they are as high as the heavens! It may be difficult to embody them, but God has built them into human nature, he has protected and supported them.

Mary - our example

Since God knows that it is particularly difficult to embody the ideals of womanhood, he, the great and wise educator and psychologist of his people, has given us a unique example and visual aid: his Mother is a living and wonderful visual aid. This is how she appears before us. And if she shines down on her people for months at a time, if she is exposed to the gaze of the people for months at a time - we think of May or October - as the great visual aid of feminine dignity, as the sun of feminine nobility, greatness and dignity, how strongly this people should be drawn upwards to the heights of such nobility! Our task consists in seeing to it that she is always seen as the sun, the perfect, spiritual ideal of womanhood.

We can understand why the Mother of God was twice praised as the blessed among women. The first time by the angel (see Lk 1,28). This greeting could have applied to her greatness in God. The greeting from a human being (see Lk 1,42) could have applied to the sunrays of the glory of her feminine greatness falling on the whole human race. We can follow up with great joy and gratitude how the rays of her greatness shine into the world of {226} womanhood. Elizabeth began to prophecy that blessing would go out from her to the world of women. In his turn, man was healed (see Lk 1,64). We can see the influence of the Blessed Mother on man. And the child in his mother's

womb was justified, freed from sin (see Lk 1,44). You here see, the Woman, the Mother of God, the blessed among women, in her glory, in her greatness, and how the flood of her glory pours out over the whole of creation.

In her woman becomes a queen again

Let us continue. In the Mother of God, in her nobility, in her greatness, woman has again become a queen, as we saw her in Paradise - royal, not just because she comes from a royal line, no, she is royal in all she does, feels and thinks. All those who bond with the Blessed Mother, and who are able to make the rays of her glory their own, all those who genuinely honor Mary deeply, who think more deeply and honor her more vitally, will get used to discovering these royal rays on the brow of every girl and woman. Yes, this mysterious royal diadem of Mary's glories and greatness has to be discovered again, but we have also to see to it that in very truth it shines mysteriously on the brow of our girls and women.

In her virginity has been ennobled

Further - we see how in the Mother of God virginity has been uniquely ennobled. She is the Virgin of virgins, the purest Virgin among virgins. Her motherhood is completely spiritualized; the Child in her womb has nothing to do with concupiscence. {227} You can again see in this the whole nobility of her glory, the original nobility of the noblest, most perfect femininity. From this you can understand that Catholic peoples down the ages have looked at our Lady's picture and climbed up as though clinging to a clear and profound mirror of morality. If a people loves her picture in the right way, devotion to Mary provides it with a measure of morality, a principle of morality, from which the people can take their bearings at all times.

I have now shown you in general terms the picture, the radiant picture of feminine dignity as it is embodied in the Mother of God. If we remember that the direction of the grace we receive is determined by our interests, we will know that what we have briefly indicated shows us the direction in which the picture of our Lady mediates the most effective graces. As educators, we take it for granted that the

Mother of God possesses a unique characteristic - she spreads an atmosphere of spotless purity and chastity according to one's state in life. One day we want to make a survey of priests, men, young men, women and girls - what will they tell us? If they have kept their purity spotless according to their state, our Catholic thinking and feeling, as well as our own experience and observation of life, will take it for granted that the purest Virgin, the sun of feminine nobility, has been uniquely at work in their regard and continues to work in this way.

{228} That is the first picture, the sun of feminine beauty and dignity. Please follow up and develop this train of thoughts for yourselves in another field: virginally helping. Where is virginity depicted in this picture, where do we find motherhood, where the attitude of helping and serving others? We want to work out this thought clearly when we paint the second picture.

Mary in the Bible

The Bible does not seem to have much to say about her, the blessed among women. And yet so many colors combine here that we will have to work a long time to discover the different brushstrokes and form them into a single picture. The Bible shows her to us as the woman listening to the Ave, speaking the Magnificat, holding the Child in her arms, with the Spirit's tongues of fire over her head and with the sevenfold sword in her heart. Is it possible to paint a more beautiful picture? If you want to follow up the individual features more closely, you will have to ponder on some of the pictures in a special way.

At the Annunciation

Remain for a moment with the Annunciation scene. Under this picture you can write with great joy and gratitude the words: Virginal Helper!

It is wonderful to be able to follow up how the basic roots, the original roots of Christianity have been planted into the soil of virginity, of purity. The Gospel traces our Lord's family tree with classic objectivity and truthfulness into the most distant past. The Bible is so truthful that it does not shrink back from mentioning all the

harlots that have a place in his family tree. But {229} the closer the coming of the God-Man, the purer the atmosphere becomes. And where the water flows directly from the wellspring, we find a completely pure, spotless spring. We have a pure Virgin, we have a saintly Joseph, and later we will meet a pure and virginal John as the favorite disciple. There we have the atmosphere, the purity, the pure atmosphere, in which Christianity has grown. So we are not surprised when we are told that the angel was sent to a virgin, and the virgin's name was Mary (see Lk 1,26f). It is mentioned twice in succession, in the same breath: Virgin. Yes, the origins of Christianity were virginal.

Please study the Annunciation scene to see how the virginity of our Lady is expressed with extraordinary clarity. Compare this picture with another that is amazingly similar. It shows Zachariah. He also received a visitor from heaven, as did our Lady, and on both occasions the same question was put in almost exactly the same words (see Lk 1,13 and 1,28). However, the reaction was quite different each time. Zachariah was punished, the Mother of God graced. She conceived in a unique way. Why? Zachariah put the question as a *Quomodo*¹, a question of reprehensible doubt; in our Lady's case it was a question that gave expression to her decision to remain a virgin (see Lk 1,18 and 1,34). She was so sure: I may not give up my virginity!

{230} Our writers and teachers of the faith show us how heaven and earth held their breath until the Blessed Mother spoke her Fiat. Shouldn't we make the same claim when we think of the *Quomodo*? It was foreseen from all eternity that the Mother of the Lord should be a virgin. This determination to remain a virgin, this unchanging determination to remain a virgin in every circumstance, is a proof that we are in truth in touch with the blessed among women. Here you can see clearly the virginity, the virginal features of the Mother of God.

After the annunciation she realized clearly that this virginity had become fruitful, her purity was fruitful. In the first place, this fruitfulness showed in the fact that the blessed among women was

¹ Latin: How, in which way?

enlightened about the mysteries of the divinity. She had tried to feel her way in this regard during the annunciation event, to discover how the greatest mysteries of Christianity had been revealed to her at that moment - the mystery of the Trinity, the incarnation and the virgin birth. That is a law in God's kingdom: pure and virginal souls are uniquely able to perceive this light, the eternal light. 'Blessed are the pure in heart, they shall see God' (Mt 5,8).

The fruitfulness of virginity becomes motherly in a double sense. Once she had professed her virginity in such a classic way, she said: 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord' (Lk 1,38). Then follow those world-shattering words: 'The Word became flesh' (Lk 1,14). The positive meaning of true virginity {231} is always self-surrender, total self-surrender to God, to our Lord and everything our Lord loves. This applies to all virginity, mine included. The positive meaning: I give up something out of love for our Lord and his cause. That is why St Augustine calls virginity a spiritual marriage with Christ¹, a spiritual marriage with God.

However, in our Lady the fruitfulness of virginity finds expression, as the annunciation scene shows, in the way she bows down to help the members of Christ. Her motherliness is revealed not just in relation to the historical Christ, but also in relation to the mystical Christ. How many of us in a similar situation, after God had taken up his abode close to their hearts, after he had taken on shape and form in us, would have been more inclined to withdraw to a lonely place and there given themselves up to silent prayer and contemplation! This did not happen with our Lady. She had heard about her cousin, she realized that she was in need and would soon give birth to her child². There we see that virginity is coupled with a tremendous openness and sensitivity to the need of others. That is why the Mother of God became at the same moment the servant of God. 'Mary set out and went with haste to a

¹ See St. Augustine, Sermon on John 9,2: "Also those souls which give their virginity to God through a vow are in now way excluded from espousal with him. They take part in the great marriage feast of the Church as a whole, at which Christ is the Bridegroom."

² See Lk 1,36.

Judean town in the hill country' (Lk 1,39). In haste, not sluggishly, not constantly preoccupied {232} with herself, not without consideration or sensitivity for what was going on around her. Oh, no! Simply because the Word had become flesh, she was urged to help wherever her help was needed. She became the first Christian midwife, the first Christian family helper.

Take another look at the ideal of woman reflected in the Blessed Mother - virginal service in which both parties form an organic whole. Virginité is helpfulness and service, it is selfless motherliness. Motherliness presupposes virginité in some way, at least in the sense of purity and integrity, moderate purity in keeping with one's state.

We should remember this picture, this great and glorious ideal of womanhood illustrated by the Blessed Mother. We should look at it and take our bearings from it. People and trends may place other ideals before us. *We* love the ideal revealed in the Mother of God. That is the God-willed and objective ideal of womanhood for which we should all strive.

The twelve-year-old in the temple

If you want to complete this picture, if you want to let me paint other pictures for you, you should pause for a moment at the event in which our Lord behaved with such austerity in relation to his Mother - in Jerusalem. He had gone there with St Joseph and his Mother. We realize how closely he was united with her, and she with him. Then he stayed behind and she had to look for him. What wonderful words she spoke: 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety!' (Lk 2,48) The three obviously had a very tender, personal and family-like relationship. And how austere - humanly speaking - his response was, what a tremendous disappointment it must have been to his parents! Humanly speaking it was at this moment {233} that they realized: He was not longing for us at all, he didn't suffer at all at being separated from us for so long. 'Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' (Lk 2,49) Look at how her motherliness had to grow to reach up to such austerity.

This is true of the life of every woman. She has to bear her child twice, no matter whether this is a natural or a spiritual child: The first time she gives the child life; the second time she has to give up her child. This second renunciation often includes the most severe birth pangs. How strongly the austerity of motherhood finds expression in Mary - virginal service and virginal motherhood! You can take as many pictures out of the Bible as you like. They will all meet in the one point - virginal motherhood, virginal service. Sometimes the one feature is more strongly expressed, at other times another.

The wedding at Cana

If you want to continue with these thoughts, you will come to the wedding at Cana. In the background you see the bridal couple. However, this human, earthly bridal couple, as they are depicted, essentially only offers the framework within which the true Bridal Couple can appear more strongly in the foreground: 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me?' (Jn 2,4) Here we see the Blessed Mother in her uniquely bridal character. Our Lord had begun his public missionary activity. She had to be involved, in the same way as she had later to co-operate in the salvation event. When the word 'Woman' is used, the exegetes tell us, she should not merely be seen as the natural mother of the Savior, but as the spiritual Bride, the Spouse, in the way depicted by the Church Fathers¹. The two were celebrating {234} their espousal. Through our Lord's first public miracle they began - each in his or her own way - the great work of redeeming the world.

Now look at how our Lady gives expression to her spontaneous, childlike and virginal service. If we consider the two statements that were made, aren't they absolutely natural, and yet at the same time edifying and uplifting?

Firstly: 'They have no wine' (Jn 2,3). Please keep in mind the whole situation. It is not as though the Blessed Mother sat there with maidenly bashfulness, not knowing what to do. She must have joined

¹ See Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Epiphanius.

in the festivities in a truly human way. And so, with a sound and womanly instinct she was the first to notice that something was amiss. Do you see how virginity gives one the ability to discover the need of others? So she realized: They have no wine! This immediately aroused his willingness to help. We will probably take pleasure in the fact that it was a little detail of everyday life that awakened her motherly readiness to help: They have no more wine. What do I need in my pastoral work today, in my educational work today? Clear concepts, a strong, courageous and supernatural attitude, simple childlikeness, self-surrender to Divine Providence. Don't we want to beg our Lady to repeat those words: They have no wine¹?

{235} There is something so great and beautiful in true virginity, in true purity. The person who is an untouched virgin is the one who is most sensitive to the needs of others, the needs of mankind. Here you have a clear and vigorous ideal. It is the ideal of virginal helpfulness, of virginal service. It is necessary for us today to fight our way through the thickets of formalism to the ultimate model of woman's ideal. Forms are necessary, but they may never lead to formalism. The heart and center of the ideal of woman is and remains virginal service.

However, Mary's attitude of service and helpfulness has not been fully described in the features I have just sketched. She spoke a second time: 'Do whatever he tells you' (Jn 2,5). Here again you see virginal helpfulness. She brings people's wishes up to God, but also bears God's wishes down to us. Do whatever he tells you. That is how it should be. That is true, feminine greatness: unreserved, selfless and heroic helpfulness, serving wherever the opportunity offers itself.

Can you realize that if we manage successfully to introduce this ideal once again to the women of today, we will have overcome the crisis of the sexes, the confusion of the sexes, in an unexampled way? Isn't it necessary for us to take our bearings from the Blessed Mother, today far more and far more strongly than we did yesterday, must we not take our bearings from a pronounced awareness of our sexuality

¹ These words became one of Fr Kentenich's personal ejaculations in times of need, for example, in the concentration camp at Dachau.

and a pronounced consciousness of woman's mission? The awareness that this is the ideal that is innate to me is such an awareness of our sexuality. This is the ideal I should one day embody according to our Mother's desire. I will be great, {236} I will embody feminine greatness, to the extent that I have formed myself and allowed myself to be formed into the image and likeness of the blessed among women.

A woman's praise

Please contemplate other pictures from the Scriptures. Each time they lead to the same goal, to the ultimate and most fundamental statement. Think of another occasion, which is often depicted as anti-Marian. The Blessed Mother is praised: 'Blessed the womb that bore you' (Lk 11,27). The woman in the crowd reacted so spontaneously. She saw the greatness of our Lord, she saw him as a great leader and prophet, and instinctively thought: How great the mother of such a man must be! So she called out: Blessed the womb that bore you! His reply? 'More blessed still are those who hear the word of God and keep it' (Lk 11,28). Let us offer the explanation which the exegetes today usually give. Of course she is blessed! He wanted to say: The person who gave me my body is great, is blessed. But then he turned his gaze away from this natural motherhood to spiritual spousehood and stressed: Yes, she is blessed, but even more blessed are those who believe, who surrender themselves in a childlike way to the Word of God as the Blessed Mother did. She did not merely give him his natural life; before she conceived him physically, she had already conceived him spiritually.

Once again we see how strong this spiritualized motherhood is. We need to take note of this, whether we are married or not. That is the essential structure of woman - to care for the spiritual component of love. Of course, woman has her rights in a marriage. Yet, in addition, her task is to care for the spiritual component of love.

Under the Cross

{237} Take a look at our Lady and our Lord and see how he solemnly relieved her of her task to be a physical mother and solemnly appointed her and proclaimed her the spiritual mother of the world (cf

Jo 19, 26f.) You will see each time that the same reality is expressed, it is an essential structure. The feminine element is illustrated here in a classical way: virginal helpfulness and service, physical motherhood and the unique Spouse of our Lord, virgin and mother. Am I right in saying, therefore, that our Lady saves the ideal of womanhood, first of all by exemplifying it in a classic way?

Mary forms and molds the ideal woman

All I have said may, however, not satisfy you. The whole effect of a deeply penetrating Marian education for women requires a formative power, a mauling power, a force that molds life, not just a visual aid. In how far can we say that the Marian ideal can also form and could the ideal woman? Once again you have the opportunity to repeat all that we have said during this Congress about the psychology of bonding. Bonding includes a transfer of life. Bonding, as a creative principle of education, is a force that unites and creates resemblance. How hard we have tried to make these truths understandable! It is natural, therefore, that if I love our Lady deeply and warmly, I have not just looked at her as an ideal, I have made this ideal my own. Notice the importance of bonding with Mary. Many of our Catholic women, who as a result of the confusion of spiritual trends today have become so unsure of the shape and form of woman's ideal, who have lost their instinctive sureness of touch, will only get it {238} back if they allow themselves to bond with the blessed among women.

The second answer reaches into the realm of supernature. Allow me to remind you that bonding with Mary also mediates grace, and it does so precisely where our interests lie. So, those who are interested in forming and mauling the ideal of woman, may be sure that through self-surrender to the blessed among women they will have access to the source of grace, which the Mother of God has in her hands.

So I am justified in repeating: The Mother of God is really and truly able to save the ideal of woman for our present times. We see it as our task for the coming centuries to work in this direction, so that later on those words may be repeated also in this context: You have helped to overcome all heresies, including the anthropological

heresies, the profound crisis of the sexes in our present times, through your ideal being and through your powerful intercession.

Eleventh Conference

{239} We are still dealing with the subject of overcoming the crisis of the sexes. Until now we have tried, at least to some extent, to think through the truths we have heard from the dogmatic, psychological and Biblical points of view. I think it is necessary to round this off by approaching the problem also as educators. We have posed three questions: Firstly, the ideal of woman in the light of cultural philosophy; secondly, Mary, our ideal. The main point was that as our ideal Mary illustrates, forms and moulds the ideal of woman.

We may congratulate the Congregations for women for committing themselves to the task of making Mary, our ideal, as widely known as possible. I may add that it wasn't very wise to work all the time under the heading 'Catholic Action' - in its content it was alright, but the title is misleading. Isn't there a danger that the associations, which are struggling so hard to make their way, will one day be dragged downwards again by a new trend? If you lead the Marian Movement purposefully, I am of the opinion that you will then have Catholic Action. The organisation, that is to say, the uniting elements which have to be added in the dioceses, can come from the leaders without disturbing anything in any way. The slogan 'Something new!' isn't good; we have to go our way purposefully so that the Marian Movement can develop purposefully. Then we will have a Catholic Movement and Catholic Action.

The way Mary's image works

We, the educators, have now to consider a third thought, which applies directly to us: the way Mary's image works. According to which laws, in which way, {240} can and must the Marian ideal be made pedagogically effective?

What I am now going to say, has in essentials already been dealt with in principle in the law governing the perspective of one's interests. At the end of the Congress you will realise that we have been dealing with an organism. You are well advised to regard it as a compendium of education through Marian ideals. It requires study. We

can't change the world with just a few concepts. Don't think a lot, speak and do a lot! The person with one great thought is the great educator of the people. Look at the lives of the great founders of Orders - a single, great thought! That's how it should be today. It isn't just the people who study and who have sharp minds, but the people with a single thought to which everything is related, who have an impact. Study national socialism to see how long it takes for a crowd to be saturated by a single thought. And if you agree to accept the Marian idea, then don't let go of it! Everything must be purposeful.

So it is good to raise the question once more: How does and must our ideal, Mary, be effectively applied in practice? Recall the three great laws of Marian education. In this instance two - the first and the last - are particularly apposite.

The motivating value of Mary's image

The first law: The meaning of Marian education is to mobilise a movement of Marian values according to the laws governing the perspective of one's interests. We need to explain this somewhat and try to apply it to our circumstances. I see the ideal, I am sufficiently trained in theology and should now educate boys, girls, etc. It is a good thing that the Marian Sodalties for men {241} are again growing in strength, and that there is a strong Marian movement among the men and youths. If the Mother of God is to save Christ and Christ's image in Germany once again, it has to be brought into connection not just with our women, but also with our men and youths. Later, when we talk about methods in the next courses, we must go into detail and raise all these questions.

The law of the perspective of our interests

We need to take special note of the law of the perspective of our interests. I must pass on the emotion or feeling that Mary is a reality in small doses according to the perspective of a person's current interests, their current receptivity for values.

Super-rational receptivity for values

If I think in terms of the ideal, that is from the higher to the lower, what is primary is my super-rational receptivity for values. I have to ask: Is a human being not a supernatural organism, an organism that sees and lives, that is strongly receptive for what is Marian - in particular for what is Marian in the way that God himself saw and created Mary? That is a super-rational receptivity for values. Subjectively I have a super-rational antenna: the antenna provided by supernatural faith, supernatural love, which then appears before me as the reality of supernature. In practice this means the reality of our Lady's presence in the objective world, in the way God has envisaged and created her with all her supernatural endowment and adornment, and as the Scriptures depict her.

Now let's see: How did God value our Lady? He was the first to incorporate and apply the great law in our world: Nothing without you, O Mary! {242} She was endowed as the most precious of God's creations, of God's grace. In addition, she was incorporated into the divine plan of redemption, which God had designed from all eternity - he wanted to do nothing without the Blessed Mother. He had planned this from all eternity. In governing the world he counted upon her Fiat. Our Lord also kept to this plan: Nothing without you! He could only take on our human nature once Mary had agreed.

We are justified in supposing that God continues to uphold this law: Nothing without you! Of course, when I use this formulation in this way, it means that I am acknowledging her general mediation of grace. Our Catholic instinct takes it for granted that most graces are not given without our Lady's co-operation. Nothing without you! The great educators have always upheld this law: Alphonsus Ligouri, Don Bosco, Ignatius, and all who have had a deep impact on the lives of other people, who didn't just ruminate, but really had an impact that transformed people. Look at how they upheld his law: Nothing without the Mother of God! And so we look up to our Lady in life as the great masterpiece of God's grace, and at the same time as the great Deacon serving the Saviour, the Co-redemptrix.

I have to achieve two things if I work according to the laws governing our super-rational receptivity for values: I must see to it that

a person's antenna for the supernatural grows, that is, their perspective of super-rational interests. Whatever I do to serve their supernatural life of faith and love must be directed by my purposeful action. It is always the same: an organism. I can't do anything great without concentrating it on the Marian element. {243} And when the organic element has been strengthened to some extent, I must try to show our Lady's objective position as clearly as possible, but in such a way that it awakens an echo in the subject. So it may not be abstract, it must always be a vital adaptation to the other person's supernatural outlook and receptivity for values.

You will notice that our Catholic people, and that includes people with a coarse-grained devotion to Mary, have such a super-rational receptivity for values. Even if they love our Lady for really worldly motives, the super-rational is always included, because they love her with a supernatural ability to love, and because the underlying awareness is always there: She is great in God and because of God.

You could now ask: How can I intensify and strengthen a person's receptivity for values? I can do it by awakening a strong love for Christ and God - and that is the most important point, because I can always bring it to a head in the Marian element. So whatever I do to serve a supernatural love of God serves a person's ability to accept supernatural values. Think of the law of bonding. If I am bonded to Christ, I am also bonded to the Blessed Mother. Can you see how organic that is? Then nothing can tear me out of the organism.

Of course, I would also try to point up the objective truths proclaimed in the Bible. And I may confess: We will only attain a complete receptivity for super-rational values and the reality of Marian values once we are in eternity. Only then will our ability to grasp the supernatural reality be perfect. Only then will we see our Lady in all her glory. Also in this regard there is growth into infinity - not just into endlessness. That is {244} the ideal: learn to love our Lady as God has placed her before us, without considering any definite goals I might want to achieve.

However, many who have a Liturgical orientation feel a strong repulsion if someone says: The Marian element takes into consideration an irrational and rational receptivity for values and perspective

of interests. But this is not the goal, it is a stage in development, albeit God-willed. An organic and harmonious combination of nature and grace! If I surrender myself to the God-willed and God-ordained order, all my drives are satisfied, as far as this is possible. Now it can happen that I give myself to the Blessed Mother - why? I give myself to her, because God has put her there. That is the ideal, the objective order. But it can also happen that I give myself to her because this satisfies special needs. You may not say that this is ideal. Because we are out of touch with reality, we move in one direction and the people in another. We talk above their heads. Please, don't just talk in a one-sided way about a spirituality, don't try to reach the heights overnight. Always develop organically! You will solve all questions if you see the organism.

That is why I ask: What is a person's rational and irrational receptivity for values? Will their sound, natural needs then be satisfied? The super-rational in the world of supernature - but now in the natural world: Aren't sound natural needs and senses satisfied when we give ourselves to the Mother of God? Are there values in Mary towards which we are directed by nature?

Irrational receptivity for values

{245} Here we have to define what we mean. The irrational perspective of interests is the ideal. I look at my nature. It is strongly inclined to remain pure. That is an irrational receptivity for values. It is there without my being aware of it. If I look at the Blessed Mother, I prefer to see her as the Immaculate; but I cannot say why. The reason is because I have a very strong irrational receptivity for the value of purity. And my perspective of interests focuses my attention on this one point all the time. I give myself to the Mother of God and will find an answer to this drive, and this drive is then my principle of selection.

Rational receptivity for values

The reason is looked for by the mind. If I say: I still lack kindness and sensitivity for others, and I then say: Look, our Lady has it all! In future, if I read a book, I will say: Let me see whether it contains a chapter from which I can learn, and so on.

There you have the rational and irrational perspective of interests. The ideal of every education is to form the irrational. The rational and reflected part can only be a transitional stage for the educand. As the educator and pastor it can happen that I have a certain charism by nature, I possess it instinctively, I know the objective realities, and I can connect them instinctively - but it is more usual that we have to train ourselves rationally. We have to ask: What are the needs of my parish, where are the objective realities I have to introduce and pass on here? It would be worth our while, both for those who have a charism and {246} for those who have acquired it through training, to ask ourselves: How can we describe the actual receptivity for values, and how should this receptivity become a reality?

There are two kinds of receptivity for values: an individual and an original, typical quality or receptivity for values. Individually: I am a personality, as an individual I have a very definite and individual receptivity for values. Later, when I talk about the method, I can tell you how Mary's image answers this individual receptivity for values. At this point we only want to dwell on the typical and natural receptivity for values. Men and women each have their own specific receptivity for values. Of course, I have to add that there is no clear line of demarcation between the sexes, but there are definite shifts in emphasis. By nature women and men have a strong receptivity for values, but more in one direction than the other.

Woman's specific receptivity for values

So the question is - I want to remain with woman: What is woman's natural and original receptivity for values with regard to the Marian element? Should I put the question differently? What need, what drive, is answered by the Marian element, by the Mother of God? Is it necessary for me to object once again against the attitude: There is nothing in it; I give myself to the Mother of God and everything happens automatically? This might be the case with the broad masses of the people, but not with us. There are laws we have to observe. Woman possesses three drives in particular: the drive to give herself and be secure, the drive towards an original independence, and the

drive towards higher spiritual values. The Blessed Mother offers a most beautiful and classic answer to all three drives.

Woman's drive to give herself and feel secure

{247} The drive to give oneself and feel secure. Another way of putting it is to call it childlike love, a childlike attitude. Now the philosopher can start to ask: What is the root of the drive to love, this drive to give oneself and feel secure? We have already given the answer. The metaphysical root is the metaphysical and ethical fear (anxiety) of the world. A metaphysical fear of the world: Since we are created beings, we are instinctively aware - if we don't lie to ourselves - we have to return to the source of our being. An ethical fear of the world: We are not as we should be. In relation to the All Holy One we have fallen out of the original order. We are dark shadows endowed with a few rays of light. Since we are created beings, we have a need to lean on others, to be secure and to give ourselves.

The need to love is an essential factor in the structure of woman's psyche. The deeper reason is the drive to love, which is a very profound part of woman's soul - because we are created in the image and likeness of God. The drive to love is innate to God, so it is also part of human nature, and it is a marked feature of woman's nature. We can count on it that this drive is strongly embodied in woman's nature.

So I have to discover the answer to this drive in our Lady by repeatedly highlighting her power, her faithfulness and her mercy, because these are the qualities that together offer an answer to the great need of woman's nature. Our sermons on Mary always highlight her power, her love, her kindness and her faithfulness. We must only do this more consciously than before, and incorporate again and again {248} the current feelings of our listeners in such a way that Mary is seen as the Mother of the people, not just as the Mother who gives bread. The picture of the Mother of the people has to shine out before our people ever more radiantly, ever more clearly.

Here you can repeat what I have already said: How do we most quickly arrive at bonding with Mary? By feeling helpless. At such moments I am sure we will instinctively apprehend what great task God has given our Lady. God embodies power and kindness. Yet we

may not overlook that the great law is: God works through secondary causes; he has led down a rope, (we have to tie ourselves to it), and then he draws us up with the rope to himself. He has let down such a rope of his power and kindness in the Blessed Mother. Now if I connect my need to be childlike and safe with the Mother of God, I know that according to the law of organic bonding I am bonded with God himself; and according to the law of organic development, the Blessed Mother wants to draw me up with her own rope into the bosom of the Triune God. I consider this point so important that I repeat it time and again. Don't simply want to be spiritual in a one-sided way! Not merely because then we won't touch our people, but also because we then violate God's laws and nature.

Present-day Catholics as a whole experience tremendous helplessness. That is why our people react so instinctively and move closer to Mary. All that was believed buried has again suddenly come to life. So the times are favourable. We have to understand the signs of our times. Hence my advice: Do not allow yourselves to be deceived by new efforts! If you have {249} started to form a broadly based Marian Movement, continue to build it up. You will then have answered woman's receptivity for values - her drive to be safe and to give herself.

Woman's drive to be independent

Secondly, woman's drive to be independent and autonomous. In order to know the direction that will accord with this desire, I must emphasise such elements. Girls today, in an era characterised by confusion about the sexes, are struggling to acquire a certain, original independence. A new branch has to grow out of the old trunk. In normal circumstances we find this struggle in the transition period between thirteen and twenty, but today it is to be found everywhere.

Now let me ask you: Where can a girl find a clear answer to this desire? You will say: Our Lord is the great ideal not just for man, but also for woman. From a psychological point of view, however, I have to say: The original quality woman has to deduce from the image of our Lord can be found in part exclusively and plastically in our Lady. So, if I as a woman or girl have to deduce my nature from our Lord,

I could well deceive myself. However, our Lady is the embodiment of our Lord's image. We have not been trained in such a way that we can deduce everything correctly. The feminine features in our Lord's image are for woman, the manly features for man. Yet God wants a Church for the people; in order to free me from this work, he has placed Mary before me as a being who illustrates the feminine features of our Lord's image in a classic and original way. Think of the organism. It is as though rays go out from our Lord and are caught up by our Lady. {250} If I then catch them, I do so not in a mechanistic fashion, but organically.

We would have to insert a long chapter on this subject to show, repeat and illustrate how the Mother of God embodies the ideal of woman in a classic and pure way. I have to place before our women and girls the picture of the Mother of God as a true woman. And if they do not achieve this independence, I have to show that one has first to be independent, then one can be complemented (by the other sex). If I take the opposite course and first look for complementarity, I remain a jumble of identities. So today girls need to see their ideal depicted with absolute clarity in Mary.

For those of you who take this as a starting point for reflection, let me add another point. What are girls striving for? I could apply a lot of this also to young men and adult men. Obviously for an ideal. What qualities must this ideal have if it is to be absolutely honest? Such an ideal must be tried and tested, it must be outstanding and plastic (concrete).

It must be *tried and tested*. Think about all the things we have enthused over in our lives! The heavens of our lives have contained all sorts of things. However, it didn't take long for us to realise: That isn't an ideal, it is an idol. Distance lends enchantment to the view. However, when we are together, we notice: it isn't true, the ideal has disappeared. The Church knows that people follow the downward pull of the earth even when striving for ideals, so she never canonises anyone until they are in eternity. Now when we look at our Lady and ask ourselves: Will she also disappoint us? We know {251} that she has proved her worth. There is no woman in history who has been quite as despised and honoured as the blessed among women. She

stands before us as the Queen of the suffering, the militant and the triumphant Church. There is no other merely human being who has had such an influence on others as she has had. Those words have literally come true: "From this day onward all generations will call you blessed" (Lk 1,48). You will see this more clearly when your ideal is shown in more practical terms.

Secondly, the ideal has to be *outstanding*, it has to be uplifting. We take this for granted. Actually, we have to ask ourselves: Isn't it too high? Does it have a psychologically sound attraction? Although she is the Immaculate Conception, is the Mother of God really and truly an ideal for the present-day world, for our girls today?

Let me give you three answers. Firstly, I ask: When your passions have broken loose, when you are restless, where do you look for protection? What calms you down? Do you go to people with similar problems? No! So, just because the Mother of God is so completely untouched, since she so classically and purely embodies the original ideal of woman, we flee to her in times of battle and need in order to find a point of calm.

Many, however, think they cannot do anything with Mary as an ideal. Such an ideal is not made for people of flesh and blood, Mary didn't have to struggle as we do. In reply the second answer: Our Lady also had to struggle, although in another way, of course. We can distinguish between a struggle with our passions and a struggle to allow our selfish selves to be drawn up into God. Our Lady didn't have to battle against {252} negative passions, because she knew no inordinate inclinations. It is not a good sign when we only mention this battle against our sinful passions. From this you can see how unclear our ideal of holiness is. What is more important is to allow our nature to be drawn up into God.

We don't just have passions, we are also selfish. The will wants to oppose God. Look at it from this point of view. Did our Lady have to work in this regard? How hard she had to work to ensure that her self-love was increasingly drawn up into God! Look at her under the cross - that was a battle! Can't we feel what a battle it is to submit to God so completely, to overcome our passions, to restore the harmony between soul and body? And what about the harmony between myself and

God? I have to think, for example, how hard it was for the Blessed Mother to believe. Did she have difficulties and battles in order to do what faith required of her? If only we had been in her situation! A tiny baby, and that should be God? She had the Child always before her, and he should one day rule the whole world! Think about it and you will see that our Lady is our ideal when we have to battle, but in a different way to the one we imagine. The more intellectual and spiritual among us could be more sensitive to this form of battle in the Mother of God.

The third answer. Alright, even if you don't have to compete with our Lady's battles in detail, it remains true that I have to respond as the Mother of God did to the inspirations of grace. This is the way we {253} must interpret every biography of the saints. Don't copy them, but say: I must also accept God's will as they did! So the picture of the Blessed Mother towers above us, but it is not out of reach. Think of how Mary could suffer. Or do you think that the spiritual suffering of the Mother of Sorrows didn't cost her any struggles?

Finally, the ideal is also *plastic and practical (concrete)*, it reaches into our practical, everyday lives. You know the various forms a woman's life can take: virginal or marital. She was married and was united to her husband in a deep and warm community of life, love and protection, but also in a fervent community of suffering. She is also the ideal for the working woman. It was her task to follow our Lord from afar, to serve him selflessly and to give her all for him. There we have the second drive in Mary, our ideal: original independence.

Woman's drive to spiritualise

The third drive in woman is to spiritualise on a higher plane. That is the most beautiful quality God has placed into woman's nature - this tendency to spiritualise. It could well be that most of us see our Lady's Immaculate Conception as her most beautiful and radiant quality. Immaculateness touches the feminine sensuality of a true woman's soul. Here you have a woman who was spiritualised through and through. Yet this does not prevent us from seeing this spiritualised woman as the ideal for a true Mother.

If you have understood the few thoughts I have briefly sketched for you, you will have a guide for how to pass on these great Marian truths in pedagogical and psychological practice. It is not an ideal we have to make girls {254} consciously aware of: You are endowed with the ability to accept these values! That is something just for us educators. The better we understand how to allow our girls to develop unconsciously, the better it will be for them. If we lead them to reflect on these truths, it is only because there is such confusion in this regard. The ideal in education is the formation of the irrational; what is reflected upon is only a concession to a time of crisis. Let us remember this, so that we can learn how to overcome the confusion of the sexes. It is quite another matter when I have to educate educators. They must have the right grasp of what has to be done. But if I am educating a child, everything must be as unreflected as possible! I have to put it in such a way that it functions inwardly.

I have deliberately not discussed the need for complementarity in relation to the psychology of women and girls, and I would not make girls aware of it. However, is the need for complementation in girls answered and satisfied by Mary? Yes, because the Mother of God, as the ideal of all virtues, embraces everything a girl longs for as complementation. It is true that from a purely psychological point of view, a girl will long for complementation in our Lord. Please don't think in sexual terms in this regard. We should see these things as pure as they really are. What we are dealing with is a complementation of nature, not sexual complementation. It is natural that a girl prefers to be with our Lord. But in its organic context, our childlike self-giving to the Mother of God leads us to our Lord.

Man's specific receptivity for values - need for complementation

What is the direction of the young man's receptivity for values? Firstly, in the direction of a need to be complemented. This element appears more strongly in men. Man as such has by nature a need to be complemented, which is answered very specially by the Blessed Mother. {255} Also in this regard I must ask you not to make young men aware of these things. In whatever I have done, I have never counted on these things, I have as far as possible kept them out of the

discussion. So don't show the Mother of God as the Spouse of man! If a man is quite simply bonded to the Blessed Mother, the natural complementation follows, because God created the two sexes to complement each other. When I am dealing with men, I have to know about their need for complementation, and I must describe our Lady in such a way that the other does not become aware of it. As far as possible, exclude everything connected with sexuality!

Man's drive to develop

Secondly, there is a strong natural need in man to unfold, to be active. He has a drive to show strength, to be great, free, joyful. Those who work in the pastorate for men have to let these things re-echo in their sermons. They need to show how Mary gives an answer to their drive for spiritualised strength. The same applies to their drive to be great, to be usefully great. Our Lady embodies true greatness: she has her drives under foot, she submits to God, she acts with great strength, everything in her is spiritualised. Our young men also want Mary as their ideal. It is said that in order to make it easier for Catholic men to find access to the new religion¹, we have to build in a picture of Mary. What could that be? Let us hold onto **our** picture of Mary! It answers all our needs.

Man's need for security

Devotion to Mary answers man's need to be a child, to be secure. It is here that we discover the masters of education. And we who work in the {256} pastorate for men have to strike this note. We have to make men aware of their spiritual helplessness - and it is easy to do so, because life today makes things so difficult for them. They need to become aware of their helplessness and then we have to paint a picture of the Mother of God in all her power, kindness and faithfulness. You will then see how childlike love germinates even in men.

You can look at these things whichever way you like - Mary is an outstanding means to bring about a profound movement of faith in the

Catholic Church - not just for children, or for the average member, but also for our women and men.

The direction and force of grace

The final law is: The direction in which grace works is determined by our perspective of interests, and its force is determined by the unique position of the Blessed Mother in God's plan of salvation. Please apply this law for yourselves. If I love our Lady, I will be given the grace I need for my personal needs. If I give myself to our Lady and feel a longing for purity, I will receive grace in this direction. And with what force? In keeping with our receptivity through the power and kindness of our Mother. I have to connect the two.

Now we know in detail in how far the Mother of God helps us to overcome the crisis of the sexes. This afternoon I want to show you in how far she saves us from the bolshevistic crisis.

¹ What is meant is the movement in the German Church to revive the faith.

Twelfth Conference

*Mary overcomes the bolshevistic crisis*¹

{257} This morning we showed the ways in which the Mother of God can be and become the one who redeems us from the crisis of the sexes today. What remains for us to do is to show how she saves us from the bolshevistic crisis.

For the sake of the symmetry, let me give you the answer in the same way as I formulated it this morning. As you know, bolshevism includes depriving people of God and the divine, it de-humanises and de-personalises them. Please weigh up these terms in relation to what I depicted sketchily when I described the bolshevistic crisis. The human soul, the human personality, should be deprived of its roots, it should be torn apart. How can the Blessed Mother save us from this crisis? Once again, in two ways: she illustrates what it means to be genuinely human, and she forms and moulds what is genuinely human in us.

Mary illustrates what is genuinely human

Let us go into greater detail on the first point and allow ourselves to be led to Mary as our visual aid. Let me repeat the elements that are part of the bolshevistic person and bolshevistic tendency: People are deprived of God and de-humanised.

Those of us who are allowed to be leaders, and who must therefore penetrate to ultimate related truths, have to lay bare the inner connection between being deprived of God and being de-humanised. The two are connected inwardly as cause and effect. Being deprived of God leads to being de-humanised, conversely, being drawn up into

¹ By bolshevism Fr Kentenich meant all mass movements, or movements aimed at mobilising the masses. At the time he was speaking he used it as another word for the Nazi ideology, but he never meant it to be understood in an exclusive sense. He saw, rather, that people today are easily influenced and captured by a crowd mentality, and can be swayed to do things they would not normally do - the 'mass person.' In Schoenstatt his aim was the 'new person' in a 'new community' as opposed to the 'crowd' or 'masses.'

God leads to becoming {258} fully human¹. Here again you find the great law directing all our courses at present: the organic, harmonious connection of nature and grace.

The inner connection between the divine, between grace and genuine humanity, has been formulated in a variety of ways in the course of the centuries. I want to offer you one or the other formulation. Of course, the best thing would be for you to study the whole organism, the organic connection between nature and grace. Listen to the well-know formulation: Grace does not want to destroy nature, it elevates nature above itself and perfects it morally². There you have clearly expressed what we want to grasp and discover today: Nature is nowhere so safe in its tendency towards true universality and all its other endeavours as under the sceptre of grace. Hettinger once wrote the following: Humanity without divinity becomes bestiality³. That is so very true. If human beings do not hold onto God and the divine, if they are not grasped and penetrated by the divine, if human beings do not become supernatural, they become bestial. If we see the connected realities in context, we distance ourselves from our times, we see the essentials and let inessentials rush past us.

{259} Or let us use more popular expressions: Grace is the essential element of nature, that is to say, if we take the bird out of the air, the fish out of its element, water, what do we do? We kill them. If you take nature-bound human beings out of their element, what happens? They must become deeply and seriously ill, not just as individuals, but also human society as such. This helps us to understand other expressions better. For example, in the fifth volume of his apologetics

¹ German: *Vergöttlichung und Vermenschlichung*, literally, divinisation and humanization, namely: man will achieve the divine life and become more like God, and become more completely human.

² The Scholastic axiom: *Gratia non destruit, sed elevat et perficit naturam*, grace does not destroy nature, but elevates and perfects it.

³ Franz Hettinger (1819-1890), Catholic theologian at Würzburg University. In his "Apology of Christianity", vol 1, he wrote: "Therefore every war of man against God necessarily becomes war against his own nature." And: "Religion alone educates man to show true and genuine humanity" (translation MC).

for Christianity, Weiss¹ based his argument on the following premise: First a human being, then a Christian, then a full human being. That is to say, if I am striving to attain the ideal of being genuinely human, I will not achieve it without grace. I cannot strive without the help of grace. There is no genuinely human being unless they are Christian. Or, seen from another angle and formulated in strictly scientific terms: Grace is the *forma substantialis*, the entelechy of nature, to an outstanding degree. Those are the first truths.

So let us remember, the inner connection between the human and the divine in mankind is that of cause and effect. Hence, if the divine is removed from the human, if the divine - and that in the sense of revelation, the supernatural divine - is removed from the human being and from human society, we prepare the ground for extreme bestiality.

{260} That is the connection: the bolshevistic person is composed of de-divinisation and de-humanisation. You could use other expressions for de-humanisation, for example, the de-personalisation of the human person. But this de-humanisation and de-personalisation show in a de-spiritualisation, an uprooting and degradation of the whole person. There, once again, you see the modern, sickly person and humankind.

In order to carry out my task to show you how the Blessed Mother illustrates what is genuine in human nature, I want to show you the positive and negative image in juxtaposition.

The whole of life is deprived of the divine

Let us look at the first image. To start with we are concerned with the attempt to deprive the present-day individual person and human society of God and the divine. How does it show? You will probably agree with me when I say that it shows in two ways.

¹ Albert Maria Weiss (1844-1925), member of the Dominican Order, Catholic theologian, Professor of social ethics, ascetics and apologetics, collaborator in the 2nd edition of the *Freiburger Kirchenlexikon*. Strongly conservative. Main work: *Apologie des Christentums*, 5 volumes (1878/89). The fifth chapter is entitled: The Philosophy of Perfection (based on Der große Herder, 1955).

First of all, life as a whole is not concentrated on God, not even in principle any more. In practice we would have to speak about this lack of concentration on God throughout history. However, the difference between today and the past is that today people no longer want it in principle. God is often argued away, at any rate the God of revelation is. Please do not deceive yourselves. When we confess so openly in the face of modern trends: 'I believe in God', you should at the same time always hear: the Triune God of revelation. We have again to place ourselves in a supernatural sense into the mystery. The same applied in those instances where it was believed that there would still be faith in the existence of a personal God, even though this was a natural God, but it slowly became clear that even this natural God no longer existed. What exists? Only human beings. {261} And if God is dethroned, human beings have to create gods to adore - this is pantheism. There we have de-divinisation, the banning of God from life today.

In certain circles they talk about cosmic cold in this regard - of cosmic and anthropological cold. The cosmos, the world has grown cold, because people have argued God out of it, they have banished God from it. Anthropological cold - people as such have become cold and rigid, because no one can discover divine features in what they do. Once again I would like those who have been called by God to be leaders, to look into themselves and try to find out what it means when the world is deprived of the divine, and when a cosmic and anthropological cold and rigidity dominates. The human personality has then lost its core, human society has lost its centre.

Please think about this sometime: If human society can no longer see itself as an image of God, as a trace of God, as the likeness, as a child of God, as a member of Christ, where should it ultimately be rooted? Can you feel that the world has to become absolutely unbalanced? How should those words spoken in Paradise become a reality: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it' (Gen 1,28)? You shall have dominion over it. However, once mankind had freed itself from the divine, it became the slave of the lower order. This is the normal order: People should be bonded to the divine, then

they can have dominion over nature. There you see the deliberate removal of the divine from public and private life.

*Mary, the contrast*¹

{262} On the other hand we see how the Mother of God in principle enthroned God in her life. There she stands before us - God is the one great thought of her life; God is the one great love of her heart. So, in future, if we have to preach or give talks, we should show the connected realities as clearly as possible. At this point we could try to discover the Blessed Mother's original relationship to the heavenly Father, to our Lord and to the reality of her membership in Christ. This casts a new light on everything and shows us in a classic way how we may use our Lady to counterbalance the bolshevistic tendencies of our present era.

The working world is deprived of the divine

There is a second way in which life today is deprived of the divine. It means applying the whole complex to a specific manifestation. God has been torn out of the working life of people today - not just from life as such, but from the working life of the people. It is a fact that today our work is seen not just in practice, but also in theory, as a means to earn a living. However, this is not the deepest meaning of work. The deepest meaning of our work is sharing in God's creative and self-giving activity. Through our work, as a result of and by means of our work, God wants to be creatively active, he wants to give of himself. There you have the metaphysics of work. If I could again see this as primary, it would be easy to enjoy my work again; what is secondary would again more easily be seen as such. Our work would inspire us and enable us to find the necessary means to live.

Please try to follow this up and discover how {263} what we formerly called Workaday Sanctity² is a core question for present-day

¹ German: *Mariens Gebenbild*.

² In August 1932 Fr Kantenich conducted a retreat course on "Priestly Workaday Sanctity". In 1937 M.A. Nailis published a revised version of this course under the title *Werktagsheiligkeit* (Workaday Sanctity). The second section deals

asceticism. Our ordinary working day must again be sanctified. God must again find a place in our workaday world. 'Jerusalem, arise, shine; for your light has come' (Is 60,1). We want to receive and welcome the light, divine light, into our everyday lives, so that from this divine, everyday life we can see, form and mould our everyday lives once again in a new way.

Mary, the contrast

Look at the life of our Lady and see how she exemplifies the ideal of simple, workaday sanctity. The common denominator is being satisfied with what one has. We can trace everything we see in her life to this one point. She was satisfied with the economic and material means at her disposal; and there is hardly anyone who has such an ability to use them correctly as she had. Think of how she could have helped the poor! But no! She was satisfied with what she had, because God was behind everything. She was satisfied with her home. Of course, we can understand that since she was so completely at home with God, it must humanly speaking have been her dearest wish to live in Jerusalem. But that was not God's will; and so she was satisfied with the way she lived. We can be sure that in spirit she was at home in Jerusalem, but humanly and physically she had to be rooted somewhere far from Jerusalem. She was satisfied with her working conditions, her normal work. She was satisfied also with regard to feeling emotional warmth. She had to be satisfied with regard to what the ascetical books call consolation. She spent three days looking for our Lord.

{264} Look at this: To see God in everything! God explains all the difficulties of my working life. It should again share in God's creative and self-giving activity. This is where you will have to hook in when you talk about the fact that life today has been deprived of its soul. There you have the removal of the divine from life today, and its contrast.

with our bonding to work. An incomplete translation has been duplicated under the title *Everyday Sanctity*.

De-humanisation

This is the deepest root for the de-humanisation of people today. Here, too, we see the reality and its contrast.

Deprived of a soul

Dehumanisation shows, first of all, as a tremendous loss of soul. When people can no longer be truly human, they become soulless. When a culture no longer forms people who are truly human, it becomes soulless. And this lack of a soul in our culture today, and in people today, shows in mechanism and rationalism.

Mechanism: All over the world people today are regarded, as in the Russian model, as replaceable parts of a machine. What are we dealing with? With people being deprived of their soul, with the mechanisation of people. As you know, when part of a machine has worn out, a new part has to be fetched and the old one is thrown onto the scrap heap. It is replaced by the new part. Soullessness as part of de-personalisation and de-humanisation.

Rationalism: On other occasions we have mentioned what is important today: a one-sided and exaggerated emphasis on reason. People have no time for emotional values. There you have the terrible tragedy: The more you hand yourself over to intellectualism, the more you are enslaved to the sub-human.

Mary, the contrast

{265} Do you want to see the contrast, the Mother of God? Was she mechanised in her life? Was she just a number, or was she a real woman, a personality, with a unique duty and a task in life? I have to see her as a marked individual with a marked and unique task in life as the contrast and counterbalance to the mechanisation of modern life.

And finally: If you want to see the Blessed Mother in contrast to the rationalisation of life today, you know that she embodied to an unique degree what we praise as true, emotional values. You can see this in the Magnificat, you can reflect on the thoughts presented today from another point of view. See how she behaves as a true virgin, as girl and mother. This will provide you with something that will counterbalance the rationalism and mechanisation of life today.

The de-humanisation and de-personalisation we have described could continue for a long time. However, I believe that because such tremendous faults have been committed against the metaphysical structure of nature, an epoch will come in the foreseeable future in which people will strive more strongly to restore the soul to life, they will cry out for the soul. This will probably happen first in Russia. The Russian people are by nature endowed with such deep emotions that they cannot cope with this rationalisation and mechanisation. Even if the present situation goes on for a time, we could be approaching an epoch in which family life, community life, will triumph in an unexampled way.

Uprooting

{266} De-humanisation and de-personalisation also show in the uprootedness of modern life, in the homelessness of modern people. There are three types of uprootedness and homelessness - a local, a national and a personal. The cultural philosopher and more profoundly reflecting educator could immerse themselves with great joy in these connected realities. *Deus operatur per causas secundas*¹. God wants to draw people to himself through human bonds, he has led down a rope so that people can attach themselves to him. This rope is places, people and our home.

You would be well advised to try to discover the vast context of these truths. Bonding to a nation, a person, to places. All that we have said about the laws governing personal bonding have to be applied to

¹ God works through secondary causes. "God operates through secondary causes, but beyond a shadow of doubt is quite capable to manage without them ..." (VI *de Potentia*, 1,p.102). "Divine Providence manages all things according to their proper mode of their functioning. Where human beings are concerned, their freedom and responsibility must be safeguarded, and therefore the employment of force is out of the question. Notice that divine help is the influence of the first cause on secondary causes, and of a principal cause on instrumental causes; in both cases the nature of the subordinate cause is respected. God does not destroy our acts of will, indeed he causes them, neither offering violence nor coercing unwilling activity" (III *Contra Gentes*, 149, p.158). *St. Thomas Aquinas - Theological Texts*, selected and translated by T. Gilby, OUP 1955.

bonding to a nation and place. This is organic bonding, and it functions according to the laws of transference and transmission¹.

I can be attached to a place heart and soul. Every attachment to an idea that is related to the divine, will lead us into the heart of the Triune God. Think of your favourite place or person, to whom you have given yourself fully. This is organic transference and transmission. I may take everything with me into the heart of the Triune God, including my home country. We should try not to hurt any sound, human instinct; and yet we try to be in God. It can well happen that I love a place passionately even though I am in Africa or America. I love the place, but I grow into the heart of the Triune God. Today we see so much uprootedness; if we do not allow {267} people today to send down their roots, we will experience very hard times ahead. That is the normal way: to root people here on earth in order to attach them to God. You could follow up the negative ways leading to illness, all the more so if you have associations resulting from personal experiences.

Mary, the contrast

¹ *Übertragung*: transfer of rights, delegation of powers.

Weiterleitung: passing something on, forwarding something

Fr Kentenich uses the word "Übertragung" in various ways: As a statement about God: God transfers some of his qualities to his creatures; to describe a psychological process, but against a theological background: Human beings transfer their love, which has God as its goal, first of all to God's creatures. In this way genuine and positive human relationships are set up. Thirdly, people transfer or project their (often insufficient) feelings and ideas onto other people or onto God; finally, when speaking about the "transfer of life", Fr Kentenich was referring to successful, normal, pedagogical or therapeutic relationships in which values, abilities and insights, etc. are passed on to others.

The concept "Weiterleitung" describes the genesis of a new relationship, or its intensification, as a result of a primary relationship. It emphasises that the first relationship continues to exist. It is not relinquished, even if it recedes into the background. In practice this means that we learn to love in relation to other people, to places and ideas. We are led to our Lady, our Lord ..., but this does not mean that the original relationship has to be relinquished (See: *Schoenstatt Lexikon*, Patris Verlag 1996).

In contrast - the Mother of God is a living protest against this threefold detachment. We see in her the force of bonding to a place, to persons and to her nation. Look at how she was attached to her home clan and her homeland! Look into the Magnificat, it is clearly expressed there. How she loved her home Nazareth, St Joseph and our Lord! Yet in her life we find a temporary uprooting. She was without work and a home, she had to flee. But on the whole her life was really normal. Our Lord and St Joseph were with her. Yet she used everything to give her a home in the Triune God. In this regard, too, you will find a single tendency in the life of the Blessed Mother. Here you can find what you must do in principle in order to overcome the bolshevistic person more and more.

Please do not just listen to these thoughts - examine them. How can we create a noble, Catholic state and such a family in the background? Each of us must do it in our circumstances - if I have to direct a boarding school, or lead a parish, etc. Thinking alone won't achieve much, we have to work with these thoughts. I have to create the ideal state, the big family, and as far as possible struggle to overcome every form of uprootedness. If nothing else is possible, I have to reckon with it that as the leader of a parish I will be the person in whom my parish sinks its roots. { 268 } I may be the person to whom people will bond themselves, and this will happen all the more, the more the one or the other form of bonding becomes impossible. Then the other bonds will increasingly retreat into the background. If it is not possible to become attached to a place, the leader comes more into the foreground and people attach themselves to him or her, not just in word, but also with their whole being!

Devaluation

And in conclusion a final effect of de-humanisation: devaluation. I wonder if you can follow me? That is the crisis of the sexes today. If people experience that they are without value, they do not value themselves and so do not value God. It is then possible to do what one likes with such people. They allow themselves to be treated like a match on the wayside which everyone can trample on or play with. This is important for those of us who have to educate people to be

humble. We may not equate it with being without value. What is my value to the world, of what value am I to the economy - or to put it in current terms - to the state? I disappear! Take the people at work, they are mere numbers, they are made use of. Who is conscious that they can do something? People with average abilities cannot bear this: I can't mean something to someone else. What must we do? There you have the devaluation of people today.

Mary, the contrast

The contrast in the Mother of God. What was her value? A supernatural one. We, too, must do this: the more we feel that what is natural is devalued, the more we have to be at home in the supernatural world. Our catechetical instruction, our sermons and talks, must take this into account. We must pass on the reality of our supernatural value with great joy {269} and fervour to the ordinary people and the intellectuals, because purely natural values and evaluation are increasingly held in disdain. It is of the utmost importance that the world of supernatural values should again come to the forefront of attention. Of course, we must first have applied it to ourselves. Hence our battle against a one-sided moralism and ethical approach. We won't grasp it with a Catholic ethics alone. Do you really believe that the specifically Catholic approach is a carefully thought out moral system? We won't have any influence that way. The first thing is the objective supernatural reality, a Catholic and supernatural life, supernatural values - we will touch people that way. This applies to the solution of all questions: problems of sexuality, marriage, state education, etc.

We will never be free of the present-day inferiority complexes unless we find a home in the reality of supernatural values. Then my life gains a meaning, even if I am not really able to carry out a task in the world that really satisfies my needs. I then know: Giving up satisfying work is a really great value. I can mean something to the whole of humankind, I can live a Christian life with and in Christ and help to redeem the world.

You will realise, of course, that such a re-valuation of values presupposes radical striving for holiness. Unless we can lead those

entrusted to our care to strive for holiness, it will not be possible to overcome the current crisis of our culture. Yet we can at least understand - we must be able to understand - how to give advice to people today from this point of view. If, in addition, the possibility offers itself, we must {270} do all in our power to value and appreciate people today, also outwardly - not treating them like numbers. We must also value them when their work is not particularly valued, because they are unable or not allowed to do more. Do you notice how valuable our Lady's life was? It was valuable in God, but also because she was allowed to do woman's work. Her life is at least a constant protest against life today, against the devaluation of life today. Now I have said enough to show you how true it is when we say that the Mother of God exemplifies all that is genuine in human nature.

Mary forms and moulds genuine humanness

I should also prove that she forms and moulds what she exemplifies. I don't want to say anything else than what I have already said: on a purely philosophical level this is justified by our attachment to her. I then become like her in thinking, feeling and supernatural life. She is the great Mediatrix of Grace who does not give up until she has overcome my limitations through the power of grace and formed me according to her image and God's will, so that I can be an apparition of her purity today.

Concluding thoughts

We now want to come to a conclusion. Let us look back on what we have discussed. It isn't much, and yet it is a great deal. It is a whole world. We have taken a very profound stand to the questions of our present-day culture. We have built the Marian element into our present-day Catholic culture as a whole, but also into the non-Catholic culture. You will admit with me that when we look at the Marian element in this way, it is a tried and tested means to create a profound, all-comprising and apposite movement of Catholic faith.

{271} Wasn't the Marian element similarly effective already in the Middle Ages? Wasn't it mainly due to the Marian Sodality of that time that Germany remained true to Christianity? Are we not ready,

must we not pull ourselves together and become supporters, pioneers of a profoundly enlightened Marian movement? Should we not at the end of our Congress promise each other and the Triune God that we want to make use of the means of Marian devotion to help ourselves and the present-day world to survive the serious and terrible upheavals and crises we are facing?

There we see the Mother of God, and above her the Triune God, the great educator in trust. He has placed the destiny of the world in her reliable hands, and I see myself as the centre, the leader, the father of my parish, as the mother of my little family. These are my school children, my parishioners, my parish children. At the close of the Congress I, too, want to place my destiny and that of my parish and country as a whole with great trust in her reliable hands. Will we be disappointed? The history of the Catholic Church in Germany, indeed the history of the Catholic Church as such, proves powerfully that “never was it known, that anyone who called upon your protection was left unaided”¹. We trust in the words: “Mother takes care”². “A servant of Mary will never perish”³. I place my {272} destiny in her hands, along with the destiny of my parish family and my parish. We unite ourselves with you, Jesus, and with your and our Mother. If we unite ourselves, and together with ourselves all who are entrusted to our care, with your and our Mother, you will have had mercy on us.

May God bless these few days we have spent in serious work and quiet prayer, so that a strong river of grace, a profound and powerful earthquake of grace may proceed from what we have been discussing, from our meeting and our prayer. May we personally be borne by this earthquake of grace; and like this force of nature may it spread further and further afield until as many people as possible are drawn into the trend of this modern Marian movement and so glorify the Triune God

and the mother of God, so that the Triune God can show that the Mother of God is really and truly “Thrice Admirable”:

admirable in her power,
admirable in her kindness,
admirable in her faithfulness.

¹ The *Memorare*, attributed to St. Bernard.

² *Mater habebit curam*, a favorite saying of St. Vincent Pallotti that also became a favorite saying in Schoenstatt starting in the founding generation.

³ *Servus Mariae nunquam peribit*, saying that can be traced to St. Anselm of Canturbury, for instance in *Orat. 51*. It came into usage in Schoenstatt through St. Alphonsus Ligouri.