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Mary as Mother of God: its Implication for the Tradition of the Sisters of our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia

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Abstract:

This article explores the dogma of Mary as Mother of God and its implications in the tradition of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort (SOLA) in Indonesia. In their traditional prayers to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the SOLA in Indonesia invoke Mary with the title, "Mother of God". This exploration includes the significance of dogmatic perspective on Mary. What are the implications of the dogma of Mary as Mother of God for the tradition of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia? Literature study is used as a method in this research. The dogma as Mother of God is reflected in their traditions such as: liturgy, devotion, the motto Tota Christi per Mariam and the formula of their religious vows. Three recommendations are offered: (1) having a uniform structural image of Mary as Mother of God in the Congregations of SOLA; (2) creation of a Marian formation program for all formators of the SOLA and the SOLA in Indonesia, and (3) designing a Marian Formation Program for Junior Sisters, Novices and Postulants, especially the dogma Mary as Mother of God and its implications in the tradition of the Sisters suited to the particular stage of formation.

Keywords:

Implication, Mary as Mother of God, tradition, the dogma of Mary

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Introduction

The doctrine that Mary truly became the Mother of God was proclaimed by the Council of Ephesus in 431.[1] This doctrine is the central belief concerning Mary, therefore, all other Mariological truths flow from it.[2] It is the greatest of all of Mary's privileges.[3] In the hierarchy of Mariological truths, Mary's being the Mother of God is the pivotal basis for her role in the economy of salvation.[4]

Mary, Mother of God is rightly honored by a special cult in the Church. even from the earliest times, the Blessed Virgin has been honored with the title Mother of God, under whose protection the faithful take refuge together in prayer in all their perils and need.[5] The researcher is convinced that "The foundation for fruitful devotion to the Mother of God starts from sound doctrine based on Scripture and Tradition, and is nurtured by good theology."[6] Marian dogma is liturgically celebrated. In Liturgy, the mystery that is believed in is given a "doxological meaning of the faith." The Church prays as it believes. Its belief is manifested and actualized in Liturgy.[7]

Mary, likewise, is honored in a special manner by the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia (SOLAI). In their traditional prayers to Blessed Virgin Mary, the SOLAI invoke Mary with the special title, Mother of God. before traveling, they start with "We put ourselves under your protection O Mary, Mother of God."[8] While in their prayer to Our Lady for the Congregation, they greet Mary "Holy Virgin and Mother of God, Mary."[9] In the last sentence of their vow formulation, they say "May, Mary Mother of God help me to keep it." In their missionary activity, Mater Dei (Mother of God) becomes the

1 *CCC*, no.466.

2 Paul Haffner, *The Mystery of Mary* (USA and Canada: Hillenbrand Books, 2004), 107.

3 Bernard le Frois, *Mary Today* (Manila: Divine Word Publication), 31.

4 Haffner, *The Mystery of Mary*, 107.

5 *LG*, no. 66; *AAS*, no. 57.

6 Haffner, *The Mystery of Mary*, ix.

7 Roland D, Mactal, *Hand out of the Basic Marian Dogmas Prior to Vatican II*, 2013.

8 --, *Buku Doa Intern Kongregasi SPM Amersfoort Provinsi Indonesia 2010*. (Intern Prayers Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort Inc. Baras Community, 2014),21.

9 --, *Buku Doa Intern Kongregasi SPM Amersfoort Provinsi Indonesia 2010*, 76.

name and patron of the first school in Probolinggo that was established by the pioneers of the SOLAI. Now Mater Dei is the name and patron of the Sisters' School from pre-school until Senior High School both in Probolinggo and Tangerang. All these show that Mary as Mother of God has an important role for the SOLAI. The significance of Mary as Mother of God to the tradition of the SOLAI interested the researcher to explore this topic.

The Blessed Virgin Mary plays an important role in their religious life. First of all, the Blessed Virgin Mary becomes the identity of every Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia.[10] Second, the Blessed Virgin Mary has come to be the model of their religious life through their motto: *Tota Christi per Mariam*. Third, the Blessed Virgin Mary is their patroness. Because of the significance of the Blessed Virgin Mary to the congregation, the researcher will attempt to answer this main problem: What are the implications of the dogma of Mary as Mother of God for the tradition of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia? The study will equip the Sisters who belong to the local Church to do better in their Marian tradition in a pluralistic society in which they live and work. The objective of the study is to present the dogma of Mary as Mother of God and to show the implication of the dogma Mary as Mother of God in the tradition of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia. Literature study is used as a method in this research.

Dogma of Mary as Mother of God

The title Mary as Mother of God derives from the title Mary as *Theotokos*, in Greek "God-bearer", which has given to Mary at the Council of Ephesus (431). The word *Theotokos* consists of two elements: *Theos* (God) and *tokos* (a creature who gives birth).[11] "The word *Theotokos*, Mary as Mother of god, was used for the first time by Alexander of Alexandria (d. 328) in his writing against Arius in 325. He describes Jesus, as "having taken in truth and not in appearance a body from the *Theotokos*, Mary."[12] He does not offer any explanation for his use of the

[10] *Constitution of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort 1988*, 15.

[11] Kathleen Coyle, *Mary in the Christian Tradition from a Contemporary Perspective* (Philippines: Claretian Publications, 2006), 22.

[12] Aleander of Alexandria, "Letter to Alexandria of Thesalonica", Retrieved September 12, 2018 from http://wwww.fourthcentury.com/urkunde-14/

term *Theotokos*, which suggests that his readers were familiar with the name, possibly in the liturgy and in popular devotion."[13] In the West, St. Ambrose first used the title Mater Dei (Mother of God).[14]

Biblical Bases of Mary as Mother of God

Although in the New Testament Mary is referred to as mother no less than twenty-five times[15], the title Mary as Mother of God (*Theotokos*) is not explicitly found in the Scriptures.[16] Nevertheless, it is implicit in three verses which can become the biblical basis of Mary as Mother of God (*Theotokos*). These verses are Gal 4:4, Luke 1:35, and Luke 1:45.[17]

> **Gal 4:4** *"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law."*[18]

This passage speaks of the Divine origin of Jesus from the Father and the fact that He was born of a woman shows Jesus' unity with humanity. This text also has interesting Marian implication. The phrase "born of a woman" is a frequently- used Jewish expression to indicate a person's human condition.[19] Nevertheless, from it can be deduced the interpretation Mother of Son (God). the word 'born' shows that giving birth is a characteristic of motherhood. The word 'woman' points to the Blessed Virgin Mary because the woman who gave birth to the Son was Mary. So Mary gave birth to the Son of the Father. Mary's giving birth is a characteristic of motherhood. Therefore, Mary is the Mother of God because she gave birth to His Son, who is also God, the second person in

[13] Roland D, Mactal, *Hand out of the Basic Marian Dogmas Prior to Vatican II*, 2013.

[14] Michael O'Carrol, *Theotokos* (Philippines: Claretian Publications, 1985), 258.

[15] Coyle, *Mary in the Christian Tradition from a Contemporary Perspective*, 24.

[16] Haffner, *The Mystery of Mary*, 106; Gerald van Ackeren, S.J., *Mary's Divine Motherhood* (USA: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1957), 182.

[17] Mactal, Handout of Mariology 2013.

[18] All biblical quotations are taken from *The Holy Bible New Revised Standard Revision Catholic Edition* (Philippines: St. Pauls, 2009), 1389.

[19] Raymond E. Brown cs (ed), Mary in the New Testament (Philadelphia: Fortress Press and New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 42; Coyle, *Mary in the Christian Tradition from a Contemporary Perspective*, 8.

the Blessed trinity.

Gal 4:4 also expresses a synthesis of Mary's divine motherhood because the woman who gave birth to Christ is the Mother of the pre-existing Son sent by the Father in the fullness of time.[20] The phrase "the fullness of time" (fulfillment) is linked to the plan or a promise later fulfilled, that is, in Gen 3:15 "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."[21] Mary became the fulfillment of this promise. Mary as the Mother of God did not only happen during the Annunciation but the Mother of the pre-existing Son sent by the Father in the fullness of time.[22]

> **Luke 1:35** *"The angel said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God."*

The Holy Spirit will come upon you.

This sentence is evocative of Genesis 1:2 when the Spirit of Yahweh moves over the waters to bring order and create life in the initial chaos of matter. Now, the holy Spirit comes over Mary to bring about the miracle of conceiving a child without the involvement of a man.[23]

The Power of the Most High will overshadow you.

This sentence is connected with Ps 140:8; 91:4 (with the meaning of divine protection) and Exodus 40:35 (where it uses the images of a bright cloud and the glory of God). The same presence – shekinah – of the Most High, which in the past protected the tabernacle by means of a cloud, will now cover Mary. In other words: 'God himself is going to make himself present in Mary, within Mary, in her womb. Mary will thereby be the new tabernacle of God, the new ark of the new alliance."[24]

[20] Juan Luis Bastero, *Mary, Mother of the Redeemer* (Ireland: Four Courts Press:2011), 82.

[21] *The Holy Bible New Revised Standard Revision Catholic Edition,* 3.

[22] Bastero, *Mary, Mother of the Redeemer*, 82.

[23] Bastero, *Mary, Mother of the Redeemer*, 111.

[24] Bastero, *Mary, Mother of the Redeemer*, 111

And then comes the conclusion: "…therefore the child to be born will be holy, he will be called Sob of God," Because of being overshadowed by God, the child to be born will be holy and is the Son of God. Bastero emphasizes Pozo's idea that God is really present in the womb of Mary, therefore, the child who will be born is God himself, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, the Word.[25] In other words, by the presence and the operation of the Holy Spirit in the virginal womb of Mary, the conception was not only miraculous but also divine. The child is not only exceptional but also holy and is the Son of God.[26] Therefore Mary, mother of the Son of God, was called the Mother of God.

> **Luke 1:43** *"And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?"*

The Mother of My Lord

The mother of my Lord can be interpreted as the proclamation of the divine motherhood. The word 'Lord' can refer to three meanings: master of the slave, king, and God. in Greek, the word Lord refers to *Kyrios* which in Hebrew is *Adonai* or "YHYW", applied to God. the term *Kyrios* has a truly divine sense. Mary is the mother of the Kyrios. It means that Mary is the mother of God. Here Elizabeth goes beyond biological motherhood and moves on to the theological plane of divine motherhood.[27]

Mother of God Prior to the Council of Ephesus

The maternal role of Mary has had a prominent place in tradition from early Christianity. From second century in order to assert the reality of Our Lord's human nature against the Gnostics and Docetists, the Fathers stressed the real maternity of Mary. St. Ignatius pf Antioch, St. Ireneus and Terullian are clear examples of this when they stressed that our Lord was truly begotten and that he was truly born of Mary.[28] "Mary's motherhood because the guarantee of our Lord's true humanity." The Fathers of this period emphasized Mary's true motherhood, thinking

[25] Stefano M. Manelli, *All Generation Shall Call Me Blessed* (New Bedford: Academy of the Immaculate, 2005), 191.

[26] Manelli, *All Generation Shall Call Me Blessed*, 174.

[27] Bastero, *Mary, Mother of the Redeemer*, 114.

[28] Bastero, *Mary, Mother of the Redeemer*, 157.

primarily in terms of natural, biological motherhood."[29]

Mary as Mother of God at the Council of Ephesus (431)

The Content

The council of Ephesus was convened to settle the issue between Nestorius (Patriarch of Constantinople) and Cyril (Patriarch of Alexandria). The issue at the Council of Ephesus (341) was two natures of Christ. It was convened in the ancient city of Ephesus, in Asia Minor, quite famous in Greco-Roman world. This council stated: "If anyone does not confess that Emmanuel is truly God, and therefore the Blessed Virgin Mary is truly Mother of God, *Theotokos*, for she bore according to flesh him who is Word from God. let him be anathema."[30] "This definition should be understood that the Son brought forth from the womb of Mary is truly and really God and man."[31] "The title safeguards the person of Jesus as God and accepts the mystery of incarnation."[32]

The Origin: Nestorius of Constantinople vs Cyril of Alexandria

During a liturgical celebration in the cathedral in Constantinople (the capital of the Roman Empire), a famous orator Proclus (who would be called to succeed Nestorius as patriarch), preached a homily in honor of the Blessed Virgin in which he called her *Theotokos* (Mother of God) in the presence of Nestorius, the patriarch of Constantinople.[33] Nestorius, who had been brought up in the school of Antioch emphasized the human nature of Jesus separated from divinity. "In this Christological context, Mary's relationship with her Son was that she had given birth only to the human nature of the incarnate Word. Therefore, Mary could not be called *Theotokos*. He held that Mary's proper title was *Christotokos*, Christ-bearer.[34]

[29] Bastero, *Mary, Mother of the Redeemer*, 157.

[30] DS, no. 113; Roland Dacanay Mactal, *Mary: Seat of Wisdom A Contemporary Marian Reflection* (Manila: UST Publishing House, 2001), 12.

[31] Mactal, *Mary: Seat of Wisdom A Contemporary Marian Reflection*, 12.

[32] Mactal, *Mary: Seat of Wisdom A Contemporary Marian Reflection*, 12.

[33] Mactal, *Mary: Seat of Wisdom A Contemporary Marian Reflection*, 12.

[34] Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1999), 235.

He, then, brought Anastasius (his secretary) to preach the teaching of Theodorus (Bishop of Tarsus): Mary could not be called the Mother of God because Mary was the mother of the Temple of God. people of the whole city, who had already been invoking Our Lady under title T*heotokos* for more than half a century, was angry but Nestorius supported Anastasius. Nestorius firmly rejected the term *Theotokos*, which had been used by other fathers before Proclus.[35] He gave a series of sermons in which he defended Anastasius and Dorotheus (bishop of Marcianapolis) both of whom had been preaching that Mary should not be addressed as Mother of God.

Reaction to the Nestorius' Attitude

The attitude of Nestorius awoke a protest both in his diocese and in the other parts of the Christian world as well. Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria was the foremost interpreter of these protests. Cyril wrote a letter to Nestorius regarding Marian tradition and informed the Pope in Rome about this matter. "Nestorius applealed to the Pope in Rome and to Emperor Theodosius II."[36]

In 430, Pope Celestine I convoked a Synod at Rome to investigate the matter of Nestorius. The teaching of Nestorius was condemned, and the term *Theotokos* was approved. Pope Celestine commissioned Cyril to carry out the sentence of excommunication against Nestorius, unless Nestorius recanted within ten days. Cyril sent Nestorius his famous Letter of the Anathemas. Nestorius remained obstinate in his error although the fact that the Universal Church had spoken in the expressions of Rome, Antioch and Alexandria. Finally, the emperor Theodosius II decided, together with his co-emperor Valentinian III and with the agreement of Pope Celestine I, to convene a general council to meet at Ephesus in June 431.[37]

The Council of Ephesus

The Council of Ephesus began on June 21, 431 under the presidency of Cyril of Alexandria. He presided the assembly of bishops in the cathedral of Our Lady, *Theotokos* at Ephesus without waiting for all the bishops to arrive or even for the papal legates and declared the Council

[35] Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church*, 235.

[36] Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church*, 236.

[37] Haffner, *The Mystery of Mary*, 115.

open. As a sign protest, Nestorius and his supporters withdrew from the assembly.[38] The Council Fathers received Cyril's first letter to Nestorius with approving applause. This document speaks about Mary as follows:

> The holy Fathers do not hesitate to call holy Virgin *Theotokos*, not in the sense that the divine nature of the Word took its origin from the holy Virgin, but in the sense that he took his holy body, gifted with a rational soul, from her. Yet, because the Word is hypostatically united to this body, one can say that he was truly born according to the flesh.[39]

The assembly approved Cyril's letter to Nestorius and condemned Nestorius' response. The patriarch of Constantinople was excommunicated and deposed from his see.[40]

The second letter of Cyril to Nestorius was declared to be in agreement with Nicaea, and was approved by the Council. The basis for the doctrine of the divine maternity is as follow:

> For this was not an ordinary man who was at first begotten pf the holy Virgin, and then the Word descended upon him: rather, [the Word] united flesh to himself from his mother's womb and is said to have undergone begetting in the flesh in order to take to himself flesh of his own …For this reason [the holy Fathers] have not hesitated to speak of the holy Virgin as the Mother of God, not certainly because the nature of the Word or his divinity had the origin of its being from the holy Virgin, but because from her was generated his holy body, animated by a rational soul, a body hypostatically united to the Word; and thus it is said that (the Word) was begotten according to the flesh.[41]

After the council led by Cyril was closed, several councils followed. The first one was the separate council held by John, patriarch of Antioch, a friend of Nestorius, with Bishops of Syria. In this council, Nestorius took part along with Candidinus, the imperial legate. The council excommunicated Cyril and all bishops who supported him.[42] The

[38] Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church*, 236.

[39] Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church*, 237; Cyril, Epist. 4.

[40] Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church*, 237; Cyril, Epist. 4.

[41] *DA*, 251.

[42] Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church*, 237.

second one was the second session of the council was opened by papal legate where the letter from Pope Celestine was read. They decided the excommunication of Nestorius. John of Antioch and bishops of Syria refused to taken part in the Council. They were excommunicated by the Council.[43] The last one to arrive in Ephesus was the emperor's representative. He "announced the deposition of both Nestorius and Cyril and had them arrested. The emperor did not release the Council from his authority until September, when Nestorius withdrew to a monastery and Cyril became free went back to his own diocese.[44]

After the Council of Ephesus (431)

In April 433, John of Antioch (in the name of the Eastern bishops) "accepted the use of the tittle *Theotokos* for the Blessed Virgin because the Son of God became incarnate within her."[45] It was an Edict of Union, also known as the Symbol of Ephesus. The Church returned to a state of peace and harmony.[46] "The Council, which had been called to resolve an essentialy Christological problem, had an important Mariological outcome."[47]

The doctrine of the *Theotokos* is important because the Christological doctrines rest upon it. For the Council of Ephesus and is for the Church, the dogma on Mary's divine motherhood was like a confirmation of the dogma of the Incarnation. "The word truly assumes human nature into the unity of His person, without canselling out that nature."[48]

Mother of God Post-Council of Ephesus

After the Council of Ephesus, many popes and councils reaffirmed

[43] Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church*, 238.

[44] Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church*, 238.

[45] Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church*, 238.

[46] Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church*, 238.

[47] Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church*, 238.

[48] Haffner, *The Mystery of Mary*, 121; *RM*, no. 4.

the divine maternity of Mary.[49] The Council of Chalcedon (451) made its own the word *Theotokos*: as regards His Godhead, He was begotten of the Father before the ages, and as regards His manhood He was for us and for our salvation born in these last days of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God,"[50] The second Council of Constantinople (553) defended the word *Theotokos* against false interpretation. This Council also accepted and conferred dogmatic value on Cyril's anathemas against Nestorius. The first anathema concerned the divine Maternity: "If anyone does not confess that Emmanuel is in truth God, and that the holy Virgin is, in consequence, *Theotokos* (Mother of God), since she brought forth according to the flesh the Word of God who has become flesh, let him be anathema."[51]

Pope John II explained the title *Theotokos* to the Senate of Constantinople in a letter in 534 as follow: "We teach that it is right for Catholics to confess that the glorius and holy Mary, ever Virgin, is truly and properly Mother of God and Mother of God the Word incarnate from her."[52] Pope Pius XI, through his encyclical commemorating the anniversary of Ephesus, *Lux Veritatis*[53] (December 25, 1931) reviewed the history of the Nestorian heresy and the event at Ephesus, considering both the defense of the traditional faith, and the authoritative position of the Roman Primacy recognized on that occasion. The central dogma of the incarnation was explained. The divine Maternity was shown as the corollary of the Christological doctrine. The pope, from this truth, derived that Mary is our spiritual Mother. he concluded by a double gesture to commemorate the Ephesian anniversary: the restoration of the mosaic in St. Mary Major of the *Theotokos* and the extension to the

[49] Carrol, "Mary in the Documents of the Magisterium" in Juniper B. Carol, *Mariology Volume I* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1955), 8.

[50] Haffner, *The Mystery of Mary*, 121.

[51] Haffner, *The Mystery of Mary*, 121.

[52] Haffner, *The Mystery of Mary*, 121.

[53] William J. Doheny, C.S.C. and Joseph P. Kelly, *Papal Documents on Mary* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1954), 155-179.

universal Church of the feast of the divine Maternity on November 21.[54]

Chapter VIII of *Lumen Gentium*

The Second Vatican Council gathered the teachings on Mary in the eighth chapter of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, reaffirming her divine motherhood. The chapter is entitled "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the Mystery of Christ and the Church". This chapter spoke of Mary as Mother of God twelve times, using *Mater Dei*, *Dei Genitrix*, or *Deipara*.[55] According to Mactal, O.P. the eight Chapter of Lumen Gentium makes use of the words, *Mater Dei*, *Dei Genitrix*, and *Deipara*, twelve times. And the English edition edited by Austin Flannery, O.P. translates each of these as "Mother of God," although there are slight nuances. *Dei Genetrix* and *Deipara* suggest "God-Bearer."[56] Equal with the English edition edited by James H. Kroeger, Mother of God is mentioned twelve times. The *Bahasa Indonesia* edition translated by Fr. R. Hardawiryana, S.J. Mother of God used *Bunda Allah* also twelve times. The title Mother of God is found in the eight chapter of *Lumen Gentium* no. 52, 53, 54, 56, 57, 61, 63, 66, 67 (2x), and 69 (2x).[57]

There is a new development in the understanding of the term Mother of God since Vatican II. There was at first a new emphasis on the concrete term Mother of God and an existential approach. Nevertheless R. Laurentine stated that metaphysical basis still remains open to research and adequate formulation.[58] Through Chapter VIII of *Lumen Gentium*, the Holy Synod "intends to describe with diligence both the role of the Blessed Virgin in the mystery of the Incarnated word and the Mystical Body, and the duties of redeemed mankind toward the Mother of God,

[54] Eamon R. Carroll, "Mary in the Documents of the Magisterium" in Juniper B. Carol, *Mariology Volume I* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1955), 9-10.

[55] O'Carrol, *Theotokos*, 257.

[56] Mactal, Handout of Mariology (2013), 10.

[57] James H. Kroeger, *Documents of Vatican Council II* (Philippines: Paulines, 2011), 121-137; R. Hardawiryana, *Dokumen Konsili Vatikan II* (Jakarta: Obor, 1993), 146-159.

[58] O'Carrol, *Theotokos*, 258.

who is mother of Christ and mother of men, particularly of the faithful."[59] Chapter VIII of Lumen Gentium consists of 18 articles subdivided into five sections: theological context of its introduction (no. 52-54); Mary's function in the Economy of Salvation (no. 55-59); Mary and the Church (60-65); devotion to the Blessed Virgin in the Church (no. 66-67); and Mary, figure and hope of the Church (no. 68-69).

The Tradition[60] of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort[61] Indonesia

There are four points of Marian tradition of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia: liturgy, devotion, its motto: *Tota Christi per Mariam*, and the formulation of their religious vows.

Liturgy

There are two Marian tradition in the liturgy of the Sisters in Indonesia: the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary observed every May 31 and the Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturdays.

Devotion

The basis of Marian devotion of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort is found in their Constitution of 1988 in the section on Prayer and Reflection. It says: "In a special way, we feel inspired by Mary and her testimony in the *Magnificat*. We contemplate her place in the history of God with humans, pray the rosary, and celebrate her feast days, especially the meeting with her cousin Elisabeth (Cf. Lk.1, 46-55)."[62] Based on this text, the Sisters has four tradition prayer: the Angelus, the Rosary, prayer to Our Lady (Prayer to Our Lady for the Congregation, prayer to Our Lady for the Council and prayers to Our Lady Before Traveling), and

[59] *LG*, no.54; James H. Kroeger, D*ocuments of Vatican Council II*, 123.

[60] Tradition in this article refers to the process and content of the transmission/handing on of belief, doctrine, prayer, devotion, habit, and life of the Congregation of sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia.

[61] Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort refers to the members of the Congregation founded by Fr, Mathias Wolff, SJ, in 1822 in Amersfoort, North Netherlands. It is a pontifical religious congregation.

[62] *Constitution of the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort 1988*, 38-39.

Triduum Preparation for the Congregation Feast on 31 May).

Tota Christi per Mariam

The Sisters live by the motto *Tota Christi per Mariam*. This motto was first found in the booklet Zonnehartsbloem around 1850 in the Netherlands. This booklet was issued to promote the congregation in the country and to attract young women to join the congregation.[63] *TOTA CHRISTI PER MARIAM* is the inscription in every ring of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort. This tradition is still alive up to now in Indonesia. *Tota Christi per Mariam* in in Latin. *Tota* is one of the irregular adjective *totus* [masculine], *tota* [feminine], *totum* [neuter].[64] It means all, the whole.[65] *Christi* is genitive case, masculine, and singular of the second declension masculine nouns.[66] It means Anointed One, Messiah, and Christ.[67] *Per* is a preposition which should be followed by an accusative. It means through.[68] *Mariam* refers to the accusative singular of the first declension nouns.[69] It means Mary.[70] So, *Tota Christi per Mariam* means totally to Christ through Mary.

Formulation of Their Religious Vows

In the Indonesian Province, there are three formulas of vows. The first formula is for the temporary vows,[71] professed by all novices who

[63] This data is taken from the archives in the Netherlands from Sr. Jacqueline, OLV who was in charge of archives in the Netherlands Province; Jacqueline van Breemen (personal communication, October 26, 2017).

[64] John F. Collins, *A Primer of Ecclesiastical Latin* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1991), 224, 436.

[65] John F. Collins, *A Primer of Ecclesiastical Latin*, 436, 244.

[66] John F. Collins, *A Primer of Ecclesiastical Latin*, 13.

[67] John F. Collins, *A Primer of Ecclesiastical Latin*, 414.

[68] John F. Collins, *A Primer of Ecclesiastical Latin*, 428.

[69] John F. Collins, *A Primer of Ecclesiastical Latin*, 7.

[70] John F. Collins, *A Primer of Ecclesiastical Latin*, 424.

[71] Rapat Komisariat Indonesia, *Kita Bersama Suster-Suster Santa Perawan Maria di Indonesia*, 52.

want to become official members of the congregation and all junior sisters who want to extend their vows. The second formula is used for the perpetual vows.[72] And the last one is the formulation of the renewal of vows.[73] In all the formulas, there is this sentence, "May Holy Mary, Mother of God, the patron of the Congregation help me to fulfill it." This plea is addressed to Mary, as Mother of God. The Sisters ask help from the patron of the Congregation in order for them to fulfill their vows. Mary as Mother of God is both the patron of their Congregation and also their personal patron.

The Implication[74] of the Dogma for the Tradition of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia

There are four points of Marian tradition of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia: liturgy, devotion, its motto: *Tota Christi per Mariam*, and the formulation of their religious vows.

Images of Mary as Mother of God

Beside the name of the Congregation, the image (statue) of Mary as Mother of God in the Congregation also becomes the identity of the Congregation. The dogma of Mary as Mother of God confirms the dogma of the Incarnation, in which the Word truly assumes human nature into the unity of His person, without cancelling out that nature. Among the images of Mary as Mother of God in the communities, the researcher thinks that the image of Mary with Jesus in the chapel of the motherhouse in Probolinggo presents the mystery of the Incarnation. The images of Jesus represents the Second Person of the Trinity with Mary behind the image of Jesus. This image presents the unity of the mystery of the Incarnation. This image links with the idea of Saint Julie Billiart (the spiritual mother of the SOLA) who emphasized the role of Mary in the mystery of incarnation. Thus, it is important and necessary that the Sisters have one image of Mary and Jesus depicting the mystery of incarnation which becomes the identity of the Sisters.

[72] John F. Collins, *A Primer of Ecclesiastical Latin,* 52-53.

[73] John F. Collins, *A Primer of Ecclesiastical Latin*, 53-54.

[74] The terms implication in this article refers to the consequences, inspirations of the dogma of Mary as Mother of God. It will guide the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia in their life journey.

Motto: Tota Christi per Mariam

This motto shows that the Blessed Virgin Mary is the model of the consecrated life or religious life. "What we said above about Ambrose applies also to Jerome, the Cappadocian Fathers, John Chrysostom, and Augustine: they see Marian devotion in the context of both the Incarnation and consecrated virginity, and so they write and preach about her as the primary model of the Christian and, especially, of 'consecrated' Life."[75] The researcher sees that it links with the Church teaching on Mary, Virgin and Mother as a model both for the Church and for the faithful (*LG* 63-65).

This motto also shows that the Blessed Virgin Mary is the patron and mediator between the Lord (Christ) and His people, in particular the SOLAI. The maternal role of Mary (*LG* 60, 62) and the subordinate role of Mary as Mary's mediation in the Church, especially in the consecrated life are shown in this motto. The following of Christ set forth in the Gospels is the ultimate norm of the religious life. It is upheld by all institutes as the highest rule (*PC* 2). This highest rule is shown in the words *Tota Christi*. Mary is the model and patron for the religious life. And also, she is their patron. These ideas are expressed in the words *per Mariam*. *Per* (through) refers to the mediator (intercession) and example of Mary. It fits the teaching of Vatican II that the Church professes the subordinate role of Mary as Mary's mediation (*LG* 62) and the Church commends her maternal help to the hearts of the faithful so that they may more closely adhere to the Mediator and Redeemer, Christ. The content through Mary (*per Mariam*): through Mary's intercession (*LG* 62) and imitation.

Liturgy

The Solemnity of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary on May 31

The Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary celebrated by the Church on May 31 is also the Feast of the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort.[76] the Sisters celebrate her feast days, especially

[75] Denis Farkasfalvy, *The Marian Mystery* (Phillipines: St Paul, 2014), 136.

[76] The official Letter of Sr. Alfonsa on behalf of the Regional Board of Indonesia on May 26, 1979.

the meeting with her cousin Elisabeth (Cf. Luk 1, 46-55).[77] Elisabeth's words: "And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?" (Luk 1:43) is the Bible's basis of Mary as Mother of God chosen by the Sisters. This verse exists in the pericope the visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elisabeth. The Sisters feel inspired by Mary and her testimony in the *Magnificat*. Mary served selflessly and freely with Jesus in her womb, conceived by the Holy Spirit. This ministry is the first step after Mary declared her willingness to be the Mother of the Redeemer and to fulfill God's will.

Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturdays

The SOLAI give honor to the Blessed Virgin Mary as Mother of God on Saturday mornings in Ordinary Time on which an optional memorial is permitted. Through both the Liturgy of the Hours from the Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Mass on Saturday mornings, the Sisters give honor to Mary as Mother of God.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy Principles and Guidelines (2001) states:

> This term is used to describe various external practices (e.g. prayers, hymns, observances attached to particular times or places, insignia, medals, habits or customs). Animated by an attitude of faith, such external practices manifest the particular relationship of the faithful with Divine Persons, or the Blessed Virgin Mary in her privileges of grace and those of her titles which express them, or with the Saints in their configurations with Christ or in their role in the Church's life.[78]

Based on the description above, among the SOLAI, there are three external practices: prayers, hymns, and observances attached to the custom that reflect the dogma of Mary as Mother of God. There are seven prayers that reflect Mary as Mother of God among the Sisters in Indonesia: Angelus, Hail Mary, the Rosary, prayer to Our Lady for the council, prayer to Our Lady for the congregation, prayer before traveling, and prayer welcoming a Sister who just arrived from another

[77] *Constitution of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort 1988*, 39.

[78] Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy Principles and Guidelines* 2001, no. 8.

country. Hymns which reflect the teachings on Mary as Mother of God refers to *Tota Christi per Mariam* song. The observances attached to the custom that reflect the teaching on Mary as Mother of God is triduum preparation for the Congregation's Feast on May 31.

Prayers

Aside from the aforementioned prayers already recited among the faithful in the Church the Sisters use for special intentions, there is but one original prayer to Our Lady that was arranged by the Congregation – the prayer to Our Lady for the Congregation. Through these prayers, the Sisters honor Mary as the Mother of God.

The dogma Mary as Mother of God is confirmed in Christology, in the mystery of the incarnation. Through the Rosary the mystery of incarnation can be contemplated and the title Mary as Mother of God can be deepened and internalized. This implication of the dogma makes the Sisters become closer to Christ and Mary as their patron to follow Christ and to do God's will. It will especially help them in identifying with Mary. For the Sisters, the Rosary is a special way to contemplate Mary's place in the history of God with humans.

Hymn

Hymn in this devotion refers to *Tota Christi per Mariam* song, an expression of communal prayer directed to Mary. It is especially sung on occasions such as patronal feasts. The content of this song has been revised to create a biblical and ecclesial spirit.[79] This song presents Holy Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ as the patron of the Sisters and also as mediator between the Lord and His people, especially the Sisters.

Observances Attached to Custom

It is an observance to Mary: triduum preparation for the Solemnity of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. For the SOLAI, the feast of the Visitation is a significant event. Therefore, it is frequently preceded by a preparatory triduum. It is a spiritual preparation to celebrate the Solemnity of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This observance

[79] Congregation for Divine Worship…, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy* , no. 17.

can be useful not only for honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary through pious exercises but also for affording the faithful an adequate vision of the positions she occupies in the mystery of Christ and of the Church, as well as the role she plays in it.[80] This observance is truly in preparation for the celebration of the feast day of Our Lady (the Solemnity of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary), especially when the Sisters are encouraged to approach the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, and to renew their Christian commitment following the example of Mary, the first and most perfect disciple of Christ.[81]

The Formulation of Vows

Two elements of the formula of the vows are implications of the dogma of Mary as Mother of God: Christological and Mariological. The first one is the recognition of Christ as having two natures: God and man. The second one refers to the recognition of Mary as Mother of God, the patron of the Congregation who mediates in fulfilling the vows found at the end formula of the vows. From the recognition of Christ which has been nature of God and man and the recognition of Mary as the Mother of God and Christ's, the position of Christ (first) and the position of Mary (last), the text clearly shows the implications of the dogma in this vow. The SOLAI also ask Mary's help every day to mediate in fulfilling the vows: "Save in us the loving virginity, the hopeful poverty, and the faithful obedience."[82]

Conclusion

The dogma of Mary as Mother of God confirms the mystery of the incarnation. This dogma also supports the nature of the person of Christ: human and divine. With regard to the tradition of the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia, the implications of the dogma of Mary as Mother of God can be seen in the following: the first one refers to the statue of Mary as Mother of God representing the mystery of the incarnation. The second one is the motto *Tota Christi per Mariam* showing that Our Lady is the model of the religious life and the patron

[80] Congregation for Divine Worship…, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy* , no, 189.

[81] Congregation for Divine Worship…, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy* , no, 189.

[82] Prayer to Our Lady for the Congregation in *Buku Doa Intern Kongregasi SPM Amersfoort Provinsi Indonesia 2010*, 76-77.

and mediator between Christ and His people, in particular, the Sisters. The third one is the Sisters' giving honor to the Blessed Virgin Mary and asking her intercession through their liturgy (Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary on May 31 and memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday). The fourth one is the Sisters' giving honor to Our Lady and asking her intercession through their devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This devotion refers to the prayer to Our Lady for the Congregation, *Tota Christi per Mariam* song, Triduum Preparation for the Solemnity of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Then lastly is the formulation of their vows showing both Christological and Mariological elements.

Based on the findings, the researcher give the recommendations: 1) establishing one image/statue Mary as Mother of God in the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort; 2) creation of a Marian Formation Program for all formators of the Sisters in Indonesia and the Sisters of Our Lady of Amersfoort in Indonesia, especially to give them a good knowledge of the dogma of Mary as Mother of God and its implications in their tradition, and 3) designing a Marian Formation Program for Junior Sisters, Novices and Postulants, especially the dogma of Mary as Mother of God and its implications in the tradition of the Sisters suited to the particular stage of formation.

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