DOCTORAL DISSERTATION
INTERNATIONAL MARIAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE
UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON
PONTIFICAL THEOLOGICAL FACULTY
"MARIANUM," ROME

Very Reverend James Presta

CORNELIUS A LAPIDE'S BIBLICAL METHODOLOGY
USED IN MARIAN TEXTS AND ITS COMPARISON WITH
A CONTEMPORARY APPROACH.

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of the International Marian Research
Institute of the University of Dayton and the Pontifical
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Specialization in Marian Theology

Director of Thesis
Reverend Bertrand Buby, SM

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Mary, Help of Christians, pray for us.
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<td>Ac</td>
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<td>AAS</td>
<td>Acta Apostolicae Sedis (1909 - )</td>
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<td>CCC</td>
<td>Catechism of the Catholic Church (1992)</td>
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<td>DV</td>
<td>Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution Dei Verbum (on Divine Revelation) (November 18, 1965)</td>
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<td>IBC</td>
<td>PBC, The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church (April 15, 1993)</td>
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<td>LG</td>
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<td>NAB</td>
<td>New American Bible</td>
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<td>NJBC</td>
<td>New Jerome Biblical Commentary</td>
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<td>NT</td>
<td>New Testament</td>
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<td>OT</td>
<td>Old Testament</td>
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<td>PBC</td>
<td>Pontifical Biblical Commission</td>
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Situating the Thesis: Status Quaestionis

The present research is situated within the context of the development of biblical, most notably during the Post-Tridentine period (late 1500 - early 1600's). A comparison will be made with the courses on Scripture taught at IMRI (International Marian Research Institute) through the works of Bertrand Buby, SM, Mary of Galilee, Volumes 1 & 2. The monumental commentaries of the Belgian exegete Cornelius a Lapide, also known as Cornelis Cornelissen Van Den Steen, (1567-1637), provide the framework for a study of this post-Tridentine exegete and contemporary Scripture. A Lapide's commentaries, with his baroque style of biblical, span the entire Catholic Bible, with the exception of the Book of Job and the Psalms. Since the object of this study was to assess and review the Mariological thread which appears throughout a Lapide's opus magnum of Scriptural commentary, a number of key texts will be presented.

A Lapide's own commentary is given in Chapters Three and Four (Old and New Testament texts with a Marian theme or texts accommodated to the Blessed Virgin Mary) and then compared with the work of Buby. The recent doctoral dissertation by Raymund Noll Die Mariologischen Grundlinien im exegetischen Werk des Cornelius a Lapide SJ (1567-1637) became a significant part of this research and will be used throughout the dissertation. Noll's work is of value to this study because he presented a Lapide's as foundational background for the insights into the dogmas of the Assumption of Mary and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Noll's dissertation is interested in the dogmatic theology which a Lapide presents in both of his Old and New Testament commentaries which will ultimately support the definition of these two Marian dogmas. The present

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2 R. Noll, Die mario logischen Grundlinien im exegetischen Werk des Cornelius a Lapide SJ (1567-1637) Mariologische Studien Band XVI, Verlag Friedrich Pustet: Regensburg, 2003. Throughout the dissertation, frequent references will be made to this particular author and his dissertation.
thesis differs from Noll’s in that it examines the biblical methodology and of a Lapide in his voluminous commentaries and compares and contrasts these texts with a method used in IMRI. Therefore, Noll’s concern with a Lapide and scripture is more doctrinal; the concern of this work is directed more to the biblical presentation and method of interpretative development of a Lapide.³

To build the platform for such a work the first chapter centers on the life and person of a Lapide in the post-Tridentine period. The biographical information regarding a Lapide is limited; however, the following works were helpful to the writer in situating himself within the mariology of post-Trent and those exegetes of the same period who were influential in the commentaries of a Lapide: *The New Catholic Encyclopedia,*⁴ an excellent article by Leo Scheffczyk “Entwicklungslinien Nachreformatorischer Mariologie unter Berücksichtigung antireformatorischer Tendenzen (Petrus Canisius, Suarez, Cornelius a Lapide”),⁵ which situates a Lapide and his mariology in the time of Francis Suarez and Peter Canisius.

For the development of a Lapide’s exegetical style which involved the four senses of scripture, the writings of the Church Fathers, the hagiographical texts of numerous medieval saints, and the tradition of the church, a few notable sources were used. De Lubac’s monumental *Medieval Exegesis* demonstrated that the biblical tradition is grounded within the exegetical approach of

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³Throughout my dissertation, I will use Noll’s dissertation to identify those Biblical texts that he views as significant in understanding the Mariology of Cornelius a Lapide, SJ. Also, I will quote from Noll’s dissertation, especially in Chapter one, regarding the life and work of Cornelius and in the conclusions of this dissertation. I have also listed Old Testament biblical citations and Marian titles derived from the commentaries of Cornelius which are directly from Noll’s thesis which may be found in an appendix of this work.


⁵Leo Scheffczyk, Translated by Sr. Isabell Naumann, STD, Professor of Theology, IMRI, Dayton, Ohio. “Entwicklungslinien nachreformatorischer Mariologie unter Berücksichtigung antireformatorischer Tendenzen (Petrus Canisius, Suarez, Cornelius a Lapide).” *De Cultu Mariano Saeculo XVI.* 1984.
Origen. The Cambridge History of the Bible gave the historical perspective for the development of a Lapide’s exegetical style of scriptural interpretation. Defining the four senses of scripture was important to gain an understanding of a Lapide’s use of the four senses within his commentary: literal, tropological, allegorical and anagogical. One important reference for this was the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which defines the four senses as used in the tradition of the Church:

“According to an ancient tradition, one can distinguish between two senses of Scripture: the literal and the spiritual, the latter being subdivided into the allegorical, moral, and anagogical senses. The profound concordance of the four senses guarantees all its richness to the living reading of Scripture in the Church.”

To provide a magisterial context for the post-Vatican II, especially as it relates to Marian biblical texts, which a Lapide uses in his biblical, three documents are used in the present study. The first is the “Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation,” Dei Verbum, which provides a solid background for understanding the Bible from the Church’s rich tradition of interpretation and . The second is the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” Lumen Gentium. There, Chapter Eight, on the Blessed Virgin Mary, states the Mother of God’s role in salvation history and the modern day Church. The third document is the Pontifical Biblical Commission’s letter, The Interpretation of the

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6H. de Lubac, SJ. 12, Medieval: The Four Senses of Scripture. Tran. Mark Sebanc. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. and T & T Clark, Ltd., 1998. “What words themselves disclose is said to be historical, and allegorical is said to be the part that is played amid the long-lost, ancient shadows. Moral is the part through which a rule of life is maintained. While the anagogical part soars higher, proffering to you what you should lay before you as an object of your hope.”

7 The Cambridge History of the Bible: The West From the Reformation to The Present Day. Cambridge, University Press, 1963. 216


9 Catechism of the Catholic Church. #115 33

10 Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Dei Verbum, Pope Paul VI. 1965.

Bible of the Church, which gives an extensive outline of approaches used throughout the Church’s history in terms of biblical.  

A noteworthy dissertation regarding a Lapide was written by Henrico Koren, CSSp, De Inspiratione Sacrae Scripturae Secundum Doctrinam Cornelii a Lapide (1942). The dissertation was conducted partly under the direction of Reverend Doctor Romuald Galdos, SJ. Galdos is often quoted in Noll’s dissertation. While there is no specific mention of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the 1942 thesis by Koren, it does contain important information regarding the exegetical style and importance of Lapide’s work in the life of the post-Tridentine Church. Other dissertations written on Cornelius a Lapide are: La idea de la eternidad en las obras del P. Cornelio a Lapide SJ, written by Hernandez, SM and La mariologia dell Padre Cornelio a Lapide nel suo commento al Cantico dei cantici by P. Malfatti.

A Lapide’s writings that contain Mariological talks and sermons were compiled in one book called Maria praedicatoris necnon confessarii aurifodina e commentariis Cornelii a Lapide. De B. Virgine Maria exceptiones coordinatae colligente ac curante C.P. L. (Paris 1872). The author of

12 Pontifical Biblical Commission. The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church, Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1993. 127. “... the contribution of patristic is acknowledged in several places (for example, see [166-172]; III.B.2) as an important element of Catholic that respects the multiple layers of meaning in the biblical texts. Yet the PCB also notes that one must always be wary of the danger that can accompany Catholic, namely, the risk of attributing to biblical texts a meaning which they do not contain but which is the product of a later development within the tradition” ([146]; III). This observation serves as a warning that all interpreters bring a certain “pre-understanding” to biblical texts, but we should not fall into the trap of eisegesis, that is, a reading into the text something that is not there.”


14 Hernandez, SM, La idea de la eternidad en las obras del P. Cornelio a Lapide SJ (Diss. greg. Rom 1940)

15 Malfatti, P., La mariologia dell Padre Cornelio a Lapide nel suo commento al Cantico dei cantici (Diss. greg. Rom 1943)
this work is unknown.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{16}Cornelius A Lapide. \textit{Maria praedicatoris necnon confessarii aurifodina e commentariis Cornelli a Lapide. De B. Virgine Maria excerptiones coordinatae colligente ac curante C.P. L.} (Paris 1872).
CHAPTER ONE: THE LIFE OF CORNELIUS A LAPIDE IN THE POST-TRIDENTINE PERIOD

I. Biographical information about the person and work of Cornelius a Lapide.

In his doctoral dissertation, *Die Mariologischen Grundlinien Im Exegetischen Werk Des Cornelius A Lapide, SJ (1567-1637)*, Raymund Noll situates the birth of the Belgian exegete in the time of the Counter-Reformation in Europe.

"Cornelius a Lapide entered this world during troubled times. Born on December 19, 1567, in Bocholt, the province of Limburg, Belgium, Cornelius entered a highly respected family whose lineage was extensive throughout Belgium. The era was restless on the continent however with a heightening in religious fanaticism and the disagreement between Calvinists and Catholics sadly reaching a high point." 17

A Lapide was a Flemish Jesuit and exegete who spent over forty years of his religious life teaching the scriptures and writing voluminous commentaries on the entire Bible, with the exception of Psalms and the Book of Job. He died in Rome on March 12, 1637.

A Lapide taught scripture, first in Louvain from 1596-1616, 18 and later at the Jesuit Roman College from 1616 until 1636. 19 A Lapide was a beloved teacher of the scriptures. He was well-

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17 R. Noll, 24, *Die mariologischen Grundlinien im exegetischen Werk des Cornelius a Lapide SJ (1567-1637)* Mariologische Studien Band XVI. "Cornelius wurde in eine sehr unruhige Zeit hinein geboren. Der Bildersturm in den Niederlanden von 1566 hatte gezeigt, zu welchen Extremen sich religiöser Fanatismus steigern konnte, und die Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Calvinisten und Katholiken waren nach diesem Ereignis auf einem traurigen Höhepunkt angelangt." (Translated by Fr. Emery De Gaal, STD, Professor of Systematic Theology, Mundelein Seminary, Sr. M. Isabell Naumann, IMRI faculty member, and Ms. Felicitas Samtleben-Spleiss, Marianist affiliate.)

18 Taheny, 382f. "Cornelius a Lapide," *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*. 1967. "He was a sincerely pious and zealous priest and an exemplary religious. During his professorship at Louvain he liked to spend his holidays preaching and administering the sacraments, especially at the pilgrimage of Scherpenheuvel. With moving simplicity and truth he portrayed himself in an emotional prayer to the Prophets at the end of his commentary on Daniel: "For nearly thirty years I suffer with and for you with gladness the continual martyrdom of religious life, the martyrdom of illness, the martyrdom of study and writing; obtain for me also, I beseech you, to crown all, the fourth martyrdom, of blood. For you I have spent my vital and animal spirits; I will spend my blood too."

19 Taheny, 382
known for his delightful teaching style and well-loved by his students because of his lively lectures which were “rich in topical allusions and pleasant irrelevancies.” These students came from different countries and backgrounds, yet a Lapide, who was a linguist and gifted in so many ancient and European languages, was able to speak with each of them in their own tongue. Obviously, there was an innate goodness in a Lapide which saw good in those whom he taught.

The sheer volume of a Lapide’s biblical commentaries is mind boggling. He edited many of his own commentaries but was not able to see all his works published. It is often noted that he did not write on Job and the Psalms. However, the use of Psalms are mentioned in the Marian prayers.

It is important to understand the historical and contextual situation of life for a Lapide as a teacher and exegete. A Lapide loved his twenty years of teaching in Rome. He found great

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20 Taheny, 382

21 John F. McConnell, MM, 102, “Communis Omnium Patria.” The Catholic Biblical Quarterly 17, 1955. “There were students of all nations, for Rome with Its colleges was like the Jerusalem of old with Its synagogues (Acts 6,9), the metropolis of faith, religion and wisdom. Nor was the Scripture professor of the Roman College reluctant to speak in tongues for them. Flemish and German and Italian proverbs and words occur often, French less often, Spanish rarely. To Judge by one example (Ecclus 43,8) it is a mercy that English occurs hardly at all, although there are continual allusions to the English and Scottish persecutions, to Henry VIII and Thomas More and John Fisher.”

22 McConnell, MM, 101 “Cornelius thought most of the students good but was aware that there were some bad eggs among them, who talked and fooled and got away with it, like pickpockets in a crowd. One of the good students of that era, although only a philosopher, was St. John Berchmans, who was able, two days before his death, to confide to Cornelius that he had nihil omnino on his conscience.”

23 Taheny, 378, “Cornelius A Lapide,” The New Catholic Encyclopedia. “Supported abundantly by quotations from Church Fathers and later interpreters, his ‘frequently included not only the literal sense of a passage but the allegorical, tropological, and anagogical meanings as well. His knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, of theology, Church history, and the classical philosophers and natural historian (especially Aristotle and Pliny), and his intense industry, fervor and awareness of problems of the day, all combined to produce commentaries highly esteemed by his contemporaries and posterity. He saw his greatest work, Commentaria in omnes Divi Pauli Epistolas (Antwerp 1614), go through 11 of its eventual 80 editions.”

24 Taheny, 378, “The complete series, with Job and the Psalms added by other hands, appeared at Antwerp, 1681, 1714; at Venice, 1717, 1740, 1798; at Cologne, 1732; at Turin 1838; at Lyons, 1839-42, 1865 and 1866;”
inspiration from the churches, institutions and the sheer beauty of the city and this gave his commentaries much vitality. His own deep faith certainly comes to the surface as one reads his works.

A Lapide did not restrict himself to libraries in Rome and the ancient manuscripts they contained, he enjoyed so much more in the eternal city. He was a man of great faith and respected the magnificent history of the Church in Rome. His faith allowed him to see Rome as a classroom so that he could visualize, experience, appreciate and treasure all that the Eternal City offered him.

A Lapide was obviously fascinated by the relics which were venerated in Rome. However, most important to him was the Cross of Jesus Christ. Even a Lapide’s Marian piety and devotion came to the forefront as he appreciated the grandeur of the Eternal City, which was influenced by Roman

25 McConnell, MM, 105, “Communis Omnium Patria.” The Catholic Biblical Quarterly 17. “The libraries of Rome made it an exegete’s heaven, and Cornelius was familiar with them all: that the Maronite College, which was in his day becoming a center of Oriental studies.”

26 McConnell, MM, 106, “He was incessantly visiting and revisiting the scenes of the martyrs’ triumphs, reliving the days when “Pontiffs and Christians hid in the caves and holes and crypts which even now are to be found in subterranean Rome and fill the spectator with horror” (CT 2,14; Lk 7,12; Ap 6,9). It is possible that the horror was a little synthetic, more in the nature of a tribute paid to the memory of St. Jerome than his own primary reaction. But the joy and devotion which Cornelius never failed to experience when he visited the beautiful church of St. Agnes with its rich marbles and precious stones was genuine beyond the shadow of a doubt (AP 14, 4; Ecclus 19,3).”

27 McConnell, MM, 107, “Cornelius was, of course, often at St. Peter’s, the Orbis miraculum which drew visitors from all sides. When he acted as guide to some unspoiled Fleming he would have pointed out St. Peter’s Chair, which was venerated on the feast of the Chair, but never used by a Pope; and he would have explained what the Penitentiaries were doing with the rod.”

28 McConnell, MM, 108, “Rome possessed many other links with the gage of the Gospels and the Apostles: images of Christ and the Blessed Mother painted by St. Luke, from which one could form an idea of their appearance and their dress, and very ancient representations of Christ, especially as the Good Shepherd; at St. Mary Major’s, which the Blessed Mother had chosen as a Roman home among the Martyrs, the crib of Bethlehem near the tomb of St. Jerome.”

29 McConnell, MM, 108 “... the most precious link with the Gospel story was established by the presence in Rome of the instruments of the Passion.”
art, architecture and mythology.\textsuperscript{30}

Here is more evidence of a Lapide's deep love for the Cross and the Blessed Mother which made the City of Rome so intimately connected to his Catholic faith and his scriptural.\textsuperscript{31} According to McConnell, "Rome was lovely, it was interesting, it was scholarly, but a Lapide thought the Italians had hit the nail on the head when they spoke of Fiorenza bella, Venetia ricca . . . Roma santa." This quotation certainly summarized a Lapide's belief in the city that offered him a home for over twenty years.\textsuperscript{32}

After twenty years of teaching in Rome and over forty years of life as a Jesuit, a Lapide died in Rome in 1637. Immediately after his death, a Lapide was remembered for his great scholarship and work with the Sacred Scripture.\textsuperscript{33} This tribute regarding a Lapide and his voluminous commentaries on scriptures serves as a genuine tribute to this scholarly Jesuit of the 16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} centuries.\textsuperscript{34}

In life and after his death, a Lapide was respected not only by students and faculty of the

\textsuperscript{30} McConnell, MM, 111 "The Roman is by nature benign, friendly, docile, as St. Paul discovered to his great relief at the Three Taverns. Cornelius cannot sufficiently praise the piety of Rome with its thousands of priests and Its sixty-three churches of the Blessed Virgin and he is constantly amazed at the marvellous devotion of the Roman people."

\textsuperscript{31} McConnell, MM, 108-109 "Veronica's veil was in St. Peter's, where Cornelius too was sure to be found in Parasceve when the veil was shown to the faithful. It was however, in the basilica of the Holy Cross, built on soil from Jerusalem, that the Passion came most vividly to life for him, and there perhaps he felt that he could most closely imitate the ineffable pilgrimages of the Blessed Mother to Calvary."

\textsuperscript{32} McConnell, MM, 106 "Rome was lovely, it was interesting, it was scholarly, but Cornelius thought the Italians had hit the nail on the head when they spoke of Fiorenza bella, Venetia ricca . . . Roma santa."

\textsuperscript{33} McConnell, MM, 102 "A dedication, written in the year 1638, for his commentary on Eccles, Ct and Wis refers to him as having been a man contemplationi addictissimus."

\textsuperscript{34} Taheny, 378 The New Catholic Encyclopedia "These numerous editions show how highly these works are estimated by Catholics. But Protestant voices have joined in the appreciation. G. H. Goetzius (Leipzig, 1699) wrote an academical dissertation, "Exerciatatio theologica de Cornelii a Lapide Commentariis in Sacram Scripturam", in which he praised the Jesuit author as the most important of Catholic Scriptural writers."
Roman College, but also by the Jesuits themselves who recognized his deep holiness and his lively faith, operative throughout his life as a member of the Society of Jesus. 35

“A Lapide was a man of wide learning and calm disposition, and although his works now seem marred by his credulity in accepting many a legend from apocryphal sources in his anxiety not to throw away anything that might serve to interpret the sacred text, one can still find much valuable insight in the canons of interpretation which he lays down before starting to comment on any particular author.” 36

It is interesting to note that a Lapide’s Latin commentaries were reprinted twenty times. Before he left Flanders, he revised two of his commentaries, “Commentarius in omnes divi Pauli epistolae (1614)” and “Commentaria in Pentateuchum I (1616).” A Lapide’s commentaries on the major and minor prophets, Acts of the Apostles, the Canonical Epistles, Ecclesiasticus, Apocalypse and the Proverbs were published during his life span. His commentary on Paul was published at least eleven times. After his death, the other commentaries were edited and published, some of them several times. 37

The English version of a Lapide’s works was published in 1876 in London by an Anglican

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35 McConnell, MM, 112, “Communis Omnium Patria.” The Catholic Biblical Quarterly 17. “… Father Cornelius a Lapide had found in Rome the holy Bethlehem which St. Jerome had sought in Palestine, and that when he died there on March 12, 1637, God had granted a desire of his that his bones might be mingled with the bones of the saints. But because in life he had enjoyed a reputation for sanctity, his superiors decided that his bones should not (literally) be mingled with other bones at all but buried apart, to provide for the possibilities which have so far not been realized. He was happy in what he considered the nearest earthly approach to eternity; he is certainly infinitely happier now, in that eternity, no matter where his bones lie. His writings have continued to offer inspiration and insight to future generations. For a very long period, perhaps two centuries and a half, his commentaries were constantly read by seminarians and priests, and his ideas were passed on to the people in sermons. Most of these must have come to see Rome with his eyes and to love it with something like his love.”


clergyman, Thomas W. Mossman, called *The Great Commentary of Cornelius a Lapide*. There is also an Arabic translation of the commentary on the Book of Revelations in the Vatican Library by a Marionite writer, Yusuf ibn Girgis, who translated a Lapide's work on Paul.  

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38 *The Great Commentary of Cornelius a Lapide* was translated by Thomas W. Mossman, Rector of Torington, Lincolnshire, assisted by various scholars.

39 "*The Catholic Encyclopedia.*" 378
II: Cornelius' Marian spirituality and devotion and the influence of Jesuit spirituality in his life and writings.

To understand the influence of the Jesuits on the life and writings of a Lapide, it is important to understand the Jesuit’s mission and ministry in the early years of its foundation as a religious order. Ignatius was greatly devoted to the Virgin Mary, and his own spirituality was influential in the development of the Jesuits.

When understanding the background of a Lapide’s life, one must take into account his early childhood upbringing in a pious Catholic environment as well as the development of a Marian spirituality in his adult life. As one reads the commentaries of a Lapide, there develops an

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40 Comments. The Catholic Encyclopedia. 1910 ed. 160, “It was then that the sons of St. Ignatius, who founded his order in 1534, stepped into the front rank to repel the attacks on the Church. The Ratio Studiorum of the Jesuits made it incumbent on their professors of the Scripture to acquire a mastery of Greek, Hebrew, and other Oriental languages. Salmeron, one of the first companions of St. Ignatius, and the pope’s theologian at the Council of Trent, was a distinguished Hebrew scholar and voluminous commentator. Bellarmine, one of the first Christians to write a Hebrew grammar, composed a valuable commentary on the Psalms, giving an exposition of the Hebrew, Septuagint, and Vulgate texts. It was published as part of Cornelius a Lapide, S.J. (b. 1566), was a native of the Low Countries, and was well versed in Greek and Hebrew. During forty years he devoted himself to teaching and to the composition of his great work, which has been highly praised by Protestants as well as Catholics. Maldonatus, a Spanish Jesuit, born 1534, wrote commentaries on Isaia, Baruch, Ezechiel, Daniel, Psalms, Proverbs, Canticles (Song of Songs), and Ecclesiastes. His best work, however, is his Latin commentary on the Four Gospels, which is generally acknowledged to be one of the best written. When Maldonatus was teaching at the University of Paris the hall was filled with eager students before the lecture began, and he had frequently to speak in the open air. Great as was the merit of the work of Maldonatus, it was equaled by the commentary on the Epistles by Estius (b. At Goreum, Holland, 1542), a secular priest, and superior of the College at Douai. These two works are still of the greatest help to the student. Many other Jesuits were the authors of valuable exegetical works, e.g.: Francis Ribera of Castile (b. 1514); Cardinal Toletus of Cordova (b. 1532); Manuel Salazar (d.1596); Bonfrère of Dinant (b. 1573); Mariana of Talavera (b. 15637); Alcazar of Seville (b. 1554); Barradius “the Apostle of Portugal”; Sánchez of Alcalá (d. 1628); Serarius of Lorraine (d.1609); Lorinus of Avignon (b. 1559); Tirinus of Antwerp (b. 1580); Menochius of Pavia; Pereira of Valencia (d. 1610); and Pineda of Seville.”

41 Noll, 45-46, Die mariologischen Grundlinien im exegetischen Werk des Cornelius a Lapide SJ (1567-1637) “In his dissertation on a Lapide, Noll states that the roots of Marian devotion and piety in the life of a Lapide are influenced by the following: his pious Catholic family life and upbringing, his school life, the influence of Jesuit Franz Coster, his Jesuit formation and training, and the lives of the saints.”

understanding of the manner by which the Belgian exegete honored Mary. His formation as a child was faith-filled. His family deepened his faith life by sending him to the Cologne school. As a child he learned Marian piety and devotion from the great Jesuit Franz Coster, who died in 1576. As a young person he also belonged to a sodality which fostered a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin. A Lapide states that Coster formed him in his Catholic faith as well as enlightened his deep devotion to Mary.

As a Jesuit, a Lapide saw Mary herself as an educator for his faith life. He also looked to the great saints of the medieval ages. In his commentaries, a Lapide also mentions St. Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, and draws out examples from the spirituality of the Jesuit charism to demonstrate the order’s influence in his personal spirituality as well as his commentaries.

In 1602, a Lapide served on the board of directors of a Jesuit House. There he would outline those elements needed in a Catholic spirituality which is integrated, whole and authentic. He would also find a Marian enlightenment which served to bring his faith into practice.

In 1604, his Marian interests took on concrete contours. A specific Marian character began to take shape in his life. A Lapide began to reflect on the influence of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He saw the teaching of the communion of saints as an important part of the content of his life. He made a commitment to Mary within the Society of Jesus and names this the mystical study of Mary.

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43 In attempting to understand the Marian spirituality of Ignatius prevalent in Cornelius’ time, the doctoral work of Louis A. Bonacci SJ, *The Marian Presence in the Life and Works of Saint Ignatius Loyola: From Private Revelations to Spiritual Exercises—The Cloth of Loyola’s Allegiance* proved most beneficial. Diss. International Marian Research Institute. Dayton: International Marian Research Institute, 2002. 397, In his dissertation, Bonacci states: “During his whole life, St. Ignatius had a preferential love for Our Lady.” A particular affirmation of this statement can be found in Ignatius’ great love for the Virgin of Montserrat, in which he places himself under Our Lady’s protection. Also the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius make mention of the Virgin Mary. ‘Some texts evoke the mysteries of her life in relation to those of the life of Christ, meditated upon from the Second Week.’ Bonacci’s dissertation offers many examples of Mary’s influence in the life of Ignatius and therefore in the life of the Jesuit Order and in their spirituality.”
Noll mentions that the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius gave a Lapide strength and hope in the Lord, despite the fact that this Belgian Jesuit dealt with many scruples. His own personal journal states that he was interested in the liturgical feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The sodality to which he belonged in Leuven continued to influence his spirituality. He meditated on Mary and drew great consolation and strength from the Lord Jesus and His Mother.

Noll states that his love for Mary and the saints, as well as the influence of St. Ignatius Loyola, led him to write biblical commentaries and write the stories of their biblical personalities. This is the close relationship between the Mariological interpretations of a Lapide and his Jesuit training and formation.

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\(^{44}\) Noll, 45

\(^{45}\) Noll, 46
III. Post-Tridentine Theologians and Mariologists who influenced Cornelius

In section two, this study situated a Lapide within the time of the Reformation and the writings of Calvin and Luther. It is also important to understand the development of a Lapide's theological mind-set by knowing those who studied and wrote theology during his time and may have influenced a Lapide's theology and exegetical commentaries. In particular, it is imperative to understand the mariology taught during the Counter-Reformation era.

This section will outline five men whose theological writings provide illuminating background in comprehending the works of a Lapide: Francis Suarez (1548 - 1617); Peter Canisius (1521 - 1597); Michael Baius (1513 -1589); Leonard Lessius (1554 - 1623); and Robert Bellarmine (1542 - 1621).

Francis Suarez (1548-1617)

Francisco Suarez was born in Granada, Spain, in 1548 and died in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1617. At age 14 he studied canon law in Salamanca. In 1564, he joined the Jesuits. He would study philosophy and theology in Avila and Segovia. He then taught at the Roman College. Suarez later returned to Salamanca and Alcala to teach theology. He wrote theology and was a consultant on moral and canonical matters. Suarez was considered a pious man.

"Suarez was the principal exponent of the doctrinal thought of the Jesuits and was called Doctor Eximius by Paul V, Alexander VII, Benedict XIV and Pius XII. . . His knowledge of the Fathers was thorough; no contemporary writer had so firm a control of former philosophical and theological thought. His procedure was analytic, but is not lacking in synthetic comprehension. He was an effectual organizer of tracts, such as those on Mariology, grace, religion, law and metaphysics."

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Suarez’s influence in moral theology has been considerable. Suarez cites Alphonsus Liguori as one of his principal authors. The theology of Suarez, especially in the area of mariology, influenced the exegetical commentaries of the great Belgian exegete. However, as Scheffczyk cites in the article, “Entwicklungslinien nachreformatorischer Mariologie unter Berücksichtigung antireformatorischer Tendenzen (Petrus Canisius, Suarez, Cornelius a Lapide),” there are differences between Suarez and a Lapide in terms of their biblical methodologies.

“While Suarez in his dogmatic-systematic way of thinking inserts the Biblical references as arguments. Exegete Cornelius tries to almost have a reverse order and tries to unfold the Marian truths from the Scriptures. By doing that, Cornelius emphasizes the spiritual interpretation although he is very much aware of the literal and spiritual sense of scripture (the topological and analogical sense). Even if one can criticize this kind of interpretation from the standpoint of modern historical critical, what [one] cannot deny acknowledging that in the case of Cornelius, in bringing together the Old Testament and the New Testament what [one] can almost find all starting points of all Mariological facts and data.”

To situate Canisius with a Lapide, Scheffczyk cites the apologetic dimension of their Post-Reformation Theology.

“Similarly, Cornelius attacks Luther and calls him a false prophet. Nevertheless, in his commentaries to the New Testament he has more detailed discussion with the teaching of Luther’s justification than with Luther’s Mariological views. This must be valued very positively that the Catholic Mariology of this post-Reformation era saw the origins and sources of the separation between

\[47\] Dalman, 559

the two churches- which is much deeper than Mariology.”

**Peter Canisius** (1521 - 1597)

In 1577, Peter Canisius wrote the *Incomparable Virgin Mary*. This is considered the first significant Mariological work after the Reformation.

Peter Canisius is often cited in the writings of a Lapide. In 1558, Canisius published and popularized the Litany of Loreto. The Litany was written as a response to the Protestants who attacked devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. In a Lapide’s commentaries, the Litany of Loreto and titles of Mary which it invoked were frequently quoted. It was influential in a Lapide’s writings because it engendered devotion to Mary among the faithful laity, which was one of the purposes for which a Lapide published his commentaries.

**Michael Baius** (1513-1589)

Michael Baius was born in Melin, Belgium in 1513. He died in Louvain in 1589. Baius studied philosophy at the University of Louvain in 1533. He then studied theology there until 1541. From 1544-1551, he taught both philosophy and theology at his alma mater. In 1551, he was named “Regius Professor of Sacred Scripture.”

49 Noll, *Die mariologischen Grundlinien im exegetischen Werk des Cornelius a Lapide SJ (1567-1637)* 451

50 Petrus Canisius, *De Maria virgine incomparabili et Dei Genitrice sacrosancta libri quinque* (Ingolstadr 1577), 68.


Baüus found himself in conflict with the teachings of the Church regarding the doctrine of original sin and justification of the great scholastics, as well as the teachings of the Council of Trent. “Between 1563 and 1566 Baüus published various opuscula that contain his essential doctrine and system.”53 In 1567, Pius V condemned 79 propositions in his writings. Baüus was ordered to abandon his heretical teachings. “By 1580, Baüus and the entire faculty of Louvain submitted.”54

A Lapide would have been cognizant of the teachings of Baüus and the errors he taught, especially in his use of the scriptures and his disregard for the tradition of the church.55 It may be plausible to deduce that a Lapide became, as a result, a staunch defender of the faith, considering the problems which arose at the University of Louvain in the years previous to a Lapide’s tenure as a professor there (1596-1616).

**Leonard Lessius (1554 - 1623)**

Leonard Lessius was born in Brecht near Antwerp (Belgium) in 1554. At a young age Lessius began studying philosophy at the University of Louvain. He became a Jesuit. He taught philosophy at the College of Douai. Later he was sent to Rome and studied under Bellarmine and Suarez. “Returning to Belgium in 1584, he taught theology at the University of Louvain. There he shocked some of the older professors by substituting in his classes the Summa of St. Thomas for the...”

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53 Gale, 18

54 Gale, 18

55 Gale, 21. These are the most significant errors in Baüus’ teaching. “1. The state of pure nature is a useless fiction of scholastics and involves fiction of scholastic and involves insoluble contradiction. 2. The justice and merits of man in the state of original innocence were natural and did not proceed from grace. 3. Fallen man is determined to evil whenever he is not drawn by charity into holiness. 4. God may and does command man to do the impossible without any justice. 5. Charity, which is the transitory impulse of God, is the only and infallible source of good works and of merit. 6. “Man is not free under the influence of grace. Unfortunately the errors of Baüus gave rise to Jansenism. Baüus, however, died in union with the Church.”
customary Liber Sententiarium of Peter Lombard."

Because Lessius was taught by Michael Bañus, some felt that Lessius had become a follower of his. After a bitter quarrel between the Bañus' followers and the Jesuits, the doctrine of Lessius was found to be in line with Church teaching.

Lessius' most famous work is De justicia et jure (Louvain, 1605) in which he deals with the morality of the marketplace and fair trade. "Representative of Lessius' spirituality is his little series of meditations called De summo bono et aeterna beatitudine hominiis (Antwerp, 1620). His cause for beatification has been introduced."

Leonard Lessius was a contemporary of a Lapide. Lessius was influenced by some of the same theologians as a Lapide, such as Bellarmine and Suarez. As Jesuits, theologians, and fellow Belgians, Lessius and a Lapide had much in common. A Lapide would be familiar with the writings of Lessius as well as the controversies which surrounded his life and scholarly works.

"A Lapide has some points in common with Leonard Lessius. Thus one can rightly speak from a deep influence of the teacher on his pupil. For one there is an affinity with mystical theology. Lessius was under the strong influence of Flemish mystics, especially John Ruysbroecks (1293-1381) and also a Lapide. In their works, both proceed always from the speculative to a mystical theology which is aimed toward the unity with the people of salvation history. Like Lessius, a Lapide was also marked by very intimate and personal Marian devotion. Both of them were leading a Marian congregation."


57 C. Meyer, 578, The New Catholic Encyclopedia,

St. Robert Bellarmine (1542 - 1621)

St. Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621), Cardinal and Doctor of the Church, was a Jesuit who studied at Louvain in Belgium. Every day after finishing the divine office, Robert Bellarmine recited the Office of the Blessed Virgin. Every day he used to recite a rosary after dinner and again in the evening after compline. Every Saturday he fasted in honor of the Blessed Virgin.59

“A Lapide was a great admirer of Robert Bellarmine, who had a deep love for Scripture, Church history and Patristics in order to systematize Church doctrine against attacks of reformers. In 1588, Bellarmine became spiritual director of the Roman College. From 1592, Bellarmine served as Rector of the Roman College, Provincial of the Jesuits Neapolitan Province (1594) and became theologian to Pope Clement VIII in 1597. In 1599, Bellarmine was created Cardinal by the same pope. He served on all the Roman congregations and many commissions. Robert Bellarmine was effective in Church and state relations. In 1616, Robert Bellarmine had to admonish Galileo, whom he admired. A Lapide in turn had great admiration and respect for Robert Bellarmine. Accordingly, he often quotes Bellarmine in his writings.”60

IV. Situating Cornelius a Lapide within the time of the Reformation, Zwingli, and Luther

To understand the exegetical methodology adopted by a Lapide, the reader must be cognizant of the period of the Reformation which preceded the writings of the great Belgian exegete. In Werner Kümmel's book, *The New Testament: The History of the Investigation of Its Problems*, the author delineates fundamental observations regarding the understanding of the Reformers, such as Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli, regarding the interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures.\(^{61}\) This methodology is well defined by the Wittenberg Reformer. Luther insisted that the "Word of God has but one meaning, a simple, unequivocal one even though occasionally he still resorted to allegorical interpretations for devotional ends."\(^{62}\) Luther’s methodology stood in dark contrast to the humanistic tradition prevalent in his day, as well as the "papist opponents and against Erasmus."\(^{63}\)

In summary, Luther’s methodology was based on a *literal sense* of the Scripture. He rejected all papal and conciliar interpretations of the Bible. Luther believed in the “sola scriptura” principle, “the Holy Spirit, is the plainest writer and speaker in heaven and earth, and therefore His words cannot have more than one, that the very simplest sense, which we call the *literal, ordinary, natural sense.*\(^{64}\)

From the beginning, Luther attacked the four writings of Hebrews, James, Jude and Revelation and did not include them in the table of contents of his own Bible. While they were not

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\(^{62}\) Kümmel, 33

\(^{63}\) Kümmel, 33

\(^{64}\) Kümmel, 22
eliminated from the Bible, Luther had serious doubts whether these books were canonical in nature. However, Luther would rely on the New Testament as the true Word of God.\textsuperscript{65}

In 1520, about the same time as Luther, Ulrich Zwingli came to a similar conclusion regarding the Scriptures interpreting themselves. "... the Word of God had become the only vehicle - and a vehicle effective in its own right - of the renewal of the world and Church."\textsuperscript{66} Reformers such as Luther and Zwingli postulated "Every understanding and exposition of Scripture is to be in agreement with the notion of faith... For everything that is said concerning Scripture or on the basis of Scripture must be in agreement with all the catechism declares of that is taught by the articles of faith."\textsuperscript{67}

Another prevalent mode of interpretation among the Reformers was the rigorous understanding of New Testament in terms of their historical setting. Two interpreters, Hugo Grothius and John Lightfoot (an Anglican priest), "set in motion the efforts of students of the history of religions to view the New Testament in the setting furnished by its historical environments."\textsuperscript{68}

\textsuperscript{65}George H. Anderson, J. Francis Stafford, and Joseph A. Burgess. \textit{The One Mediator, The Saints, and Mary}. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1992, 240-241 "Luther was equally consistent in his view of artistic representations of Mary. There is evidence that he kept a painting of Mary with the baby Jesus in her arms in his study at the Black Cloister, though the painter is not known. He opposed the iconoclasts, especially the radicals (\textit{Bilderstürmer}) in his own camp, but he also opposed abuses in art. Some pictures, for example, exposed Mary's breast which, according to legend, had nurtured Bernard of Clairvaux. That goes too far, Luther declared, 'I do not Like Mary's breasts or milk, for she did not redeem or save me,' he commented in 1537... Mary and her Magnificat should lead worshipers to give thanks, hear the gospel, and meditate on her as a model of Faith. These norms guided him as to which festivals to keep. He rejected the festivals of Mary's immaculate Conception, December 8, and her Assumption, August 15. It is not quite clear which festivals he did favor, but in the sixteenth century most Lutheran Territories celebrated the festivals of Purification (February 2), of Annunciation (March 25), and of Visitation (July 2). Luther considered these festivals to be festivals of Christ also. Mary can be celebrated as the "Mother of God" precisely because Jesus is the son of God. To conclude: to Luther Mary was the prime example of the faithful—a \textit{typus ecclesiae} embodying unmerited grace. Mary is a paradigm for the indefectibility of the Church. But Mary is not the "mother of mercy (\textit{mater misericordiae}) interceding with God and Christ for humankind."


\textsuperscript{67}Küimmel, 30

\textsuperscript{68}Küimmel, 39
While many of the Reformers' biblical works as well as their theological insights on were noteworthy, they did not break through the "wholly unhistorical position of the rigidly orthodox Protestant and also Catholic theologians with respect to the New Testament." 69

A Lapide comments on all books of the Bible except Job and Psalms, in contrast to the Reformers who left aside such inspired Scripture as Hebrews, Jude, James and Revelation. A Lapide also uses the various methods of Catholic Tradition as well as devotional insights in explaining the text. He also was familiar with several biblical and Semitic languages which he uses in his commentaries. He is not a fundamentalist nor is he fixed on the literal interpretation as were the reformers mentioned in this section. He develops a pastoral interpretation as well as spiritual one. Integrated in his writings is a formational aspect for his readers who most likely are seminarians.

69 Kümmel, 39
CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER ONE

Chapter one of this dissertation introduces the reader to the life and person of Fr. Cornelius a Lapide, SJ, (1567 - 1637) post-Tridentine Belgian exegete who wrote volumes of commentaries on all the books of the Bible, except Psalms and Job. A Lapide was a scholar, a teacher and man with a deep love for the Lord, the Church, the Sacred Scriptures and Sacred Tradition. In his writings, Cornelius a Lapide also demonstrates a love and devotion to Mary, the Mother of God who becomes a model of faith and virtue for him. This notion of Mary as “model of faith and virtue” will be seen in his biblical writings in Chapters three and four of the dissertation, as actual texts from a Lapide’s commentaries will demonstrate.

In section one of this chapter, a brief biographical sketch of a Lapide’s life was given. Born in Limburg, Belgium in 1567, a Lapide’s life occurred during the Counter-Reformation or Post-Tridentine period. A Lapide was a Flemish Jesuit and exegete who spent more than forty years of his life teaching the Scriptures and writing voluminous commentaries on the entire Bible, with the exception of Psalms and the Book of Job.

As a Jesuit, Cornelius lived and taught in Louvain and in the Roman College for forty years of his life. A Lapide was a popular teacher, well loved by his students, who enjoyed his lively lectures on the Sacred Scriptures. Because a Lapide was gifted in languages, he was able to converse with so many of his students who came from various backgrounds and cultures in Europe, speaking various languages.

A Lapide wrote volumes on the Scriptures and a number of edition of his commentaries were published many times during his life span, and even after his death. This speaks volumes well of his outstanding biblical commentaries which were written for both the spiritual nourishment of the
lay faithful as well as for preachers in their pulpit exposition.

In part two of Chapter one, a presentation is made of the Marian Spirituality of Cornelius a Lapide and the influence of the Jesuit spirituality in his life and writings. It is apparent the formative years of young Cornelius as a Jesuit that Mary herself becomes an educator for him in the ways of faith. Also, the influence of the Saints, especially Ignatius Loyola will have a profound effect on the life of Fr. Cornelius a Lapide but also on his biblical commentaries which are filled with his own Marian spirituality. This will be evidenced later in the dissertation as a Lapides’s Old Testament and New Testament Marian texts are presented.

Part three of Chapter one surveys five contemporaries of Cornelius a Lapide who influenced the Belgian exegete. They are: Francis Suarez, Peter Canisius, Michael Baüis, Leonard lessius and Robert Bellarmine. These men help form a Lapide as a theologian and as a person of deep devotion and love for Our Lord, Our Lady and the Sacred Scriptures. Often, Suarez, Canisius and Bellarmine are quoted in his commentaries. Baüis and Lessius are not often quoted in his commentaries but he respected both of these theologians and was influenced by them because he lived and taught with these men. They were contemporaries of a Lapide. Yet, Cornelius kept some distance from some of their theological teachings which were contrary to Church teachings.

In part four of this chapter, a Lapide’s writings are situated within the time period preceding his birth, the Reformation period during the time of Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli. A Lapide’s commentaries were written in an apologetical style to counter some of the writings and the doctrines of these two prominent Reformation figures. Both believed in the “Sola Scripture” principle and had little if any regard for the Sacred Tradition which Catholic believe is an important source for understanding the “Sacra pagina” within an ecclesial context. The Reformers rejected all papal
interpretations of the Bible and Luther's methodology was based on a literal sense of the Scripture. In Luther's theology, the Holy Spirit would reveal the one, true sense of Scripture. No other senses or sources were needed to understand the Word of God. Zwingli held a similar opinion regarding the Scripture in that the Scriptures and the Catechism must be in agreement when it comes to creedal statements, or article of faith.

As we will see in the research presented in this study, a Lapide's biblical commentaries will directly respond to the Reformers, Luther, and Zwingli, and in apologetical style, will defend the Church's doctrines and teachings.

A Lapide was considered an outstanding Catholic exegete of the post-Tridentine era; however, he was in the good company of many other fellow Jesuits like Maldonado (d. 1583) who wrote extensive Biblical commentaries in the Post-Reformation Era.70

A Lapide's name appears in almost every list of post-Tridentine exeges who made a significant contribution to Catholic Biblical scholarship of the post-Tridentine period.71 In the book

70 Anselm Biggs and Peter W. Becker, 546-547, Reformation and Counter Reformation, New York: Seabury Press, 1980. “Biblical was not outdistanced by textual criticism. Whereas the exegetical works of the Jesuit Francisco de Toledo, important also as philosopher and preacher, are only a part of his total achievements, Juan de Maldonado (d. 1583) became the most celebrated exegete of the period with his commentary on the Gospels (posthumously published in 1596) and those on the Old Testament. Both men came from the Salamanca school. But in the extent of exegetical accomplishment both were surpassed by Cornelius a Lapide (van Steen, d. 1637), who commented on almost all the books of the Bible during his long teaching career at Louvain. Sixtus of Siena (d. 1569) established the “introduction” to Scripture on a scientific basis. After his conversion from Judaism he had been condemned to death for alleged heresy, pardoned through Ghislieri’s intervention, and admitted to the Dominican Order. His Bibliotheca Sacra contained not only the most complete introduction to Scripture up to that time but also a critical history of biblical interpretation.”

71 216, The Cambridge History of the Bible: The West From the Reformation to the Present Day. Cambridge, University Press, 1963. “Cornelius a Lapide (or van den Steyn, 1567-1637) was the universal commentator of the Baroque age, and himself in his profusion partook of its spirit. It is true that the commentary of Estius (or van Esten, 1543-1613) on the Epistles would have been found in most Catholic libraries of the age, but the Baianist tendency of this Douai professor led to his being relegated into a lower place. A Lapide was a man of wide learning and calm disposition, and although his works now seem marred by his credulity in accepting many a legend from apocryphal sources in his anxiety not to throw away anything that might serve to interpret the sacred text, one can still find much valuable insight in the ‘canons of interpretation’ which he lays down before starting to
A Companion to Scripture Studies the author, John E. Steinmueller classifies the Catholic Scripture exegetes who produced significant biblical commentaries from the Council of Trent to 1650, commonly referred to as "The Golden Age of Catholic."

Lastly, a Lapide is a man deeply in love with the Church and in biblical scholarship from the patristic and medieval eras. He uses St. Teresa of Avila as an example of great saints who open themselves to Christ speaking in the sacred scriptures, mindful of the Church’s great tradition and resources in understanding the meaning of the Sacred Scriptures.

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72 John E. Steinmueller. 272-273, A Companion to Scripture Studies, "There were noteworthy authors in the areas of biblical criticism, biblical geography and biblical archeology. In the category of biblical commentaries, Cornelius a Lapide is listed among the many notable Jesuit and other Catholic biblical scholars of his time who wrote exegetical works on either Old or New Testament, or the entire Bible: James Bonfrerius, SJ (d. 1642), Nicholas Serarius, SJ (d. 1609), Benjamin Pererius, SJ (d. 1610), St. Robert Bellarmine, SJ (d. 1621), . . . John Pineda, SJ (d.1637) and . . . John Maldonatus, SJ (d. 1583),"

73 Scott Hahn, 181-182, Scriptures Matters: Essays on Reading the Bible from the Heart of the Church. Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Road Publishing, 2003. "The fortunes of the Church throughout history depend on her love of Christ and, consequently, her openness to Him speaking through Scripture. The great Catholic Scripture commentator, Cornelius a Lapide, testifies to the conviction of Saint Teresa of Avila: 'Saint] Teresa, a woman endowed with the spirit of prophecy, and renowned throughout all Spain for the glory of her miracles, and the sanctity of her life, was taught by God that all the troubles of the church, all the evils in the world, flow from this source, that men do not, by clear and sound knowledge, and serious consideration, penetrate into the verities of Sacred Scripture.'"
CHAPTER TWO: BIBLICAL METHODOLOGY OF CORNELIUS A LAPIDE AND VATICAN / POST-VATICAN II

I. The four senses of scripture in patristic times

In tracing the history of Catholic, a brief synopsis of the African and Latin Church Fathers who used, studied and interpreted the Sacred Scripture may be helpful. To perform this task, I will focus on the exegetical work of Bertrand Buby’s *Mary of Galilee, Vol. III, The Marian Heritage of the Early Church*, particularly Chapter Three of his work “Patristics and Marian Thought,” which outlines the history of in the Patristic period. The Church Fathers who will be examined are: **Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Cyprian** and **Athanasius**. Mention will also be made of the work of **Tertullian** who is considered the “earliest Latin Christian writer to develop a Marian Theology.”

I will conclude part one with **John Cassian** (d.435) who distinguishes the four senses of Scripture which became classic in the Middle Ages. Cassian’s definition of the four senses was also used by Cornelius a Lapide in the Post-Tridentine period when he wrote his biblical commentaries.

**Clement of Alexandria (150-215 A.D.)**

Born in Athens, Clement is identified with the Alexandria School of thought. The Alexandria School approached scripture from an allegorical point of view. This background will enable the reader to understand the more prolific writings of Origen, one of Clement’s students and probably the greatest of intellectual geniuses in early Christianity.

Clement’s understanding of Scripture emphasizes Jesus as the Logos or Word of God. Therefore, Clement emphasizes the divinity of Christ. His theology would be classified as a High

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75 Buby, SM, 66
Christology.

Clement would model the Alexandrian Method of which would involve these seven principles:

1.) In the first principle, Clement would accept the fact that both Old and New Testaments form an organic whole and must be studied as a unity, with God as the author and “primary cause”\(^76\) of both Testaments.

2.) Clement’s second principle is the allegorical method of understanding the Sacred text. In it Clement would search for a spiritual meaning to the Scriptures. “The Scriptures are often seen by Clement as hiding their sense because they are frequently parabolic in style. The Lord himself employed metaphorical language.”\(^77\)

3.) A third principle used by Clement is “the Scriptures are to be interpreted by the Scriptures . . . the true interpreter does not merely apply one’s own meaning to the names or words of Scripture; the interpreter makes use of all the Scriptures and establishes each one of the points demonstrated in the Scriptures again from similar scripture.”\(^78\)

4.) In his fourth principle, Clement makes “use of philosophy and culture to support his interpretation. A distinct characteristic of Clement’s is that he sees the philosophy of Plato offering support and insights into the Scriptures.”\(^79\)

5.) A fifth principle employed by Clement is the use of the Logos as an instructor or teacher.

\(^76\)Buby, SM, 68

\(^77\)Buby, SM, 68

\(^78\)Buby, SM, 69

\(^79\)Buby, SM, 70
in the history of humanity. "Clement, too has the thought that believers are progressively led and taught through the Word of God." 80

6.) Clement's sixth principle involves typology. This exegetical tool combines the Old Testament to the New Testament. Buby states that Irenaeus and Origen use this principle quite frequently in their writings. 81

7.) The seventh and final exegetical principle is that gnosis plays an important role in the of Clement. "Gnosis here means the knowledge of God. God is the proper object of Clement's 'gnosis.' This gnosis is a gift of God which differs from human reason; it is an illumination." 82

To conclude, Clement's may be summarized in the following manner:

1.) In Clement's interpretation of Scripture, the Bible belongs to the Church. He sees the tradition of the Church as key to understanding the Scripture.

2.) Philosophy is an important tool to be used in understanding Scripture. Clement favors Platonic philosophy and calls it the "handmaid of Scripture." 83

3.) Clement places greater emphasis on the spiritual rather than the literal sense of Scripture.

Tertullian (155/160 - 240/250 A.D.)

Tertullian is a "rhetorician, lawyer and theological . . . Tertullian, who was dedicated to proclaiming and clarifying the truths of Christianity was most faithful to his understanding of the

80 Buby, SM, 70
81 Buby, SM, 70
82 Buby, SM, 71
83 Buby, SM, 74
Christian and Jewish Scriptures.\textsuperscript{84}

Buby states that Tertullian would not be considered an exegete even though he does offer commentaries in his works on the Sacred Scriptures.\textsuperscript{85}

It is important to note that Tertullian makes use of "Marian references in the New Testament for the first time in early Christian writings . . . Tertullian links Mary to the soteriological mystery of Christ."\textsuperscript{86}

\textbf{Origen (185 - 254 A.D.)}

In the patristic era, Origen's contribution to biblical plays a significant role in understanding the use of the senses in interpreting the Sacred biblical texts. Origen is the first "textual critic of the Bible, according to Buby.\textsuperscript{87} Origen was a librarian, an archivist, or grammarian and a theologian. Origen began a school at Caesarea in Palestine much like the one in Alexandria which was a global center for catechetical instruction in antiquity.

Origen believed there was a hidden or spiritual meaning in the interpretation of Scripture. Origen understood that all Scripture was inspired by God and believed that the Holy Spirit guided the work of the human authors of the Bible.

Most important in understanding Origen's exegetical style of interpretation is his use of the threefold sense of Scripture. The three senses are: the \textit{literal and historical} (which is also referred to as the "body"); the \textit{moral} (or the psyche), and the \textit{spiritual} (or the pneuma). However, it is

\textsuperscript{84}Buby, SM, 75
\textsuperscript{85}Buby, SM, 75
\textsuperscript{86}Buby, SM, 85
\textsuperscript{87}Buby, SM, 86
interesting to note that the moral sense is rarely used by Origen. In his writings Origen stresses the use of the deeper spiritual sense of Scriptures. Buby notes that Origen often used the spiritual sense to understand some of the more difficult texts in Scripture 'where one would either be scandalized (for example, the incest of Lot, Jacob’s marriage to sisters and two handmaids) or those texts which would be unworthy of God because of their anthropomorphic nature.'

Like Clement, Origen maintains fidelity to the Church’s understanding of Scripture. He too insists that the Sacred Scriptures belong to the Church and it is the exegete’s obligation to maintain and promote the rich tradition of the Church through its interpretation of Scripture. Like Clement, there is a unity of Old and New Testament. Origen’s emphasis and great contribution to exegesis is the spiritual sense.

"Origen is the Marian doctor par excellence. His devotion to the Word made flesh (Jn 1:14) led him to discover in the Mother of the Word a person of great faith and love... The Marian insights of Ambrose and Jerome are dependent upon Origen,“ who views Mary’s virginity as “an integrity of a life lived totally in conformity to the promises of the Old Testament which she pondered over and saw fulfilled in her Son.”

Cyprian (200/210 - 258 A.D.)

Cyprian was a bishop who ministered for ten years to the people of Carthage during a time of rampant persecutions on the part of Decius and Valerian. During Cyprian’s episcopate, the Church in Africa found itself in conflict with Pope Stephen (254-257 A.D.) Regarding the issue of the

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88 Buby, SM, 91
89 Buby, SM, 97
90 Buby, SM, 97
baptism of a heretic. There was a jurisdiction question regarding the issue of baptism by heretics which left Stephen I and Cyprian in conflict with each other. So deep was the divide that eventually “Stephen was martyred in 257 C.E. while Cyprian was martyred as the first African Bishop on September 14, 258 C.E.” However, Cyprian’s writings do not offer any other significant Scripture insights on Mary, other than the one mentioned above.

**Athanasius of Alexandria (295 - 373 A.D)**

Athanasius was born in Egypt and was a convert to Christianity. He is considered a doctor of the Church and his writings as a bishop span from 346 - 356 A.D. Athanasius is similar in exegetical style to Origen and is deeply devoted to the Virgin Mary. He writes many homilies, essays, apologetics and commentaries on The Old and New Testaments.

Athanasius is the first theologian to refer to Mary as sister. He also refers to her as Mother Zion which was a new title for Mary in the time of Athanasius.

“*Athanasius*’ Marian theology is embedded in his familiarity with the New Testament Marian texts and his knowledge of the Old Testament.”

In his writings, Athanasius defends Mary as the Theotokos and sees her as a “model and exemplar for those dedicated to virginity.”

In presenting these five theologians/exegetes of the early centuries of the Church’s existence, it becomes evident that Origen is “the first great master and most original thinkers of all times.”

Many early Church Fathers owe a great deal to Origen, especially Jerome, because they were

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91 Buby, SM, 99
92 Buby, SM, 102
93 Buby, SM, 103
94 Buby, SM, 88
profoundly influenced by this great Alexandrian exegete. We can also say that Origen offers us the first systematic view of interpreting the Scriptures by use of the senses. In Origen's there is the threefold sense of interpreting Scripture: the literal, the moral and the spiritual. “Origen is among the first to demonstrate this useful approach in commenting on the Virgin.” 95

In the fifth century, John Cassian, the great founder of the monastic trend in biblical was able to distinguish the study of the four senses as the historical (literal) the allegorical (typological), the moral or tropological and the anagogic. He was convinced that as the monk became purer of heart in his desire to interpret the sacred text, he would also become more skillful in his understanding of the spiritual sense.

“Although these divisions were not rigid and were applied in different ways, a Latin verse, originated by the Dominican Augustine of Denmark, became the student’s catchword” 96

With some assistance from John Cassian, a definition of the four senses of scripture would be appropriate:

The historical (literal) sense is the meaning expressed directly by the words of the sacred writers. The question which needs to be asked, “what is the background of the text?” Another question would be, what did the passage mean in its own day? These are questions asked of the text when deriving the literal sense of the scriptures.

The allegorical (typological) sense is a metaphor, a description of one thing under the image of another. The allegorical sense understands deeper meaning of the text.

95 Buby, SM 87

96 George T. Montague, SM. Understanding the Bible: A Basic Introduction To Biblical Interpretation 52-53 “Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria, /Moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia./The literal sense shows what happened,/ the allegorical what you are to believe, /the moral what you are to do, the anagogical where you are headed.”
The **moral** (tropological) **sense** is an interpretation of scripture in a moralistic sense. The moral sense seeks to offer guidance in living out the scriptures in one’s every day life.

The **mystical (anagogical) sense** reveals a hidden spiritual meaning of the end-times. It has an eschatological quality to its interpretation. It names the four last things, namely, death, judgment, heaven and hell.

These definitions of the four senses of scriptures were used by John Cassian and throughout the Middle Ages. In post reformation times, a Lapide used these four senses of scripture to understand the sacred text in a classical way, respectful of the ancient tradition of the church as it was developed by the Church Fathers throughout the early centuries.

A Lapide used the four senses as this preferred method of explaining the texts. This is apparent in the texts in which he refers to Mary, the Mother of Jesus. It also enables him to associate languages, devotions, spirituality and even polemic argumentation against the Reformers who deny some of the dogmatic prerogatives of Mary.
II. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* and its continuity with de Lubac's definitions of the four senses

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and its section on the senses of Scripture (numbers 115-118)\(^97\) refers to an "ancient tradition" to distinguish the two senses of Scripture, the literal and the spiritual. The spiritual is subdivided into three other senses: allegorical, moral and anagogical.

The catechism quotes from St. Thomas Aquinas regarding a doctrinal synthesis in understanding these two senses of the inspired text, as ways to better express the truths given in God's Holy Word.

The Catechism offers this definition of the Literal sense.

"The *literal sense* is the meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by following the rules of sound interpretation: "All other senses of Sacred Scripture are based on the literal."\(^98\)

The Catechism affirms that the text of Scripture may be rich with meaning for the explanation of future events. The Catechism states,

"Thanks to the unity of God’s plan, not only the text of Scripture but also the realities and events about which it speaks can be signs."\(^99\)

The Catechism defines the three divisions of the Spiritual sense in this manner:

1.) *allegorical*: In understanding an important event such as the crossing of the Red Sea, so too we can acquire a more profound understanding of events as they relate the Christ.

"... thus the crossing of the Red Sea is a sign or type of Christ's victory also of Christian Baptism."\(^100\)


\(^98\) *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 33

\(^99\) *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 33

\(^100\) *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 33
2.) **moral**: There are sacred moments described in Scripture that inspire us to live a more Christian way of life.

3.) **Anagogical**: There are events and moments in the sacred Scriptures which assist us in understanding their heavenly or eternal significance. One example is that the Church on earth is a sign of the heavenly Jerusalem.

In the first section of this chapter, a historical view of the Patristic use of the senses was presented. The Catechism points to these classical notions about the meaning of Scripture which correspond to the exegetical works of Church Fathers like Origen and Jerome. The quotation by the catechism of the medieval couplet situates its most sacred teachings and doctrine within the context of traditional biblical:

“The Letter speaks of deeds; allegory to faith; the moral how to act; anagoge our destiny.”

When speaking of the fullness of Scripture, the Church urges the faithful not to dismiss the spiritual sense in biblical.

“The profound concordance of the four senses guarantees all its richness to the living reading of Scripture in the Church.”

In his theological masterpiece, Henri De Lubac’s *Medieval Exegesis*, intends to present “an historical and literal study of the ancient commentators on Scripture.” He begins the book by stating that his task is to expose the intention of the ancient and medieval authors and not their various applications of exegesis. De Lubac presents a spiritual exegesis to connect history and scripture as

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101 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 33

102 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 33

103 Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, p. XIII
a theological whole.

In the book, de Lubac explores the intention of these ancient and medieval authors. He is attempting to portray their mentality and not their methodologies. He considers his work a contribution, not to history of exegesis, but to the history of theology. De Lubac’s work presents spiritual exegesis as a whole theology of history which is connected with a theology of scripture.

De Lubac offers two fundamental senses of scripture: the letter and the spirits. These two senses are passes on the mystery of the Incarnation in which Jesus is both human and divine, who lived in a particular moment in salvation history, who is now eternal in time. The fourfold sense of scripture is derives by subdividing the spiritual sense into three parts, and all four parts are related organically to each other.

Here are the four senses defined, according to de Lubac:

The **literal sense**, is deeply rooted in history. The literal sense records the fact that God has acted in history.

The **allegorical sense** is rooted in the concrete historical fact of the Incarnation. Spiritual truth is profound and goes deeper than the literal and historical sense of the Old Testament. Content and theology define this Christian sense of allegory, not method.

The **moral sense** generates a behavioral response from the Christian. The moral sense follows from the allegorical. This sense responds to the Truth which is unveiled by allegory.

The **anagogical sense** points toward the eternal realities of the Kingdom of God. This sense directs us toward the eternal goal of God in heaven. The Christian’s moral life lived out according to the laws of God leads on to the anagogical sense.
De Lubac admits that the fourfold sense was not the only way to view scripture. Origen’s triple sense (literal, moral, allegorical) was preserved by great medieval minds such as Peter Lombard, Rupert of Deutz and Richard of St. Victor. De Lubac and the Catechism agree that using the four senses of Scripture continues to be a time-honored and appropriate way to deepen one’s understanding of the scripture.
III. Understanding of Exegesis in time of Trent. (1545-1563)

A Lapide will describe the ecclesiological and Mariological significance in the history of salvation. In so doing, his is a bold contrast to what the literal interpretation of the reformers present in their aggressive polemicism against the Catholic Church in their one unifying principle "sola scriptura."

The image of the Church as it became prevalent after the Reformation was apologetically oriented. Robert Bellarmine was particularly influential here with an ecclesiological concept, which emphasized the visible, institutional structure of the Church. Thus, in the foreground stood the Church, united in the papacy, with a strong apologetic impetus. A Lapide is helpful in understanding an ecclesiological dimension to Scripture as it is used in the Post-Reformation Church.

The division of Christendom brought about through the Reformation in the sixteenth century caused a setback to Marian devotion. Against Luther's and other reformers' increased distance from Catholic Marian doctrine, the Catholic representatives pointed out the significance of Mary in the work of redemption. The Council of Trent and the post-Tridentine period, marked by the aforementioned apologetic impetus, gave rise to a new Catholic self-confidence and a marked Marian piety; the latter was central to the Counter-Reformation and particularly influential in strengthening the faith. "In the ecclesiological perspective, Mary's position remained that of being the Mother of God and the most excellent member of Christ's body. All gifts, graces and divine influence proceed from Christ, the head of the Church, through Mary, the neck into the body of the Church."

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105 Erwin, Iserloh, Joseph Glazik, and Hubert Jedin, 547
IV. Exegesis in the Vatican and post-Vatican II period

In this part of the present study, a presentation will be made of three documents of Vatican II and Post Vatican II that are significant in the world of Catholic biblical interpretation. Two of these documents were promulgated during the Second Vatican Council. The first is the Eighth chapter of *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, which is considered a synthesis of Catholic, Marian teachings as well as a scriptural overview of biblical passages accommodated to or directly relating to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The second document presented is *Dei Verbum*, the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, which presents the important principles of Catholic biblical interpretation. The third document, written in 1993 and published by the Pontifical Biblical Commission, is the *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (IBC), which draws much of its material from the foundational principles of *Dei Verbum*, but also gives an overview of Catholic biblical interpretation in the last fifty years since the promulgation of Pope Pius XII's *Divino Afflante Spiritu*. The purpose of presenting these three biblical documents is to provide a background for the post Vatican II presentation of Marian texts and the contemporary Catholic methodologies used to analyze them, which will be presented in Chapters three and four.

*Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter is the Mystery of the Church. Chapter two covers the People of God. Chapter three speaks of the Church as hierarchy. Chapter four talks about the laity as the Church. Chapter five talks about the universal call to holiness. Chapter six is about the religious life. Chapter seven covers the pilgrim church, and Chapter Eight is titled, "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the mystery of Christ and the Church." In Chapter seven, *Lumen Gentium* first mentions the Blessed Virgin Mary and develops its understanding of Mary within the context of the communion of saints. "The Church
has always believed that the apostles and Christ’s martyrs, who have given the supreme witness of charity and faith, by the shedding of their blood, are closely joined with us in Christ, and she has always venerated them with special devotion, together with the Blessed Virgin Mary and the holy angels." *(Lumen Gentium, 50)*

In Chapter Eight, the Council points to Mary as an image of the Church. The Council makes an analogy between Mary and the Church to demonstrate what the Church is and what the Church longs to be. *Lumen Gentium* stresses the ecclesial, typical approach, that Mary belongs to the mystery of Christ, but that she also belongs fully to the Church as a preeminent member of the community. *Lumen Gentium* offers a scriptural summary of Mary in the Old and New Testaments. Buby states that Chapter Eight of *Lumen Gentium* is considered "the fullest and most authoritative synthesis about the Mother of the Lord ever to be compiled in a Church Council. This compendium on Mary’s role in the history of salvation demonstrates the importance of a biblical understanding of Mary."¹⁰⁶

The Blessed Virgin Mary is mentioned in ten of the sixteen conciliar documents. In the decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, she is called "Queen of Apostles." In the decree on Religious Life, Mary’s life is a rule of life for all according to St. Ambrose. In the decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, Mary is seen as a model of spiritual and apostolic life. Yet, it is *Lumen Gentium* which offers a full and complete portrait of the Virgin Mary in the life of the Scriptures and the Church.

It is interesting to note that Chapter Eight of *Lumen Gentium* covers many magisterial documents, including different ecumenical councils and papal statements. It also footnotes a variety of Patristic and medieval writings. These footnotes offer greater clarity to understanding Chapter Eight.

¹⁰⁶Bertrand Buby, *Mary of Galilee: Vol. I.* xvii
The Marian chapter of *Lumen Gentium* opens with three sources. The first is a quote from Scripture, Galatians 4:4, which is a foreshadowing of a Jewish woman in the birth of the Messiah. The second source quotes from the Nicene Creed. The third source is from the Liturgy itself, taken from the Roman Canon. *Lumen Gentium* is biblical in its foundation, and presents most scriptural passages that refer to Mary. However, *Lumen Gentium* also points out that Mary is a model of virtues, and in her, the Church is already reached the perfection of holiness that all its members are called to. Mary is also presented in *Lumen Gentium* as a model for evangelization. "The Church, in her apostolic work also, justly looks to her who brought forth Christ, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, that through the Church, he may be born and may increase in the hearts of the faithful also." (*Lumen Gentium*, 65) Therefore, Mary is an example and model for those who carry out the work of evangelization in the Church.

*Dei Verbum*, The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, promulgated at the end of the fourth session of Vatican in November 1965 by Paul VI, is divided into six chapters. The first chapter describes the meaning of revelation and the response of faith and reason, specifically to Jesus Christ and the salvation history. The second chapter presents Scripture, Tradition and the Teaching Magisterium of the Church, which have a common source and three links that must be joined together as one, under the action of the Holy Spirit for the salvation of souls. Chapter three expounds on the principle for interpreting Sacred Scripture. Chapter four describes the purpose and value of the Old Testaments and the relation between Old and New. Chapter five discusses the saving of work of Jesus and the prominence of the four Gospels and other books of the New Testament. Chapter six outlines the importance of Sacred Scripture in the life of the Church, the study of Scripture, its relationship to the Theology and its significance in the life of the laity.
What is most important in *Dei Verbum* for the mariologist and for our present study of the works of Cornelius a Lapide is the following statement, found in the Constitution: "The books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching, firmly, faithfully and without error, that truth, which God wanted put into the Sacred writing for the sake of our salvation." (*Dei Verbum*, Chapter 3, vs. 11). Buby states in his article, "The Use of Biblical Methodologies in Marian Theology Today," that this statement is "an opening for the Marian scholar to assert the role that Mary has in the history of salvation precisely because she cooperated with God’s call for her to be the Mother of the Son of God. Her presence at the foot of the cross (Jn 19:25-28a) and in the upper room (Acts 1:14) point to her role in the Paschal mysteries of her son (Soteriology) and to the descent of the Holy Spirit on the nascent community of the Church (Ecclesiology)."\(^{107}\)

Buby goes on to say that *Dei Verbum* favors a rereading of the Old Testament in light of the Paschal Mystery. "God, the inspirer and author of both Testaments, wisely arranged that the New Testament be hidden in the Old, and the Old be manifest in the New. For, though Christ established the new covenant in his blood (cf. Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25), still the books of the Old Testament, with all their parts, caught up into the proclamation of the gospel, acquire and show forth their full meaning in the new Testament." (*Dei Verbum*, Chapter 4, vs. 16)\(^{108}\)

Also an important aspect of *Dei Verbum* is a quote from the Pontifical Biblical Commission’s document, *The Historical Truths of the Gospel*, which states that there were three stages of development in the gospels: one, the historical time of Jesus of Nazareth; two, apostolic preaching; three, the redaction of the gospel.

\(^{107}\)Buby, SM, 365

\(^{108}\)Buby, SM 365
The final chapter of *Dei Verbum* offers a pastoral note that the Scriptures are the soul of theology. Buby adds that the study of Scripture is the soul of Mariology.

*The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* contains four major sections. The first is an introduction to the methods and approaches for biblical interpretation. This section of the document provides a context for the use of scientific approaches to bible study among Catholic exegetes called the historical critical method. This document examines rhetorical, narrative and semiotic analyses, which are formal methods of biblical study, and offers a number of different approaches that have developed over the years. These approaches are based on tradition, the human sciences and other contextual approaches. The IBC also analyzes the fundamentalist approach to scripture, and indicates that this approach is incompatible with the Catholic perspective.

Part two of the document discusses hermeneutical questions. In particular, it discusses the question, "How is the Bible considered inspired Scripture?" The IBC considers different levels of meaning in the biblical text, all of which are essential. The first is the literal meaning, not to be confused with a literalist meaning, which denotes a fundamentalist interpretation. The second level is a spiritual meaning, and the third is the fuller sense, or in the Latin, "sensus plenior," deeper meaning often associated with spiritual meanings. The document reiterates what the Church has always taught, that the Bible is inspired, but does not choose any particular methodology or explanation to state how it is inspired.

Part three of the IBC discusses characteristics of Catholic interpretation. This part of the document is especially important for this present study, because it serves as a way to remind Catholic exegetes about the different ways the Bible must be interpreted in order to remain faithful to the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and in fidelity with the teaching Magisterium of the Church.
It examines biblical interpretation in the tradition of the Church under these categories: one, rereadings of texts, i.e. when the Bible itself quotes or alludes to biblical texts; two, the connection of the Old with the New, and the New with the Old; three, the primacy of Patristic exegesis in the history of Catholic biblical exegesis. It also reminds Catholic scholars that all members of the Church, bishops, priests and laity have a role in understanding and interpreting the sacred text. The IBC pays attention to the Christological, canonical, ecclesial and ecumenical significance of biblical texts as well as the historical character of biblical revelation. It also underlines the importance of biblical exegesis and interpretation to other branches of theology.

The fourth, and final, section of the IBC serves as a caution to some of the limits of biblical interpretation. It promotes the importance of reading and studying the Bible on a personal level, traditionally called Lectio Divina. It also serves as a reminder of the importance of biblical studies among the faithful in pastoral ministry and ecumenical discussion. The document concludes by encouraging bible study as a most important task for clergy and laity in the life of the Church and the need to use traditional and new ways of understanding the Sacred Scriptures.

For the purpose of this present study, it is necessary to highlight a few statements from the document regarding the importance of rereading the Sacred Scriptures to understand new aspects of meaning which may be different from what was originally intended. The document reminds the faithful that "what characterized Catholic exegesis is that it deliberately places itself in the living tradition of the Church whose first concern is fidelity to the revelation attested to the Bible" (IBC, 88). It is important to note that the contribution of Patristic exegesis consists in this, "to have drawn out from the totality of scripture the basic orientations which shape the doctrinal tradition of the church, and to have provided a rich theological teaching for the instruction and spiritual sustenance of the faithful" (IBC,
129). The Catholic Church has an obligation to study the homilies and commentaries of the Fathers of the Church who directly connected their teaching with a particular understanding of the sacred text. Of course the Fathers also understood that the Bible was meant to be read in Church for the sake of Liturgy. These interpretations were important and helpful both for the Christian community as well as the individual layperson.
V. Cornelius a Lapide’s Method of Scripture Interpretation

According to Raymund Noll in his dissertation *Die Mariologischen Grundlinien in exegetischen werk des Cornelius a Lapide, SJ (1567-1637)*, a Lapide wrote his biblical methodology in the prologue of his *Commentary on the Letters of Paul*, which he wrote in Louven. For the first time he mentions his methodology, which can be framed in four words: solid, brief, methodic and clear. The "solidatis" should help the author find meaning in the examination of the text. The "brevitas" is meant to keep all the comments short and to the point. Cornelius says that it is the judgment of the reader to understand what this means. In a sense, Cornelius actually does not apply brief to himself, because he gives so many examples in his commentaries, which are long. Then the exegete applies "methodice," using a step by step approach in analyzing the sacred text. Finally, the "claritas" should make the text understandable and clear and allowing the truth of the text to unfold and avoiding his own subjective opinion to obscure the meaning of the text.

The Belgian exegete is a synthetic thinker rather than an analyst. A Lapide does not have a Mariological treatise written for all to understand, analyze and digest. Rather, the Marian truths unfold in a Lapide’s commentaries as he analyzes the sacred Scriptures. This is one reason why he uses the spiritual senses so frequently in his writings.109 Noll explains that a Lapide possessed a solid knowledge of the theological treatises and controversial questions of his time. The structure within his commentaries is reminiscent of the scholastics in which questions are asked and notes are made. He also utilizes a dialectic procedure to find in the questions and answers the real sense of the Scripture.

109Noll, 123, *Die mariologischen Grundlinien im exegetischen Werk des Cornelius a Lapide SJ (1567-1637).*
Noll states the a Lapide’s exegesis is in line with the Church. A Lapide desires to serve the faith of the Church and dogma becomes the center for all theology. The author wishes to illumine the center and set up connections by opening his exegesis to dogma. A Lapide’s exegesis is not seen as a neutral or non-believing abstraction, but it is an exegesis in union with the Church, "sentire cum ecclesia." His exegesis is written with the preacher in mind. His writings had a positive influence on pastoral preaching and spirituality.

In his dissertation, Noll states that a Lapide does not consider Philology as the primary focus of exegesis. Rather, in the mind of a Lapide, exegesis should lead one to Dogma and ecclesiology. Cornelius acknowledges that the Vulgate is the standard biblical text to be used by Catholic exegetes in his time. A Lapide understood this as a directive of the Council of Trent. In the following text from his "Proemium et Economicum Sacrae Scripturae," a Lapide describes the process of Patristic exegesis.

"I think I must make efforts by reading and examining a lot, to imitate the bees and to choose the honey from appropriate flowers, to find first the historical sense. Whenever there is a difference in the edition I will note it; and among those many suggestions which often irritate the frightful and weak listener, I shall choose the one which harmonizes most with the text. Therefore I consider the Vulgate, according to the decree of the Council of Trent, as the edition to be protected. Wherever the Hebrew texts seem to differ, I will make an effort to point out the corresponding, and when the heretics offer pious and scholarly, yet not opposing our insight, I will mention it by translating the Hebrew into Latin. This is for those who do not know Hebrew that they can understand; and those who know Hebrew may refer to the sources. This should be done in few words and only when necessary."  

110 Noll, 126
111 Noll, 127
112 Cornelius A Lapide, SJ, "Prooemium et economicum Sacrae Scripturae" Commentaria in Pentateuch, I, 15
"Ut multa legens, multa disquirens apiculas imiter et mellilegium e floribus ad id aptiouribus, lecto examine conficam: ut his toricum primo sensum, exacta discussione vestigem; sicubi is apud various erit varius, indicabo; atque in tanta opinionem multitudine, quae anxios sape fluctuantesque tenet et obturbat audi tores, eum, qui maxim textui consonus est, praeferam et seligam. Qua in re Vulgatam semper, decreto Concilii Tredentini, editionem
The accommodated sense (interpretation) is used in explaining other things which are appropriate aside from what the author expressed. A Lapide notices that the Fathers of the Church use this accommodated sense for what is understood as the spiritual meaning or sense. He is concerned that such a sense take nothing away from the inspiration of the Scriptures (Holy Spirit’s influence upon them.). One could easily see this accommodation as distinct from the **literal and spiritual sense**; thus it is described as: an extended meaning or sense.

According to a Lapide, the Scripture is to be accommodated in an honest manner, preserving its truth of expression. There are examples and metaphors that belong to the text, not in an accommodated way, but in a literal manner. A Lapide is very close to the accommodated sense of scripture but never leaves the framework of the analogy of faith, analogia fidei. These accommodations serve the subjective piety and are not considered scholarly in their exegesis.

A Lapide always follows an apologetical manner to interpret Scripture. His goal in his commentaries is to find the truth about the Mother of God as an answer to the reformers and defend it. In his commentaries, a Lapide reacts to the reformers by stressing the Marian virtues and her outstanding qualities in his biblical commentaries.

A Lapide uses the medieval method of the four senses which is rooted in the teaching of Origen. The traditional use of the four senses should lead to a profound understanding of the Scripture. The Church Fathers in their exegesis would sometimes equate the literal and spiritual sense of a passage. A Lapide recognized the correlation between the literal and spiritual sense, but stressed

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*tuendam duxi. Hebraea vero sicubi dissonare videantur, quo haereticis respondeamus, Vulgatae consentientia ostendere enitar; et si quem alium, nostra tamem non adversum, pium doctumque suggerant intellectum, eum afferam; sed ita, ut Latinis Hebraea reddam verbis; ut et his Hebraea nesciant, ea assequantur; et qui sciant fonts consulere possint; verum haec omnia parce, et non nisi de ubi res exiget."

113 Noll, 112

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the distinction between the two, separating one from the other.\textsuperscript{114}

A Lapide's commentaries demonstrate his preference for the tropological sense or exegesis of scripture. In his search for a type, the analogy and parallels of the Old and New Testament text are of great import. In his writings the term \textit{type, figuratively, allegorically} and \textit{mystically} must all be understood in the same way.

In his introduction to the Epistles to Paul, a Lapide is thus explaining how Scripture is to be interpreted. Whenever the accommodated sense is used, there are certain guidelines and restrictions, nor must the interpreter confuse what is not an accommodated sense as given in his examples. A Lapide is pointing out the importance of the literal and spiritual sense, while showing what properly is the accommodated sense.

\textsuperscript{114}Noll, 111
Conclusion to Chapter Two

Chapter two presents the biblical methodologies of two scripture scholars from different eras in the Church: Fr. Cornelius a Lapide, SJ (post-Tridentine) and Fr. Bertrand Buby, SM (post-Vatican II). While both offer similar insights regarding Old Testament and New Testament Marian texts to be presented in Chapter Three of the present study, both approach the sacred texts using different exegetical tools to analyze and understand the Scriptures.

In Section one of this chapter, five Church Fathers are presented who use the senses of scriptures in their biblical commentaries, homilies and writings: Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian and Athanasius of Alexandria. Of these five Church Fathers, Origen "is among the greatest and most original thinkers of all times."\(^{115}\) The section concludes with the contribution of John Cassian (d. 435) who was the first to define the four senses, as were later used throughout the Middle Ages.

Origen's threefold sense of scripture (literal, moral and spiritual) is characteristic of an outstanding contribution he makes to the history of biblical interpretation within the Church.

Origen is also considered the Marian doctor par excellence. As Buby states,

"The Marian insights of Ambrose and Jerome are dependent upon Origen who is the exponent of her virginity not only in the conception of Jesus also throughout her life."\(^{116}\)

The second section of Chapter two presents the senses of Scripture from the perspective of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The authors of the Catechism affirm the significance of this ancient patristic exegesis of the sacred scriptures and view its "richness to the living reading of

\(^{115}\) Bertrand A. Buby, SM, 86 The Marian Heritage of Early Church.

\(^{116}\) Buby, SM, 97
Scripture in the Church.\textsuperscript{117}

This section also presented the work of the great twentieth century theologian, Henri de Lubac. His book, \textit{Medieval Exegesis}, is a masterpiece in theology. In the preface of his book de Lubac states that his work will be “an historical and literal study of the ancient commentators on Scripture.”\textsuperscript{118} In the book, de Lubac explores the intention of these ancient and medieval authors. He is attempting to portray their mentality and not their methodologies. He considers his work a contribution, not to history of exegesis, but to the history of theology. De Lubac’s work presents spiritual exegesis as a whole theology of history which is connected with a theology of scripture.

De Lubac distinguishes between two fundamental senses of scripture: the letter and the spirit. This basic distinction is basically Christian, even though it may have Hellenistic overtones. The letter and spirit is based upon the Incarnation, eternity in time which sheds light upon the concrete facts in salvation history. The four fold sense is derived by subdividing the spiritual in three. All four senses are related almost organically to each other.

Here are the four senses defined, according to de Lubac.

The \textbf{literal sense}, is deeply rooted in history. In fact, the literal sense records the fact that God has acted in history.

The \textbf{allegorical sense} is rooted in the concrete historical fact of the Incarnation. Spiritual truth is profound and goes deeper than the literal and historical sense of the Old Testament. Content and theology define this Christian sense of allegory, not method.

The \textbf{moral sense} generates a behavioral response from the Christian. The moral sense follows

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{117}Bertrand A. Buby, SM, \textit{The Marian Heritage of Early Church}.
\end{itemize}
from the allegorical. This sense responds to the Truth which is unveiled by allegory.

The anagogical sense directs us toward the eternal goal of God in heaven. The Christian's moral life lived out according to the laws of God leads on to the anagogical sense.

De Lubac admits that the fourfold sense was not the only way to view scripture. Origen's triple sense (literal, moral, allegorical) was preserved by great medieval minds such as Peter Lombard, Rupert of Deutz and Richard of St. Victor.

In section three of this chapter, attention was given to the understanding of exegesis in the time of Trent. The Reformers took a "sola scriptura" approach which was a bold contrast to the Scriptural approach of the Catholic Church, which took into consideration both the Scriptures itself and tradition to understand the meaning of the Word of God.

In section four, a brief summary of Vatican and Post-Vatican II exegesis was given using three significant Catholic ecclesial documents promulgated with the closing of the Second Vatican Council in 1965 and thereafter. These three documents are: *Dei Verbum* (*Constitution on Divine Revelation, 1965*), *Lumen Gentium* (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 1965*), and the Pontifical Biblical Commission's *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (1993). Each of these documents offers insights into Catholic biblical exegesis, particularly with an emphasis on Mary, the four senses of scripture and writings of the Church Fathers. This section is different in tone from the previous regarding Catholic exegesis during and after the Council of Trent. While exegesis during the Post-Tridentine period was apologetical in nature, the exegesis of Post-Vatican II has been much more ecumenical in spirit. The historical-critical methodology is used by Catholics and Protestants alike. However, the Catholic Church must also respect the teachings of the Magisterium when it interprets the Sacred text and takes into consideration the tradition of the Church regarding the exegesis of the
scripture passages.

Lastly, in this chapter, the scriptural interpretation of Cornelius a Lapide was presented. In two of his commentaries on the Pentateuch, Commentaria in Pentateuchum I, Commentaria in Pentateuchum II and St. Paul, Commentaria in omens divi Pauli Epistolarum I, outlines his exegetical method to his readers.

While this chapter focused on a history of biblical methodology from patristic times to the present day, there was a particular emphasis on the history of the four senses of Scripture from the time of Origen. This emphasis on the four senses will allow us a deeper understanding of a Lapide’s exegesis as we begin to analyze the Old Testament texts accommodated to the Blessed Virgin Mary in the writings of the Belgian exegete. A Lapide makes frequent use throughout his commentary of the four senses as well as typology to assist the reader in a deeper understanding of the sacred texts.
CHAPTER THREE: OLD TESTAMENT TEXTS ACCOMMODATED TO THE VIRGIN MARY

I. A chronological study of Old Testament passages accommodated to the Blessed Virgin Mary by Cornelius a Lapide.

Then here my point of departure is derived from *Lumen Gentium* which in paragraph 55 mentions the three texts from the Old Testament. Father Manelli capsulizes the significance of these texts which a Lapide also had commented upon.¹¹⁹

In Chapter Two of this study, an historical overview of scriptural exegesis in the Catholic Church was outlined, with an emphasis to the four senses of scriptures and the writings of the Fathers of the Church.

Now, in Chapter Three, the Old Testament passages commented upon by a Lapide which deal with the Blessed Virgin Mary are analyzed.

Of particular interest for this thesis are the three biblical texts found in *Lumen Gentium*, 55: Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2-3. Then the writings to be studied are the following (in chronological order) from the

**Pentateuch:** Genesis 3:15, Exodus 15:20

**Prophets:** Isaiah 7:14, Micah 5:2-3 (major)

¹¹⁹Manelli FFI, 81-82, *All Generations Shall Call Me Blessed*, “We can affirm, then, at once that the Mariology of the Old Testament has all the essential characteristics of a Mariology at its ‘roots’ In that Mariology are contained in fact the ‘roots’ of that unique, precious plant that is Mary most holy. From those ‘roots’ has sprung, in the New Testament, the one ‘full of grace’ (Lk 1:28), the Mother of God and of the new humanity. In these Mariological texts of the Old Testament are discovered the ‘roots’ of the mystery of Mary, predestined ‘in one and the same decree’ (*Ineffabilis Deus*) to be the ‘woman,’ Mother of the New Adam, with whom she is united in the same ‘enmity’ for the serpent whose head is to be crushed (Gen 3:15). This “woman” is the Virgin Mother of Emmanuel, that is, of ‘God with us’ (Is 7:14). She is the ‘woman in travail’ bearing God made man, the Savior of the ‘remnant of Israel,’ of the people of God (Mic 5:1-2). The two mysteries of the Incarnation and of the redemption, foreshadowed in these prophetic oracles, are intimately linked to the mysteries of the Immaculate Conception (Gen 3:15), the divine and virginal maternity (Is 7:14), and the coredemption (Gen 3:15) attributed to the “woman in travail” of Bethlehem (Mic 5:1:2).”
Wisdom Literature: Proverbs 8, 9, 14 and 31, Songs of Songs 4:4, and Sirach 24

The Writings: Esther 2:7 and Judith 13:10, 13:18 and 15:10 (minor)

1 Kings 26:41, Judges 4:21 and 5:8

The above texts studied correspond with the research of Raymund Noll in his dissertation on a Lapide which outlines the important texts in his commentaries which are focused on the Marian dogmas.¹²⁰ Noll uses the results of critical exegesis to focus upon the privileges of Mary seen in dogmas; whereas, this thesis demonstrates the method and principles employed by Cornelius a Lapide.

¹²⁰ Noll, 271-282, "Die mariologischen Grundlinien im exegetischen Werk des Cornelius a Lapide SJ (1567-1637), The following categories are presented by Noll. "Person-TYPOLOGIES for Mary; Biblical Marian images; Trinity and Mary; Wisdom and Mary; Mary and the Church; Virginity and Martyrdom of Mary; Priesthood and Eucharist related to Mary; Creation and Mary; Mary and the Incarnation; Mary full of grace"
II. Methodology

A. Presentation of a Lapide’s commentary:

In terms of methodology, a Lapide’s actual text will be interpreted, including his use of the patristic writings, the four senses of scripture and other hagiographical writings. Then, a presentation of the writings of contemporary Catholic exegete, Fr. Bertrand Buby, SM will also be used to analyze these Old Testament texts accommodated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. His interpretation will be compared with that of a Lapide.

Biblical Methodology of Cornelius a Lapide

These are the principles of biblical exegesis employed by Cornelius a Lapide in his commentaries.

1. The Holy Spirit is the Divine Inspirer of all the Scriptures. Often the deeper meaning goes beyond what the human author conveys in writing. To arrive at the Sensus Genuinis, the Holy Spirit’s inspiration is to be sought and explained by the interpreter.

2. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament are united and divinely inspired. They lead to mutual interpretation of one another.

3. The Incarnation is central to interpreting the Scriptures. Christology is at the center of Marian interpretations of passages. Mary is always to be seen in relationship to Christ. (Christotypical.)

4. For a Lapide, Sacred Scripture is to be interpreted in the light of the Church’s authoritative teachings especially the principals set forth by the Council. Thus the ecclesiological interpretation is central to Marian interpretation of certain texts where she is mentioned.

5. The Scriptures are to be understood in a *soteriological sense*, that is, they are to be interpreted as salvation history.

6. The history of authentic biblical interpretation is found in what the *Fathers of the Church* have handed down as their biblical heritage for the Church. Particular Church Fathers are signaled out in a Lapide, particularly Jerome, Augustine, Ambrose, Aquinas and Bernard, to name a few.

7. *Sacred languages* are essential to the Bible’s interpretation (Complutensis was used by a Lapide). The trend of his times was to return to the original languages. However, a Lapide always checked his interpretation in the light of Trent’s teachings, favoring the Vulgate as the normative text for the Catholic Church. A Lapide is close to Erasmus in his search for meanings from ancient languages.

8. A Lapide also honors the *interpretation of holy persons, great Catholic theologians, and mystics*. He considers them a part of the history of the Biblical interpretation he follows or uses.

9. Central to all of his interpretations are the *four senses*. The first of which is the *literal sense* which is the text in its plain and common sense meaning both for history and for the metaphors or parables used in the texts.

   A. The *allegorical sense* is a spiritual sense that springs from the literal but goes beyond it searching for a deeper meaning. The typology used by interpreters like a Lapide belong to this category. In his commentaries, a Lapide uses other names for the allegorical sense as in “type-antitype, figurative, allegory or mystical are stated to be synonymous in Cornelius a Lapide.”

   B. The *tropological* sense is seen as the moral interpretation and applies especially to Old Testament texts. It is concerned with right actions (res agenda) and involves conversion; it

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122 A Lapide, 114
is preparatory to the next sense of the mystical-spiritual Sense.

C. The anagogical sense is the culmination of interpretation leading us to hope and beatitude. Contemplation is involved and deep theological reflection, even that like the mystics.

10. A Lapide also is aware of liturgy, devotion, and piety in his overall interpretation of Scripture.

11. A Lapide uses accommodation in his exegesis, according to his own interpretation, as found in his Introduction to St. Paul's epistles.

Noll states in his dissertation that a vast number of Marian symbols dominated the Old Testament texts accommodated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, particularly in the Wisdom literature (Song of Songs 1 - 6 and Sirach 24) For a listing of the Marian references in the Old Testament in Noll, see Appendix IV.

B. Presentation of Post-Vatican II exegesis: Bertrand Buby, SM

The perspective from a post-Vatican exegesis stresses that Scripture is the soul of Marian theology. The New Testament is kerygmatic: a proclamation of faith. The New Testament texts where Mary is mentioned are points for departure in research. Tradition and the Teaching of the Church are essential parameters besides the Scriptures.\(^{123}\)

Biblical Methodology of Bertrand Buby, SM

These are the principles used by a contemporary Catholic exegete and mariologist, Fr. Bertrand A. Buby in analyzing Biblical tests of Marian imports. His methodology is seen in his trilogy of works, Mary of Galilee, Vol I, II, and III\(^{124}\) as well as the article in Ephemerides


\(^{124}\) Note: Buby’s exegetical approach or biblical methodology may be found in his book Mary of Galilee, Vol. II, 2-3
Mariologicae, "The Use of Biblical Methodologies in Marian Theology Today."

1. The **historical-critical method**\(^{125}\) is the preferred starting point. This is based on the literal meaning of the text seen within its context. "A text seen without content is pretext." The literal sense is the material upon which the exegete works; it is scientific through study of the original language within the best of textual evidence. It does not develop Marian theology but is the foundation and starting point.

2. Mary is a **datum**\(^{126}\) (*a given, a real historical figure, a factual reality*). It is best to see her within the framework of *Lumen Gentium*, chapter 8, especially article 55. The Mariological Societies are good secondary resources for seeing these principles or methods. Methods are discovered in analyzing these studies on Mary in Scripture. One looks for patterns, methods, and principles of interpretation.

3. Unlike a Lapide, today’s scholars and interpreters rely on the **best of manuscripts, those closest to the originals**\(^{127}\); also, the original languages are essential. In a Lapide, the Vulgate was considered the normative text; today textual criticism is more precise in assessing the meaning of the Greek text. It is an exacting science with critical editions of the New Testament and Old Testament foundational.

4. **Philological studies**\(^{128}\) are important and lead to accuracy in understanding and interpreting a text. For example, “kecharitomene”, is an object of such study and interpretation that goes beyond the simple “full of grace” of the Vulgate. Cornelius was aware of the importance of philology and

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\(^{126}\) Buby, SM, 364, *Ephemerides Mariologicae* 49

\(^{127}\) Buby, SM, 357, *Ephemerides Mariologicae* 49

\(^{128}\) Buby, SM, 357, *Ephemerides Mariologicae* 49
mastered the languages of Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic.

5. Source Criticism\textsuperscript{129} offers a window from the New Testament looking into the world of the Old Testament. An author’s words, imagery, themes and symbols taken from prior scriptural texts are important. Parallel passages are important for understanding a text. Vocabulary studies are essential and belong also to the literal sense of the text.

6. Form Criticism\textsuperscript{130} was unknown during a Lapide’s time. Here a specific structure or pattern is compared with other similar patterns and genres. Thus, certain Psalms are classified as hymns of praise, others as lamentation, etc. This criticism helps us to understand the Oral Tradition behind the history of the texts. The patterns help us to see the inner coherence and ideology and theological purpose of the author.

"In the Gospels as we have them today is not the words and deeds of Jesus in the first stage of tradition, nor even the form in which they were preached in the second stage, but only in the form compiled and edited by the Evangelists. This form, however, reflects the two previous stages, and the second more than the first. It is good to recall that this redacted form of the sayings and deeds of Jesus which the Evangelist give is the inspired form. The Evangelists were inspired by the Holy Spirit to compile and write down the accounts as they did. The three stages are: The very words and deeds of Jesus himself; the preaching of the Apostles; and the writing of these in the Gospels by the evangelists"\textsuperscript{131}

7. Redaction Criticism\textsuperscript{132} is the careful editing of the materials by the Evangelists and giving them a specific direction and theological view for the communities to which they were writing. It may need

\textsuperscript{129}Buby, SM, 358 \textit{Ephemerides Mariologicae} 49
\textsuperscript{130}Buby, SM, 358. \textit{Ephemerides Mariologicae} 49
\textsuperscript{131}Fitzmyer. 21 and 25, \textit{Historical Truth of the Gospels: The 1964 Instruction of the Pontifical Biblical Commission}. 1964
\textsuperscript{132}Buby, SM, 360. \textit{Ephemerides Mariologicae} 49
to be seen within the theology and themes of each author. The rediscovery of that theology of a particular author and seeing Mary’s role within it would be the objective of Marian research based on redaction criticism.

8. Structuralism/semiotics consists in a method that is focused on the process by which the sacred writers give meaning to a biblical text. The object of their reflection in this method is the text itself rather than the author who composed it (historical criticism) or the reader who peruses it (existentialism). Synchronic means looking at a text in its wholeness and single time dimension whereas diachronic means looking at a text or biblical event according to which it is understood in all the moments that preceded it and how its meaning is spread throughout a given gospel and other writings in a chronological way. Semiotics and structure are synchronic, not diachronic. This method is more suited to a faith inspired approach. It seems to be open to a fides quaerens intellectum focus, hence Laurentin uses it in his latest book on the Infancy Gospels. It also would lend itself to interpreting the symbolic literature of the Apocalypse or Book of Revelation.

9. Canonical Criticism favors seeing the Bible in its final formation and embraces all the books of the Bible. It entails a close relationship between the canon of Scripture and the Church, thereby indicating it is more focused on a theology of the bible than a literary analysis alone or on the historical critical approach though it uses both to form the perspective of the “bigger picture.” It involves both the believing community and its spiritual life among the members. The New Jerusalem Bible Commentary, states “Certain traditions and values became authoritative and thus were preserved by the community of faith because in some sense the community found its identity and

133Buby, SM, 362. Ephemerides Mariologicae 49

134Buby, SM, 363. Ephemerides Mariologicae 49
direction for its lifestyle in them."  

10. Contextual approaches: **Rhetorical Criticism.** The basic principle of rhetorical criticism is that texts must reveal the contexts of both the author and the reader. This also is about the "world within the text." The reader searches and wants a meaningful interpretation. Rhetoric seems to belong to the Reader-Response method.

The recent document from the Pontifical Biblical Commission is entitled *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (1993). Other official documents or encyclicals that show the progressive thought of the Church in Biblical studies are: *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (1943), *Historical Truth of the Gospels* (1964), *Constitution on Divine Revelation* (1965), Lumen Gentium, Chapter Eight, and *The Virgin Mary in Intellectual and Spiritual Formation* (1988). This latter is an essential document about the different contemporary methods and approaches to Scripture. This entire document gives a good critique of each method and approach.

11. **Typology** and its use in the Catholic Catechism is seen in the references to Mary from the Old Testament. Typology finds fulfillment of the Old Testament with the New Testament but also extends it homiletically outside the Bible to illustrate the mysteries of faith by a figurative rather than a critical use of the Scriptures. Gerard Sloyan's observations in his article "The Use of the Bible in a New Resource Book" are important. "There is nothing wrong with using the Bible topologically. Indeed there is much in its favor. Later writers of the New Testament did this with the work of earlier

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136 Buby, SM, 364, Ephemerides Mariologicae 49


writers in the same collection. The books of the New Testament regularly cite places in the Old Testament that are thought to prefigure events in the life of Jesus or the early Church.139

12. The Sensus Plenior140 or Fuller Senses or Genuine Sense of Cornelius141: This approach would include attention to the influence of the Holy Spirit in the text. Raymond Brown defines sensus plenior as the “deeper meaning intended by God but not clearly intended by the author, that is seen to exist in the words of Scripture when they are studied in the light of further revelation or of the development in the understanding of revelation...”142 Brown sees this especially in texts like Isaiah 7:14, Psalms 2, 22, and 110.

“In a word, one might think of the ‘fuller sense’ as another way of indicating the spiritual sense of a biblical text in the case where the spiritual sense is distinct from the literal sense.”143

13. The Worlds of the Text144 are another framework for understanding how to interpret Scripture: The World Behind the Text is actually the exegetical study combined with the social location, time of the writing, author, etc. It is primarily concerned with the literal sense of the text. The historical critical method is what is involved in this world of the text.

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140 Buby, SM, 369. Ephemerides Mariologicae 49


143 PBC. p. 87

144 Buby, SM, 364. Ephemerides Mariologicae 49

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14. **The World within the text** is the study of how the text is put together or its rhetoric. This is the literary study of the text including genre, style, characterization, plot, etc. A current example of this “world of the text” is Beverly Gaventa’s book *Mary: Glimpses of the Mother of Jesus*.145

15. **The World beyond the Text**146 refers to the way the text is read in light of our contemporary culture and the challenges we face when reading the test. We critique our own society or that of the biblical text when reading in the world in front of the text. There is always the need to make the text relate to our times and our concerns.

**Format to be used in analyzing Biblical passages:**

In Chapters Three and Four, I use the following format to analyze a particular Old or New Testament Marian Text, comparing and contrasting the biblical commentaries of Cornelius a Lapide and Bertrand Buby.

1.) I will begin the presentation of the particular Marian texts by quoting the English version of the Douay-Rheims Bible. The scripture quotations will be footnoted using the Latin Vulgate. It is most likely that Cornelius a Lapide used the Vulgate to do his exegesis since this is the version of the Bible promulgated by the Council of Trent.147

2.) Then I present the commentary of Cornelius a Lapide, using his own words (with Latin footnotes) to demonstrate his Marian devotion and spirituality laced throughout his biblical commentaries. In the heading of the particular text, I will acknowledge the Latin name of a Lapide’s biblical commentary. In the presentation I will offer a Lapide’s commentaries on the sacred text, including

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146Buby, SM, 375. *Ephemerides Mariologicae* 49

147Buby, SM, 375.
quotations from the Fathers of the Church and other medieval saints as well as the four senses of scripture. Along with his commentaries I will offer actual explanations of a Lapide’s exegesis. I will also include any apologetical aspects in his writings. Lastly, I will offer examples of his method of analysis.

3.) Then I will present the commentary of Fr. Bertrand Buby, SM, a post-Vatican II exegete and Mariologist. I will use his trilogy of books *Mary of Galilee, Volumes I - III* to present his contemporary Catholic approach to scriptural exegesis. To supplement Buby’s commentary, I will also quote from the *Navarre Bible Commentaries* which use the Latin Vulgate in their exegesis, as well as the Fathers of the Church, a style similar to the methodology of Cornelius a Lapide. Also, I will use three Post-Vatican II Catholic Commentaries on Scripture: *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* and *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* for additional resources in gaining an understanding of the possible Mariological applications of the Sacred texts in Post-Vatican II exegesis.

4.) In the section “Comparison / Conclusion,” I will use the templates given previously in this chapter on the methodologies of both exegetes, Cornelius a Lapide, SJ and Bertrand Buby, SM, to assist the readers in identifying the points of principles, techniques and theology used by Cornelius a Lapide and comparing them with the principles of modern day exegesis employed by Bertrand Buby. I will offer a “comparison/conclusion” after the Marian texts for each book of the bible presented.
III: Passages in the Old Testament

A Lapide’s Commentary on Gn 3:15 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Pentateuchum I

Genesis 3:15 - The Protoevangelium

“I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt live in wait for her heel.”

Raymund Noll analyzes a Lapide’s exegetical treatment of The Protoevangelium by stating that the exegete’s analysis has a dogmatic tone to it, as he builds a foundation for understanding the Immaculate Conception. Yet, a Lapide also shares three criticisms on the text from a philological perspective.

“Cornelius comments on Genesis 3, 15 in detail. In his exegesis of the protogospel was absorbed and discussed aside of tradition beyond the borders of denominations, whereby its train of thought appears in some vote as to the definition of the theory behind the Immaculate Conception. However it also experienced very clear criticism. First the three versions or variables existing in tradition are gathered in Genesis 3,15: There are three versions available. First those found in Hebrew writing: The women shall crush your head; Second is: Humans - or Christ - shall crush your head; third: your head shall be crushed. So says the Roman Bible and nearly all the Latin writers as well as a large number of the fathers.”

In this passage, a Lapide uses the tropological sense and a quote from St. Gregory to admonish the faithful to avoid temptation, personified by the serpent in Genesis 3:15.

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148 Commentaria in Pentateuchum I, 9, Genesis 3:15: “Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem et semen tuum et semen illius ipsa conteret caput tuum et tu insidiaberis calcaneo eius.” (A Lapide’s Latin text was translated by Lawrence R. Strittmatter, former instructor of Latin in Cincinnati, Ohio.)

"Figuratively: St. Gregory libr. I Moral. Cap xxxviii: He says, "We relate the head of the serpent to the beginnings of temptation which we root out of the heart, then he strikes at our heel, because he attacks the end of a good action with greater cunning and force." And St. Augustine in Psal. XLVIII and CIII: "If the devil," he says, "watches your heel, you watch his head. His head is the beginning of evil suggestions; when he begins to suggest evil, repulse him, before pleasure arises, and consent follows. In this way you will avoid his head, and thus he will not strike your heel."\textsuperscript{150}

Using a quote from Philo, a Lapide uses the \textit{symbolic} sense to make a correlation between the Washing of the Feet at the Last Supper with the cursing of the heel of the woman in the Protoevangelium.

"Symbolically: Philo says, "The heel is that part of the soul which adheres to the world of nature, which is prone to the senses and to sensual pleasures and offenses; in this and through this the devil lies in wait for the mind and the will, and therefore Christ washed the feet of his disciples at the last supper so that this was a sign that the curse of the heel was removed, for by this very thing the original order concerning the bite of the snake became apparent."\textsuperscript{151}

Using the \textit{allegorical} sense and quoting the Fathers of the Church, the woman refers to a literal woman: in this case, the woman is the Church.

"Allegorically: this enmity between the woman and the serpent signifies the continual hatred and warfare between the Church and the devil, as St. John teaches Apocal.xii, vers. 13, any number of Fathers: indeed some, such as P. Gordonus, Controvers. I, cap. xvii, literally understand here the woman as the Church, the serpent as the devil. In truth, the woman refers to a literal woman, and mystically to


\textsuperscript{151} A Lapide, 107, "Symbolice Philo: Calcaneus, inquit, est ea opars animae quae terrenae adhaerescit naturae, quaque in sensum et voluptates terrenas prona est et labilis; huic, et per hanc menti et voluntati insidiatur daemon, ideoque Christus discipulorum pedes in ultima coena lavit ut hoc signum esset, dilutum jam esse maledictum ilud calcanei, quo ab ipso reum primordio serpentis morsibus patebat aditus."
the Church; wherefore the Apostle, Ephes. cap v, vers. 32, calls this a Sacrament, or as the Greek has it, a mystery of Christ and his Church."\textsuperscript{152}

In his commentary on this passage from Genesis, a Lapide presents a literal interpretation of this passage in 3:15, Protoevangelium, "the first glimmer of salvation."\textsuperscript{153} In reading the commentary from a Lapide, the rich tradition of the Catholic faith is preserved in his exegetical style in comparison with the more contemporary scriptural scholarship of those who compiled The New Jerome Biblical Commentary in which the following interpretation is presented.

"The snake is cursed, condemned to crawl on its belly, eat dirt, and be forever the enemy of the woman whom he deceived and of her offspring. He shall strike your head. 'He' refers to offspring, which is masculine in Hebrew. Christian tradition has sometimes referred it to Christ, but the literal reference is to the human descendants of Eve, who will regard snakes as enemies."\textsuperscript{154}

However, there are other contemporary scriptural sources that offer a more in-depth exegetical perspective on Genesis 3:15, similar to that of a Lapide. For example, a Lapide’s commentary is characterized by his thorough analysis of the Hebrew, Greek and Latin versions of the text. In a similar style to a Lapide, a footnote in the Jerusalem Bible offers this explanation, using all three texts:

"The Hebrew text, by proclaiming that the offspring of the serpent is henceforth at enmity with the woman’s descendants, opposes the human race to the Devil and his ‘seed,’ his posterity and hints at man’s ultimate victory; it is the first glimmer of salvation, the proto-evangelium. The Greek version has a masculine pronoun (‘he, not ‘it’ will crush . . .), thus ascribing the victory not to the woman’s


\textsuperscript{153} Richard Clifford, SJ, The New Jerome Biblical Commentary, “Genesis” 12

\textsuperscript{154} Clifford, 12
descendants in general but to one of her sons in particular; the words of the Greek version therefore expresses to messianic interpretation held by many of the Fathers. The Latin version has a feminine pronoun (‘she’ will crush . . . ) and since, in the messianic interpretation of our text, the Messiah and his mother appear together, the pronoun has been taken to refer to Mary; this application has become current in the Church.”

It is clear from reading the text a Lapide possesses a knowledge of natural history and philosophy. For example, in his opening commentary of Genesis 3:15, a Lapide speaks about the relationship of man and serpent. “Aristotle taught that the saliva of man tormented the snake, and if it touched the throat (by which he tempted Eve), it would kill him.”

It is interesting to note a Lapide’s understanding of the Hebrew, Latin and Greek languages. For example, in analyzing the verse “she will strike your head,” a Lapide attempts to understand whether the word is “he” or “she.” Scheffczyk notes the following insight from a Lapide’s commentary. For a Lapide, the Hebrew is translated into the Latin “ipsum” as Cornelius also cites Church Fathers, like St. Leo, to support his argument. In the Latin text, he also cites the Church Fathers of the West like St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom, Ambrose and Gregory to deepen his argument. Finally, “he” is used in reference to Christ in the Septuagint. In the end, a Lapide advocates that “none of these readings should be rejected; indeed all are true.” However, it should also be noted that the traditional Vulgate which conveys the Genesis passage with the female

155 Brown, SS, The New Jerome Biblical Commentary. 33


157 L. Scheffczyk. 445 “[a Lapide] zur Begrüwährung er zur Begründung der Heilsstellung Marias an der Seite Christi das Protoevangelium Gn 3,15 sogar im Literalsinn heranzieht. Das wird im aber nur möglich, weil er, was sein exegetisches Verfahren charakterisiert, in einem hebräischen Text das weibliche Pronomen “hi” vermutet.”
pronoun, "ipsa" or "she" has been used by numerous popes in papal documents in referring to Mary.\(^\text{158}\)

For example, Blessed Pius IX in the papal bull defining the Immaculate Conception, *Ineffabilis Deus* (Dec. 8, 1854), refers to the woman of Genesis 3:15 as Mary, who will crush the head of Satan "with her virginal foot" and clearly identifies the Mother's sharing in the Son's redemptive victory. This is but one of several examples from the papal magisterium that identify without question the woman of Genesis 3:15 as Mary.\(^\text{159}\)

*A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* also recognizes the Mariological sense of the passage followed once it was recognized to have a personally messianic application.\(^\text{160}\) A Lapide notes that the woman in Genesis 3:15 is Eve or ‘to an even greater extent the woman is Blessed Mary, the daughter of Eve; her seed is Jesus and the Christians and the serpent is the devil, his seed is the unfaithful and all the impious. Therefore, Blessed Mary crushed the serpent; because she was always the complete and glorious victor over the devil.’\(^\text{161}\)

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\(^{158}\) Buby, SM, 91-92. *Mary of Galilee, Vol. II* “From a Catholic doctrinal perspective the Genesis text commences the history of salvation or God’s creative redemption of the human race through the victory of the mother of the living (Eve/Mary) over the serpent through her offspring. The text begins with God speaking with Adam who is blaming Eve for his own sin. The Preface for this mass turns more to the New Testament text of John 19:25-27 and Acts 1:12-14. There is a mention of Mary receiving God’s word in her immaculate heart and thereby conceiving the Word in her virginal womb first through faith. This thought is present in Ambrose and Augustine. Mary contrasts with Adam who is not listening to God with a pure heart and conscience.”

\(^{159}\) Noll, 149, *Die mariologischen Grundlinien im exegetischen Werk des Cornelius a Lapide SJ (1567-1637)*, “Diese Methode kommt nicht nur für die Kirchenvätertexte zur Anwendung, sie gilt bereits für die Ausgaben der Heiligen Schrift selbst. Indem Cornelius wie im Kommentar zu Gen 3,15 die Lesarten vor der Auslegung nebeneinander stellt, kommen die Übereinstimmungen zum Vorschein, die für die Auffindung des echten Schriftsinnes von Belang sind.”


\(^{161}\) Cornelius a Lapide, *Commentaria in Pentateuchum I*. 105, “Vel potius mulier est beata Maria, Evae filia; semen ejus est Jesus et Christiani; serpens est diabolus, semen ejus sunt infidels, omniumque impii. Ergo B. Maria contrivit serpentem; quia ipsa semper plena et gloriosa fuit victrix diaboli.”
His vast knowledge of Latin, Greek and Hebrew as well as his keen usage of the four senses of scripture assist a Lapide in deepening his understanding of the biblical texts. These insights have made profound impact on Catholic exegetical scholars for the past four hundred years. A Lapide writes his exegesis using the best that the Catholic tradition offers, faithful to the Church’s magisterial teachings.

“Also hu is often used instead of he especially when there is some emphasis on action and something manly is predicated of the woman, as is the case here with the crushing of the serpent’s head ... It makes no difference that the verb is masculine yasuph, that is ‘(he) shall crush,’ for it often happens in Hebrew that the masculine is used instead of the feminine and vice versa, especially when there is an underlying reason or mystery, as I have just said,”162

Contemporary Catholic Commentary of Gn 3:15 and Mary

In Mary of Galilee, Vol. II, Buby offers this interpretation of the “Protoevangelium” or “First Good News of a promise of victory over evil symbolized under the serpent who beguiled the first couple.”163

“The text of Genesis 3:15 is also compared with the scene of Mary at the foot of the Cross (Jn 19:25-28a). Newman and Lebon suggested that Mary is seen as a new Eve by these early Church writers. In my opinion, such an interpretation did not belong to the earliest commentators in Christianity. Have not the Jewish commentators interpreted Eve in ambivalent ways, sometimes emphasizing her beauty and adornment and, at other times, her failure? A return to a positive presentation of Eve would take nothing away from the Synagogue or Church. The method of parallel typology is more a method of interpretation of the past and, possibly, a patriarchal tendency. Yet, the theory of Justin, Irenaeus, and Tertullian persists. Later writers would continue the development. Jerome says, ‘Death through Eve, life through Mary.’ St. Augustine is more tempered. Michael O’Carroll notes: ‘Reflecting constantly on the Church and Christ its head, he [Augustine] saw Eve as the figure of

162 A Lapide, 105., “Adde hu saepe poni pro hi, praesertim cum emphasis est, et virile aliquid feminae tribuitur, uti hic est contrition capitis serpentis. Nec obstat verbum masculinum iascuph, id est conteret; est enim crebra enallaage generis in Hebraeo: ut masculinum ponatur pro feminine, et contra, praesertim si causa et mysterium aliquid subsit, sicut hic subest, uti jam dicam.”

163 Buby, SM,124, Mary of Galilee, Vol. II.
the Church, which he also called 'mother of the living.' Mary is the model for her sex. The death-life antithesis is for him 'through a woman death, through a woman life.'

Buby quotes from, Church fathers as Justin and Irenaeus to make a connection between Eve and the woman in Genesis 3:15. Like a Lapide, Buby cites the "allegorical and the typological in these comparisons, and contrasts Mary with Eve." Buby notes that this text has been used in the development of dogma for the Immaculate Conception, understanding Genesis 3:15 in a Mariological sense.

**Comparison/Conclusion: Genesis 3:15**

In Genesis 3:15, a Lapide uses a literal interpretation of the text. A Lapide uses Hebrew, Greek and Latin versions of the text to gain a better understanding of it. A Lapide also uses the Latin Fathers of the Church to deepen his interpretation of this text.

A Lapide uses typology to understand the woman of the Protoevangelium as the Blessed Virgin Mary. A Lapide addresses the controversy as to the gender of the pronoun in the text: if the pronoun is masculine, then "he shall strike at your head" refers to the offspring of Eve; if the pronoun is feminine, then "she shall strike at your head" refers to the woman, Mary.

Buby interprets the passage in a similar way as a Lapide and sees the woman in Genesis 3:15 as the Virgin Mary.

"Mary is seen as the Woman whose offspring will conquer the wily serpent by crushing its head. We have seen that Mary is interpreted as a new Eve figure. This is

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164 Buby, SM, 91-92
165 Buby, SM, 125
one of the earliest texts to have been applied to Mary through typological and analogical rereading of this passage.\textsuperscript{167}

Buby is describing the traditional Catholic view given to this text, which is typology and analogy. However, he does not use the historical-critical method in understanding this text.

\textsuperscript{167}Buby, 166-167, \textit{Mary of Galilee, Vol II.}
A Lapide’s Commentary on Exodus 15:20 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Pentateuchum I

Exodus 15:20 - “So Mary the prophetess, the sister . . .”

“So Mary the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand:
and all the women went forth after her with timbrels and with dances” 168

In this passage from the fifteenth chapter of Exodus, a Lapide uses typology to accommodate
this particular text to the Blessed Virgin. In Exodus 15:20, Maria, the prophetess, sister to Aaron, is
compared with Mary because the Old Testament Mary is a virgin and mother. A Lapide cites the
writings of St. Ambrose to support his point.

A Lapide uses etymology to deepen the reader’s understanding of Mary’s name using Hebrew
and Syrian translations for her name. A Lapide uses the writings of Gregory of Nyssa to demonstrate
that, because Aaron’s sister Mary was a virgin, so too she was a type of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
Because Mary of the Old Testament sang a song and took timbrel in her hand, so too the Blessed
Virgin Mary sang the Magnificat in praise of the works of Yahweh. A Lapide draws a parallel
between Mary the prophetess in Exodus 15:20 and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

“The fact that this virgin Maria would be the type (as St. Ambrose teaches in
Admonitions to virgins) of the virgin mother, for instance the Blessed Mary Mother
of God, who is the teacher and mistress of the sea of this age. For Mora in Hebrew,
and Mara in Syriac, mean both mistress and teacher, especially among the Syrians.
For hence comes down that phrase Maranatha, that is our Lord is coming: for the
Syrians call the Lord teacher. So also the Hebrews call the Lord, Rab, Rabbi,
Rabboni, which commonly means teacher.” 169

168 A Lapide, Commentaria in Pentateuchum I 571 Exodus 15:20: “Sumpsit ergo Maria prophetis soror
Aaron tympanum in manu egressaeque sunt omnes mulieres post eam cum tympanis et choris”

169 A Lapide, 571, “Quod Maria haec virgo typus foret (uti docet S. Ambrosius, Exhort. ad virgines)
virginis matris, puta B. Marieae Deiparae, quae magistra et domina est maris hujus saeculi. Mora enim hebraice, et
syriace Mara, tam dominam, quam magistrum significat, maxime apud Syros. Hinc enim descendit illud Maranatha,
id est, Dominus noster venit: Syri enim magistrum vocant Dominum. Sic et Hebraei Dominum vocant Rab, Rabbi,
Rabboni, quae communiter magistrum significant.”

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A Lapide cites the writings of the fathers, particularly Epiphanius and Peter Chrysologus, to interpret the name of Mary. He understands Mary’s name as “mistress.” He also cites a teacher of Hebrew who lied before the time of Jesus, who believed that he Mother of the Messiah would be known for her ability to teach and for her sanctity. A Lapide also recalls that Mary’s name has been remembered in the Liturgies of the Orthodox Church, citing St. James, Basil the Great, and St. John Chrysostom. He refers to Mary as the First of creatures, the first human being.\(^{170}\)

Here we see a Lapide upholding Catholic tradition by citing the Church Fathers such as Gregory of Nyssa and St. Ambrose as well as the historian Josephus to say that the Blessed Virgin remained a virgin and has no other children, in the same way as Miriam (Maria) in Exodus. He contrasts the Catholic tradition with the Jewish by also citing the name of the Jewish Historian Josephus.

“Hence Gregory of Nyssa, in the book On Virgins chapter 6, teaches that this Maria was a virgin: this is true because if she had been married, she might be named after her husband, not after her brother, might be called not the sister of Aaron, but the wife of such or such a husband. In the second place, because no where does Scripture mention her husband or children. St. Ambrose teaches the same, Admonitions to virgins, and Apponius, 6 Commentary on the Canticle. Therefore this Maria was a type of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and just as this one sang”: let us sing to the Lord,” so did the Blessed Virgin sing: “My soul magnifies the Lord.” However Josephus thinks the opposite, and says that this Mary was wed to Hur, of whom mention is

\(^{170}\)A Lapide, 571, “Hanc esse veram etymologiam nominis Maria, ut dominam significet, patet primo, ex eo quod ita nomen Maria interpretatur Epiphanius, serm. De Laudibus Virginis; Damascenus, lib. IV De Fide, cap XV; Eucherius, lib. II Instruct.; Chrysologus, serm. 146, Beda in cap. I Lucæ; secundo, quod R Haccados doctrina et sanctitatis celeberrimis ante Christum Hebraeorum doctor, Messiae matrem (scilicet B. Mariam) dominam nunuandam praedixit; tertio, quod liturgiae S. Jacobi, Basilii, Chrysostomi ad etymon Mariae alludentes, eam despoianan nmn, id est, dominam nostram indigitant; quarto, quod Christiani omnes B. Virginem omni lingua, Dominam nostram, notre Dame, nostra Senora, onse Lieve Vrouve, quasi proprio nomine compellant. Est enim ipsa mater Christi, qui est primogenitus, et dominus omnis creaturae: unde et R. Haccados ipsam primam creaturarum, et primum hominem appellat.”

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made in *Exodus* 24, 14. But Josephus, as also the Jews in the Old Testament, with few exceptions, did not recognize virgins and virginity."¹⁷¹

In conclusion, a Lapide affirms a tradition long held by the Church that Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, is a type of Mary. Mary is prefigured by Miriam because, as Miriam stood by the side of her brother Moses, the Lawgiver of the Chosen People, so too, Mary stands by her Son Jesus, who is the great Lawgiver and High Priest of the New Covenant.

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Exodus 15:20 and Mary**

In *Mary of Galilee, Volume II*, Bertrand Buby states the Miriam, the sister of Moses, is considered a prophetess in Judaism. The song she sings may be attributed to Moses in Exodus 15:1-18.

"The prophetess Miriam, Aaron’s sister, took a tambourine in her hand, while all the women went out after her with tambourines, dancing; and she led them in the refrain: ‘Sing to the Lord, for his is gloriously triumphant; horse and chariot he has cast into the sea.” (Ex 15:20-21)"¹⁷²

As the Magnificat is generally attributed to Our Lady, so the "Song of the Sea" is attributed to Miriam. Buby states that there are similar themes in both of these hymns.

"Mary glorifies God as her Savior, while Moses or Miriam sing about the glory, *kabôd*, of God; both identify God as Lord and Savior. Abraham is the father in faith of both women; both exalt God in their triumph over the mighty ones; Pharaoh is cast down just as the proud and mighty ones are in Mary’s Magnificat. The powerful right hand or arm of God is outstretched for both singers. The mighty works of God are extolled; God's steadfast love has saved and liberated Israel, the people.


These parallels are more easily seen in a contextual reading of the ‘Song of the Sea’ in the Septuagint with Mary’s Magnificat in the Greek of St. Luke. Luke not only used this earliest Greek translation of the Hebrew text but also imitated its style, expression and vocabulary.”\(^{173}\)

\(^{173}\)Buby, SM, 107
Comparison / Conclusion: Exodus 15:20

In his commentary a Lapide uses typology to understand Miriam, the sister of Aaron, as a foreshadowing of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He also uses Philology to render a deeper understanding of Mary’s name. Within the interpretation, a Lapide quotes from the Church Fathers, particularly Ss. Ambrose, Epiphanius, and Gregory of Nyssa to support his understanding of the text. A Lapide parallels this passage with the “Magnificat” in Luke’s gospel. Buby also accommodates this text to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He also sees a connection between Miriam’s “Song of the Sea” and Mary’s “Magnificat.”
A Lapide's commentary on Isaiah 7:14 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Isaia Prophetam

Isaiah 7:14 - “The Virgin shall bear a son...”

“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel.”

A Lapide begins his interpretation of this passage by comparing and contrasting the time of Isaiah with the time of Christ the Lord. The comparisons offer parallels which assist the reader in seeing the “similarity of times and events, between that of Isaiah and Christ himself.” A Lapide uses the Hebrew word “’elem” to mean “a young person or youth,” “a private person.” Such a woman may be called “alemah,” a young girl, a maiden, namely unwed. The word “alemah” refers to the virgins, although the word does not properly signify a virgin.

In his exegesis, A Lapide never directly names Mary as the “virgin” foreshadowed in Isaiah 7:14. However, as he interprets the meaning of the word “virgin,” as in Genesis 24, referring to Moses calling Rebecca a virgin, he states that the word signifies “she who has received flow of seed into her womb.” Thus a Lapide compares Isaiah 7:14, this with Matthew 1:23d, “she will have it in her womb.”

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174 A Lapide, Commentaria in Isaia Prophetam 923 Isaiah 7:14: “Propter hoc dabit Dominus ipse vobis signum ecce virgo concipiet et pariet filium et vocabitis nomen eius Emmanuel,”(Latin was translated to English by Lawrence R. Strittmatter, former instructor of Latin, Cincinnati, Ohio.)

175 A Lapide, 923 “Hebraeis sicut elem est adolescens seu juvenis quandiu est privatus et privatam vitam agit...sic feminim alemah est adolescentula, juvencula, scilicet innupta, quae nondum est in matrimonium alicui collocata, neque nuptias celebravit aut publicum conjugii statum ingersa est.”

176 The Holy Bible. Douay-Rheims, 27, Genesis 24:16 “An exceeding comely maid, and a most beautiful virgin, and not known to man: and she went down to the spring, and filled her itcher and was coming back.”

177 A Lapide, Commentaria in Isaia Prophetam, 924, “Sed nomen in eadem forma eam significant quae fluxam seminis in utero receipt; unde uterus instar montis tumescit.”
Noll cites the fact that Cornelius' interpretation of Isaiah 7:14 may not have been in line with some of his contemporaries, however, a Lapide connects Matthew 1:23 with this verse to defend the Church’s teaching that Mary is the Theotokos, the God bearer. In another passage, Noll demonstrates his theory regarding a Lapide’s commentaries, that Catholic exegesis leads to dogma.

"Some others than Cornelius believe that he went too far, with the passage from Isaiah 7, 14 ‘The virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.’ Taken literally this could have been in regard to the wife of Isaiah, although the entire church and the Evangelist Matthew (Mt 1,23) teach that nevertheless this is to be understood only about the virgin who would be the ‘God bearer.’"\(^{178}\)

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Isaiah 7:14 and Mary**

A Lapide’s interpretation links the Isaiah 7:14 verse with the first Chapter (1:23) of Matthew’s Gospel. This is in line with modern day Catholic exegetes. Buby points out that this “Emmanuel prophecy” is the most important text in the Old Testament for the Church’s Mariological reflections of the patristic period. This text formed part of a chain of texts which have been traditionally used to explicate the role of Mary in her virginity. “Emmanuel” only appears once in the Old Testament.\(^{179}\)

"Lumen Gentium, 55, and John Paul II link the Isaian text with Genesis 3:15. Vatican II describes Isaiah 7:14 as an “oracle” applied in a strict sense to Mary in Matthew 1:23. This would be what is called the sensus plenior when applied to Matthew’s use of Isaiah 7:14 in chapter 1, verse 23."

\(^{178}\)Noll, 101, “Einige andere gehen Cornelius zu weit, wenn sie Jes 7,14: “Siehe, die Jungfrau wird empfangen und einen Sohn gebären, und sein Name wird Emmanuel sein” gleicherweise im Literalsinn von der Gattin des Jesaja aussagen wollen, obwohl doch die ganze Kirche und der Evangelist Matthäus (Mt 1,23) sicher lehren, dass dies nur von der Jungfrau Gottesgebärerin zu verstehen sei.”

\(^{179}\)Buby, SM, 31 Mary of Galilee, Volume II.
The passage has been seen to have messianic and Mariological import in the tradition of the Church. Justin Martyr was one of the first Church Fathers to use this passage. "The patristic literature from the fourth century abounds in use of the text to demonstrate the virginity of Mary."¹⁸⁰

Buby on the other hand, relates the text to its soteriological meaning, that is, salvation history, and Mary's role within it.¹⁸¹

There are two Biblical texts which offer a Messianic and a Marian understanding of the prophecy of Isaiah. The first is in Matthew's gospel, chapter one, verses 22 and 23, in which the angel reassures Joseph that Mary has conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. This miracle of Jesus' conception is foreshadowed in the prediction by the prophet Isaiah.

The second is the dialogue in Luke's gospel (1:31-32) between the angel Gabriel and Mary as it is announced that Mary will conceive and bring forth a Son and name him Jesus, who shall be called great and descend from the throne of David. Both of these passages from Matthew 1:23 and Luke 1:31 which refer to Isaiah 7:14 offer the Church's position and tradition which regards the "Virgin" as Mary bringing forth "Emmanuel," Jesus.

¹⁸⁰Buby, SM, 31.

¹⁸¹Buby, SM, 29 Mary of Galilee, Vol I., "Matthew's use of Isaiah 7:14 is the most important text of the Hebrew Scriptures for the Church's Mariological reflections of the first centuries. The text formed part of the chains of Scripture (catenae) which were used during the patristic period to explain the role of Mary in her virginity and in the history of salvation. In the early christian writings she is always presented in relationship to the primary purpose of the New Testament which has a Christological and soteriological focus. Incidentally, one of the earliest Christian paintings of this prophecy is found in the catacombs (Catechism of the Catholic Church, p. 13). "Isaiah 7:14 as a Hebrew Text is not speaking of Mary but of the immediate historical situation during the time of Ahaz. Catholic scholars, basing their work on the Septuagint and Matthew 1:23, interpret the text as speaking of the virginity of Mary. Other exegetes situate the text more in a Christological interpretation than in a Mariological one. Some of the earliest uses of Isaiah 7:14 outside the Old Testament are found in Justin Martyr. The patristic literature from the fourth century abounds in use of the text to demonstrate the virginity of Mary."
Comparison/Conclusion: Isaiah 7:14

A Lapide’s interpretation of Isaiah 7:14 is very much in line with the understanding of contemporary Catholic exegetes. While he does not name the virgin directly, a Lapide alludes to the fact that in this passage that the Virgin bearing a child, naming him Emmanuel, is the Blessed Virgin Mary. He connects the word “virgin” with Rebecca of Genesis 24:16 who has received the seed in her womb, much like this passage from Isaiah 7:14.

While Buby understands the Marian import of this passage, he also warns that there is a danger to use this as a “proof text” for Mary’s perpetual virginity. However, Catholic scholars agree that this text, linked with Matthew 1:23, pertains to the virginity of Mary. Buby cites Patristic literature (from the Fourth Century on) to demonstrate the virginity of Mary.
A Lapide's commentary of Micah 5:2-3 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Abdiam, Jonam, Michaem, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophoniam, Aggaeum, Zachariam, Malachiam.

Micah 5:2-3 - “And you, Bethlehem . . .”

“And Thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Juda; out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel: and his going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity.”182

In this passage, a Lapide begins his interpretation in the following manner: “On account of this he will give them up until the time, in which a woman in labor will bring forth . . .”183 In his exegesis, a Lapide states that “will give” may signify a time of liberation from the Babylonian captivity. It may also mean the giving birth of the synagogue. Thirdly, it may denote the time of the nascent Church. A Lapide then refers to Isaiah, saying that human beings hoped a Messiah would be born.

A Lapide uses both the symbolic and allegorical senses to say that God decided to make Christ who would be born in Bethlehem, the savior of the world. God delayed Christ for four thousand years, until the time of the giving birth of the Virgin, so that the world would acknowledge the sins and wounds of its souls and earnestly ask for a healer, for instance, Christ.

Contemporary Catholic Commentaries of Micah 5:2-3 and Mary

Bertrand Buby explains this text differently from a Lapide.

182 Latin was translated to English by Dr. William Napiwocki, Ph.D., Professor of Latia and Greek. Archbishop Quigley Preparatory Seminary. A Lapide, Commentaria in Abdiam, Jonam, Michaem, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophoniam, Aggaeum, Zachariam, Malachiam. 999 “Et tu Bethlehem Ephrata parvulus es in milibus Juda ex te mihi egredietur qui sit dominator in Israel et egressus eius ab initio a diebus aeternitatis.”

“It is noted that this Micah text has to be viewed in the promise that Jerusalem (the Daughter of Zion) will be rescued from the Babylonian captivity. The actual text notes that in Bethlehem, Ephrathah, a commander, is being born. The birth takes place within the ancient House of David. There also seems to be an echo of the text in Luke 2:4-14. The parallels between Micah 5 and Luke 2:4-14 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Micah 5</th>
<th>Luke 2:4-14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v. 1 Bethlehem</td>
<td>v. 4 Bethlehem, Judah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. 2 time...give birth</td>
<td>vv. 6-7 days...birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. 3 glory of Lord</td>
<td>vv 8-9 glory of the Lord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. 4 peace</td>
<td>v. 14 peace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This pericope is used as an alternative reading in the appendix of Old Testament readings of the Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

It is important to note the following taken from an article written by Charles Miller:¹⁸⁴

“The passage from Micah seems to have been chosen for this Mariological context because ‘she that travaileth shall bring forth.’”¹⁸⁵

Miller also points out that many of the Council Fathers of Vatican II were not in agreement that Isaiah 7:14 be applied to Mary; yet its use in Matthew 1:22-23 was a reference to her.

All three passages from Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2-3 are used in Lumen Gentium number 55 which are messianic texts which form a prelude to the story of Christ’s birth and the role of His Mother Mary. Buby cites C. Miller in summarizing the Council’s use of these three Old Testament Messianic texts:¹⁸⁶

In his book At Worship with Mary, A Pastoral and Theological Study, Christopher O’Donnell, O. Carm. cites the fact, while there may have been some redaction done to this passage, the prophet


¹⁸⁵ Miller, 147

¹⁸⁶ Buby, SM, 148 Mary of Galilee, Vol II, “Although Lumen Gentium explicitly bases its use of Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2-3 on tradition, the reference to Isaiah finds its primary basis in Mt. 1:23. When the Isaiah prophecy was not in itself originally messianic in the full sense, it would seem to have acquired such a notion by the time of its relecture by the author of Mt 5:1-5 the latter passage being literally a messianic prophecy. Lumen Gentium interprets the Mican reference, then, as the fulfillment of a prophetic oracle.”
in Micah 5:2-3 may have been thinking of the birth of the Messiah and his Mother (Isaiah 7:14) and therefore, is of primarily Messianic import yet has a Mariological significance which is secondary.

“This is a messianic prophecy which is probably from the 8th century before Christ, but which may have received some editorial revision about the time of the exile (587-538). The prophet has been castigating Israel and foretelling doom. Then the tone changes to one of light. There is a prophecy to Ephrathah, originally a clan that had settled near Bethlehem, and later a name for this town. The prophet is thinking of the Davidic origins of Bethlehem and he sees a future ruler of Israel. God will protect his people until she who is in labour gives birth. The reference here is to the mother of the Messiah, and the prophet may be thinking of the birth of Immanuel (see Is 7:14). This Davidic ruler will shepherd God’s people and they will be secure. Finally, he himself will be peace.

O'Donnell also offers this liturgical note regarding the Feast of Mary’s Nativity (September 8) and this particular Mican text.

The choice of this prophecy for the birthday of Mary suggests that the fullness of time came with the birth of Mary: it is already the dawn of the messianic age.”187

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Comparison/Conclusion: Micah 5:2-3

In this text of Marian import, a Lapide uses the **symbolic** and the **allegorical** senses to understand that Mary gives birth to the Messiah in the town of Bethlehem as was foretold by the prophets. A Lapide uses typology to understand this text.

While Buby understands the Marian interpretation of this text in Micah, in his commentary, he accentuates the promise that Jerusalem will be rescued from Babylonian captivity. However, Buby cites *Lumen Gentium* 55 as well as a contemporary scholar, Charles H. Miller, to support the principle of typology, that the child in Micah 5:2-3 is Jesus Christ, and the Virgin is his mother, Mary. Buby also cites the Old Testament readings of the Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary as a way to show that the Church preserves this text as an accommodation to her.
Wisdom Literature in the commentaries of Cornelius. Selected texts in Proverbs 8, 9, 14 and 31; Song of Songs 4:4 and Sirach 24.

presented in Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I, II, Commentaria in Canticum Canticorum et Librum Sapientiae, and Commentaria in Ecclesiasticum II

Because a Lapide accommodates numerous verses within the Book of Proverbs to Our Lady, I have chosen to present all a Lapide’s commentaries on these various passages from Chapters 8, 9, 14, and 31 while offering Buby’s general exegesis on the Book of Proverbs in which he does not analyze all the specific texts a Lapide accommodates to the Blessed Virgin Mary. As I conclude the presentation of all texts in Proverbs, I will then offer a comparison/conclusion of a Lapide’s work and that of Buby’s. Under the contemporary exegesis, I will also refer to three Contemporary Catholic Commentaries as well as the Navarre Bible Commentaries to see if there are any Marian references to these texts, which a Lapide accommodates to Mary.

“Since Vatican II, three excellent Catholic biblical commentaries have been published. They are: A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture (1975 revised and updated), The Jerome Biblical Commentary (1968), and The New Jerome Biblical Commentary (1990). These commentaries give us the world behind the text from the perception of leading Catholic exegetes.”

In his article, “Entwicklungslinien Nachreformatorischer Mariologie unter Berücksichtigung antireformatorischer Tendenzen (Petrus Canisius, Suarez, Cornelius a Lapide),” Scheffczyk states that Cornelius a Lapide found a great deal of Marian references within the Wisdom literature, rich with allegory accommodated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

188 Buby, SM, 141 Mary of Galilee, Vol. II.

A Lapide's commentary on Pr 8:1 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I

Proverbs 8:1 - “Doth not wisdom cry aloud, and prudence put forth her voice?”

From the sixth century onwards, this passage appears in the Mass of the birth of Mary (8 September) showing that the church recognizes that, just as the Word is God for all eternity, and is active in the creation of the world, the Mother of the Savior must have been in some way present in the mind of God “at the beginning” (vv. 22-23).

“Mystically, our Canisius, and after him Salazar: “Three things, he says, are appropriate to the Blessed Virgin, which the stupid Greeks proclaim in their Minerva (the goddess of wisdom) as outstanding, namely virginity, prudence and fortitude.” And then they compare her to Penthesilea the female leader of the Amazona: “This Virgin, he says of the Amazons, that is without the breasts of women, shows herself as the best leader. If indeed she is the first who entered this path of virginity, and whom innumerable numbers of girls truly Amazons followed.”

“Again St. Bonaventure, sermon 1 On the Blessed Virgin: The Virgin, he says, was the sky, for example the firmament, always uniformly moved by the firmness of patience. This is true because although the waters are inferior in her, that is sensitive and sensible forces, they were struck very strongly in the passion of her son, however the superior ones were not moved by her own peace. Ant although the bottom of a ship, that is the sensible part, has been filled with the waters of the sea, the upper part of the ship however has always sailed with favorable winds.”

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190 A. Lipide, Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I, Ed. A. Crampon. Paris, 1863. 221, “numquid non sapientia clamitat et prudentia dat vocem suam” (Latin was translated to English by Dr. William Napiwocki, Ph.D., Professor of Latin and Greek, Archbishop Quigley Preparatory Seminary.)

191 A Lapide, 211, “Mystice, noster Canisius, et ex eo Salazar: B. Virgini, ait, competunt tria, quae stulti Graeci in sua Minerva (dea sapientiae) velut eximia praedicant, scilicet virginitas, prudentia et fortitudo. E mox eam comparat Penthesileae Amazonum ducisse: Haec Virgo, ait, Amazonum, id est sine mammis mulierum, optimam secutae. Siquidem prima est quae hanc virginitatis semitant ingressa fuit, quamque innumerabiles puellanum vere Amazonum copiae sunt secutae.”

192 A Lapide, 211, “Rursum S. Bonaventura, serm. 1 De B. Virginie: Virgo, ait, fuit coelum, puta firmamentum, uniformiter semper motum per patientiae firmitatem. Nam licet in ea aquae inferiores, id est vires sensitivae et sensibiles, fortissime fuerint concussae in filii passione, superiores tamen a sua non fuerunt pace commotae. Et licet sentina navis, id est pars sensibilis, repleta fuerit aquis maris, pars tamen superior navis semper ventis prosperis navigavit.”
In this sixteenth verse from Proverbs 8, a Lapide defines the ways the princes govern and how lawgivers established justice. Primarily these princes receive their power from “uncreated wisdom,” that is, God. “For God has the highest and infinite dominion, from whom men and angels receive and participate partially in his law, dominion and kingdom, not only the good but also the bad.” A Lapide also points out that “Wisdom enlightens and directs kings so that they can rule their subjects, regally, that is wisely, justly and in holiness, not tyrannically, that is weakly, unjustly, godlessly.” The highest standard of the prince’s rule is Jesus Christ. “This is the unassailable foundation for honorable kings.”

A Lapide then argues that, if Jesus is the highest standard of rule, his mother, the Blessed Virgin, participated in the power of ruling and commanding. A Lapide cites St. Athanasius who concludes in his sermon, De Deipara, that the mother of a king must be a queen. Mary is “Queen of heaven and earth, Queen of men and of angels. She is Queen of all the Saints in Heaven, and on earth, she is the Queen of queens.” Ultimately, by law, the Queen possesses the kingdom of the son.

A Lapide’s exegesis of this passage makes connections between princes and lawgivers, authority and wisdom, God as the source of authority and power, and Christ as King, sharing his power with His Mother Mary, who reigns as Queen. She is given due honor and admiration by Kings of recent centuries, by establishing Churches and erecting statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

“Mystically, you might correctly apply the same thing to the Blessed Virgin, in whom God, who is the center of greatness, and so the center of all creatures, as Trismegistus says, joined himself to the earth and our humanity as though to the center

193 a Lapide, 237, “Non est potestas nisi a Deo. Deus enim summum et infinitum habet dominium, a quo homines et Angeli omne suum partiale jus, dominium et regnum accipiant et participant, non tantum boni, sed et mali. Secundo, quia sapientia reges illuminat et dirigat, ut regaliter, id est sapienter, juste et sancta, non tyrannice, id est impotenter, injuste, impie subdios regant. Tam pii, ait, et praecleri vestry imperii summum praesidium est Dominus noster Jesus Christus. Quod autem gloria in Deum pietas, regis honoribus immobile sit fundamentum, etiam ex ipsa sancta divinaque Scriptura docere attentabo, idque quanta fieri potest brevitate.”
of gravity, while she incorporated the divinity of the Word, and put on and clothed it with her own flesh. For this wonderful work of wisdom, which so combined and balanced divinity with humanity, that the dignity of the divinity approaches humanity, and nevertheless its honor and majesty remain gifts of the Angels and humans; likewise all the prayers of humans, troubles, temptations, afflictions, so that she sustains, raises up, takes care of and heals them. 194

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 8:1 and Mary

In light of modern Catholic biblical scholarship, Buby points out that these texts from Proverbs “manifest the Wisdom of God and God’s Shekinah or glory dwelling among us.” 195 Within the liturgy, Proverbs is used in nine different liturgical readings. The “texts are used in the feasts and memorials of Mary. It is through the symbolism and imagery of Wisdom that a divine feminine dimension is seen in Judaism. Catholic tradition and liturgy have applied the same texts to Mary.” 196

Contemporary exegetes such as Buby and Cazelles reflect on these passages from Proverbs in this manner:

“This favored chapter of Sirach is in praise of Wisdom. The verses selected for a Marian commemoration tie in with the salvific plan of God and with Israel’s spiritual inheritance as a people. Mary is part of that spiritual inheritance, being a Daughter of Israel as well as Daughter of Zion (cf vv. 8-10). This chapter is the high point of the book and is modeled on Proverbs 8. Sirach has skillfully adapted this form [an aretalogy] to his concept of divine Wisdom which he can personify as a female figure, conveying the Lord’s gracious will to humankind. The image is a

194 A Lapide, 237, Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I. “Mystice, idipsum recte adaptes B. Virgini, in qua Deus, qui est centrum magnitudinis, ideoque centrum creaturarum omnium, ut ait Trismegistus, sociavit se terrae et humanitati nostrae quasi centro gravitatis, dum ipas deitatem Verbi corporavit, suaque carne induit et vestivit. Mirum enim hoc fuit sapientiae opus, quae ut deitatem cum humanitate temperavit ac libravit, ut humanitati accedat dignitas deitatis, et tamen deitati suis maneat honor et majestas. Ipsa bicipsis est centrum, ad quod confluent omnes creaturarum perfectiones, omnes Angelorum et hominum praerogativae ac dotes; item omnes hominum preces, aerumnae, tentationes, afflictiones, ut ipsa eas sustentet, sublevet, curet et sanet.”

195 Buby, SM, 185, Mary of Galilee, Vol II.

196 Buby, SM, 185
natural one, since both Hebrew and Greek words for “wisdom” are feminine nouns: hokmah and sophia.197

“For an understanding of the mystery of the Incarnation it is perhaps the portrait of Wisdom, in Sirach 24, that is most laden with theology. In Proverbs 8, the Bible had shown that the true royal heir, “by whom kings reign,” was a Wisdom born of God before all ages. In Sirach 24, it shows that this eternal Wisdom was planted by the Most High in the land of Israel (v.12). She has her seat in the holy tent (Temple, v. 10), from which she derives growth and efflorescence prior to calling all nations. It was through Mary that the eternal Word willed to experience this growth and this planting.”198

“The church’s tradition has often read the most beautiful texts on wisdom and relation to Mary.”199

In summary, a Lapide makes a spiritual connection between Mary and Wisdom, as in Proverbs 8:1. This connection represents the Catholic Tradition since medieval times when the Great Saints of the Church called upon Mary in her title as Seat of Wisdom.200

197Buby, SM, 187


200Catechism of the Catholic Church. 721, “Mary, the all-holy ever-virgin Mother of God, is the masterwork of the mission of the Son and the Spirit in the fullness of time. For the first time in the plan of salvation and because his Spirit had prepared her, the Father found the dwelling place where his Son and his Spirit could dwell among men. In this sense the Church’s Tradition has often read the most beautiful texts on wisdom in relation to Mary (cf. Prov 8:11-9:6; Sir 24). Mary is acclaimed and represented in the liturgy as the ‘Seat of Wisdom’.”
A Lapide’s commentary on Pr 8:16 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I

Proverbs 8:16 - “By me princes rule . . .”

“By me princes rule, and the mighty decree justice.”

A Lapide acknowledges that all wisdom which kings and princes enjoy ultimately comes from uncreated wisdom, which is God. This power from God is transferred to kings and rulers. This wisdom enlightens and directs kings so that they can rule their subjects wisely, justly and in holiness. A comparison is made to the wisdom of Solomon.

A Lapide envisions the Blessed Virgin participating with Christ as ruler and commander. The mother of the king must be a queen. This is the maternal right by which her son can command. Therefore, Mary also has this same right in reference to Christ. Mary is the Queen of all the Saints in heaven and on earth. She is mother of a crowned King.

In this sixteenth verse from Proverbs 8, a Lapide defines the ways the princes govern and how lawgivers establish justice. Primarily these princes receive their power from “uncreated wisdom,” that is God. “For God has the highest and infinite dominion, from whom men and angels receive and participate partially in his law, dominion and kingdom, not only the good, but also the bad.”

A Lapide also points out that “Wisdom enlightens and directs kings so that they can rule their subjects, regally, that is wisely, justly and in holiness, not tyrannically, that is weakly, unjustly, godlessly.”

201 Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I, 211, “Per me principes imperant et potentes decernunt iustitiam.”

202 A Lapide, Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis, 211, “Deus enim summum et infinitum habet dominium, a quo homines et Angeli omne suum partiale jus, dominium et regnum accipiunt et participant, non tantum boni, sed et mali.”

203 A Lapide, 212, “Quia sapientia reges illuminat et dirigat, ut regaliter, id est sapienter, juste et sancte, non tyrannice, id est impotenter, injuste, impie subditos regant.”
Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 8:16 and Mary

While this typology and accommodation of the Old Testament texts to Mary are not commonly used by contemporary Catholic exegetes, it is in the liturgy, especially the Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that we find Old Testament texts otherwise overlooked for the liturgy to honor the Mother of God. Within the liturgy, Proverbs is used in nine different liturgical readings. The texts are used in the feasts and memorials of Mary. It is through the symbolism and imagery of Wisdom that a divine feminine dimension is seen in Judaism. Catholic tradition and liturgy have applied the same texts to Mary. ²⁰⁴

A Lapide's exegesis of this passage makes connections between princes and lawgivers, authority and wisdom. God is the source of authority and power, and Christ is King sharing his power with His Mother, Mary, because she reigns as Queen. However, in light of modern Catholic biblical scholarship, Buby points out that these texts from Proverbs “manifest the Wisdom of God and God’s Shekinah or Glory dwelling among us.” ²⁰⁵

²⁰⁴ Buby, SM, 185, Mary of Galilee, Vol II.
²⁰⁵ Buby, SM, 185
A Lapide's commentary on Pr 8:18 and Mary presented in *Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I*

**Proverbs 8:18 - “With me are riches and glory, . . .”**

“With me are riches and glory, glorious riches and justice.”

A Lapide interprets verse 18 in chapter 8 of Proverbs, in a spiritual sense. He also quotes S. Bernard of Clairvaux whose writings have great Marian import. In this instance, there is a reference to St. Bernard of Clairvaux in his sermon on the Nativity, as he uses the mystical sense to interpret this passage, accommodating it to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

“Mystically, glory among pure creatures is as though the proper gift of the Blessed Virgin, both because she herself is grace, and so very full of grace, embraces in herself all the grace and glory of all the Apostles, Martyrs, Virgins, and transcends them by many miles; and because she communicates it abundantly to the faithful: “Because this is the will of him (of God) who wished us to have it totally through Mary,” says St. Bernard, sermon *On the Nativity.*

This particular line from Proverbs 8 extols high praise of the Virgin Mary. She is above all the Saints and angels. She is “supereminent and drawn above among the souls of the saints and choirs of angels.” Therefore, Mary is more powerful than the saints and angels because of her great virtues and immense grace.

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206 *Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I* 214, “Mecum sunt divitiae et gloria opes superbae et iustitia.”

207 A Lapide, 214

208 A Lapide, 214, “Mystice, gloria inter puras creaturas est quasi propria dos b. Virginis, tum quia ipsa uti gratia, ita et gloria est plenissima, omneque omnium Apostolorum, martyrum, Virginum, hominum et Angelorum gratiam et gloriam in se complectitur, ac multis parasangis transcendit; tum quia eam copiose fidelibus communicat: Quia haec est voluntas iusti Dei qui totum nosx habere voluit per Mariam, inquit S. Bernardus, serm. De Nativit.”

209 A Lapide, 217, “Virgo, ait, ait, animas Sanctorum et Angelorum choros supereminens...”
Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 8:18 and Mary

The Church through the liturgy has accommodated this text to Mary, Seat of Wisdom. This reading is used in the Masses of “The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother and Teacher in the Spirit” and as “The Blessed Virgin Mary, Seat of Wisdom.” Since a Lapide was familiar with the Litany of Loreto and utilized it in his own devotional life, these biblical commentaries, especially in Proverbs, reflect the Marian spirituality of a Lapide which is prevalent in his writings.

A Lapide’s commentary on Pr 8:19 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I

Proverbs 8:19 - “For my fruit is better than gold.”

“For my fruit is better than gold and the precious stones, and my blossoms than choice silver.”

In his commentary on this verse from Proverbs, a Lapide outlines the meaning of this passage not only from his own translation (which is not specified) but also from that of the Septuagint. A Lapide explains the meaning of “precious stones” as well as the understanding of the “fruit.” He explains that precious stones are “very strong and very solid.” He also describes the fruit of the tree “which spontaneously comes forth without labor and the cultivation of man.” The fruits are interior and of a high order. “…these fruits that come forth are thoughts and actions all of honesty and virtue, especially distinguished, heroic and divine.” This demonstrates his knowledge of the original languages and his attention to philology.

From this detailed explanation of “the fruit” and “precious stones,” a Lapide, in his characteristic manner of exegetical study, describes “mystically, the fruit of the Blessed Virgin is Christ, more precious than all gold and precious stones.” St. Bonaventure describes the words of Elizabeth to Mary at the time of the Visitation, in these words: “Better is my fruit, the fruit of my womb better than gold and precious stones.” This statement leads one to understand why a Lapide would accommodate this passage to the Blessed Virgin Mary as Bonaventure did in earlier centuries.

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211 Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I, 219, “Melior est fructus meus auro et pretioso lapide et genimina mea argento electo.”

212 A Lapide, 219, “Mystice, fructus B. Virginis est Christus, pretiosior omni auro et lapide pretioso.”

213 A Lapide, 219 “In quae verba scribens S. Bonaventura: “Melior, ait, est fructus meus, fructus ventris mei (quem ego tanquam meum hominibus, et pro hominibus offero) auro et lapide pretioso.”
A Lapide continues to explain that the Fathers called the Blessed Virgin the “mediatrix and authoress of our redemption and salvation: not because she on her own paid the price of purification (for this belongs to Christ alone); her most pure flesh bore Christ who is the price of our salvation.” Referring to the mystical sense, a Lapide finds his interpretation in agreement with Salazar as well as St. Bonaventure and St. Peter Chrysologus.214

Because a Lapide’s writings lead the reader to an understanding of the mystery of the Incarnation, it is logical that Mary who brought forth the Messiah into the world, would also be seen as a “presence” or a “figure” in the Wisdom Literature. It was through Mary that the eternal Word would “pitch his tent” and dwell among God’s people.

In summary, a Lapide writes his commentaries with his students and seminarians of Rome in mind to whom he wished to impart his own love and devotion not only for the Sacred Text but also for the Blessed Virgin Mary, who has borne “fruit better than gold and precious stone” in a Lapide’s life as a Jesuit. His life as a teacher and scripture scholar has blossomed more than choice silver because he has remained a devout and loyal son of the Church and of Mary, the Mother of God. Again, the philological acumen of Cornelius is evident in his use of the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and the Hebrew text. He is especially fond of the mystical sense in his commentary on Proverbs and its accommodation of Wisdom to Mary.

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 8:19 and Mary**

In *Mary of Galilee, Vol. II*, Buby cites the work of Kathleen O’Connor, an expert on the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament, to describe the role of the Wisdom Woman in the world of

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214 A Lapide, *Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I*, 219, “Hac de causa B. Virgo a Patribus vocatur mediatrix et authoress redemptinos salutisque nostrae: non quod ipsa per se ejus lytrum et pretium solverit (hoc enim soli Christo competit); sed primo, quod ipsa e carne sua purissima conceperit et pepererit Christum, qui est pretium salutis nostrae.”

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the ancients. The Wisdom Woman is a person of faith, in right relationship with the Lord and gives
good example and inspiration to human beings. She also notes that the text from Proverbs has been
accommodated to the Church’s Liturgy, under the title, Mary, Seat of Wisdom.

“The remarkable poem of Proverbs 8 is a manifestation of God through the
feminine image of Wisdom. The poem describes Wisdom’s birth (Pr8: 22-31). Why
would Wisdom’s birth be described? Kathleen O’Connor, a scholar of Wisdom
literature, gives us the answer:
It is these origins before the birth of the world which establish the Wisdom
Woman’s authority. In the ancient world, the older the religious figures and
traditions were believed to be, the more claim they had to reveal hidden truths.
She is older than even the oldest thing we know, the earth itself. By placing
her birth before creation, the author gives her unquestionable authority to
speak the truth. This Wisdom Woman is an ancient power to be reckoned
with. Both a relationship with God and the great dignity of human beings are
primary roles of Wisdom. The Church through the liturgy has accommodated
this text to Mary, Seat of Wisdom.”215

In his classic book A Short Treatise on the Virgin Mary, Rene Laurentin summarizes the
connection between Proverbs and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

“Proverbs 8:22-35, “Dominus possedit me,” became the epistle reading for the
feast of the Nativity of Mary in the tenth century. Thus in this case there is no
extension to the Virgin Mary of a text already in use for virgin. The idea, it seems,
was to recall how the one whose birthday was being celebrated had her origins in
God’s own thought.”216

215 Buby, SM, 174-175, Mary of Galilee, Vol II.

216 Rene Laurentin, 282, A Short Treatise on the Virgin Mary. Trans. Charles Neumann, SM. Washington:
A Lapide’s commentary on Pr 8:23 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I

Proverbs 8:23 - “I was set up from eternity...”

“I was set up from eternity, and of old before the earth was made.”

In this passage, a Lapide delineates the meaning of “I was appointed” by relying on several sources, such as the Septuagint, and several writers who understand this idea of appointment derived from “essential uncreated wisdom,” which is the Word or the Son of God. A Lapide then accommodates this verse to Mary, using the mystical sense.

“Mystically, all of these things are applicable to the Blessed Virgin. For she designated from all eternity, for she is a magnificent work... From eternity God established her, from the beginning of the world he designated her in various figures, archetypes, models through all the ages; thus he designated her virginity and foreshadowed it in the angels, charity in the Seraphim, wisdom in the Cherubim, integrity in the heavens, splendor in the stars, grace in the meadows, fecundity in the trees, in the animals... and what is more the virtues of all the just including those which existed as incipient shadows, by which God in designating her foreshadowed the basic principles of such a work.”

A Lapide calls Mary “a mystical priest, in order that she might offer Christ to God as a holocaust and victim for sin, for the redemption of the whole human race.” Mary is also referred to as the “batteline drawn up as in Song of Songs 6:9, because she draws the batteline of the saints...

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217 Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis II, 229, “Ab aeterno ordita sum et ex antiquis antequam terra fieret.”

218 A Lapide, 229, “Mystice, haec omnia adaptas B. Virgini. Ipsa enim ab aeterno ordinata fuit, quia ipsa est opus magnificentum...Ab eterno eam ordinavit Deus, ab initio mundi eam in varis figuris, archetypis, exemplaribus per sacula omina delineavit; ita ejus virgnitatem delineavit et praelusit in Angelis, charitatem in Seraphinis, sapientiam in Cherubinis, integritatem in coelis, splendorem in stellis, in pratis gratiam in arboribus frutuum, in animalibus spirandi agendique virtutem: adeoque omnium justorum virtuties non nisi umbratilia quaedam praeludia exsitterunt, in quibus Deus delineando prima tanta fabricae rudimenta praeludebat.”

219 A Lapide, 229, “Ipsa fuit ordinata et constituta sacerdos mystica, ut Christum suum in holocaustum et victimam pro peccato offeret Deo, ad redemptionem totius generis humani.”
to fight Satan and all evils in the world." This is an example of parallelism, where he compares this verse (Proverbs 8:19) with Song of Songs 6:9 and draws a similar interpretation.

A Lapide uses other titles for Mary such as "Virgin daughter of God," "Spouse of the Holy Spirit," and "Sister of God the Father." She is first-born of all creatures, most excellent of all creatures. A Lapide also uses other Marian titles within this Proverbs' text such as "Shining and Brilliant Star" and "Star of the Sea." A Lapide uses trinitarian theology to support his exegesis, especially Mary's relationship to the three persons of the Blessed Trinity.

In his commentary on Proverbs, a Lapide demonstrates his ability to parallel this sapiential book with others from the wisdom literature of the Old Testament. He is able to use the Septuagint and other translations to further the depth of his biblical commentaries. A Lapide theologizes and offers a more integrated approach to his writings.

"Mystically, you may apply all these things to the Blessed Virgin. For she herself was ordained from eternity, because she herself is the magnificent work, and the divine production, not of one hour, month, year or age, but of all ages."  

"Secondly, she was ordained and established as a mystical priest, so that she might offer to God her own Christ as a holocaust and victim for sin, for the redemption of the whole human race."
In his commentary, a Lapide names those religious orders and congregations who bear Mary’s name and title to show the reader how much honor and veneration is due the Mother of God.

“Thirdly, she was the most ordained, and so most holy in all her thoughts, words and actions, which St. Ambrose describes in particular, book 1 Offices chapter 18, and more fully in book 3 On the Virgin, at the beginning. Hence she equally ordains and arranges congregations devoted to her, Orders, Religions, also Virgins, Martyrs, Confessors, Doctors, whom she fitly raises for the Church for either its restoration or increase, as she supplied and offered for its renewal Saints Dominic and Francis to Christ’s wants to destroy a sinful world.”

“Hence she is called the ordered battle line of a camp, Canticle 6,9. Because she herself set up the battle line of Saints for fighting the devil, the world, the flesh, for uprooting lust, simony and other sins.”

A Lapide uses titles of Mary which define her relationship with each of the three persons of the Blessed Trinity. This demonstrates a Lapide’s trinitarian theme which is seen throughout his biblical commentaries. Mary is in relationship with all three persons of the Blessed Trinity.

“For she was the very daughter of God the Father, the spouse of the Holy Spirit, the parent of God the Son.”

In a spiritual sense, a Lapide enumerates several reasons why Mary remains the Mother of all humanity.

“. . . that the Virgin is the mother of all for four reasons: “First, he says, because she gave birth to all the saints spiritually. Secondly, because of the care which she bears of all. Thirdly, from dignity, because she is the first born before every creature, and is the most excellent of creatures. Fourthly, from the priority of


225 A Lapide, 229-230, “Hinc ipsa vocatur castrorum acies ordinata, Cant. VI, 9. Quia ipsa Sanctorum aciem instruit ad debellandum diabolum, mundum, carnem, ad eradicandom libidinem, simoniam caeteraque sceleras.”

226 A Lapide, 230, “Fuit enim ipsa filia Dei Patris, sponsa Spiritus Sancti, pares Dei Filii.”
predestination; for she was predestined before the ages, that she should exist, from which fact all that is created has been created anew.”

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 8:23 and Mary

In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, and *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, there is no mention of a application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide’s interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.

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227 A Lapide, 230, “...Virginem esse matrem omnium quatuor de causis: Primo, inquit, quia genuit omnes sanctos spiritualiter. Secundo, propter curam quam gerit omnium. Tertio, dignitate, quia est primogenita ante omnem creaturam, et est excellentissima creaturum. Quarto, prioritate prædestinationis; ipsa enim ante saecula prædestinata est, ut esset, ex quo recreandum fuit omne creatum.”


230 Fuller, DD, PhD, LSS, (eds), 504, *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*. 

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A Lapide's commentary on Pr 8:29 and Mary 
presented in Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I

Proverbs 8:29 - “When he compassed the sea with its bounds...”

“When he compassed the sea with its bounds, and set a law to the waters that they should not pass their limits: when he balanced the foundations of the earth;”

In this twenty-ninth verse from Proverbs 8, a Lapide speaks of the land and the sea, comparing it to the womb of Mary which enclosed her Son, Jesus. Here he also mentions use of Complutensis which assisted him in the writings of his biblical commentaries.

“Symbolically, God puts limits on the waves of the sea, that is on the temptations and tribulations of the age, when he diminished and repressed their force because of the merits of Christ, and so strengthens the faithful, that by resisting they might be; and when it happens that they no longer persevere, so that they are not afflicted with weariness because of its length and throw out the fighter of Christ, and finally after the conflict he imparts to the soul the desired tranquility and peace.”

A Lapide uses the mystical sense to analogously compare Mary’s enclosing her womb around Jesus, “the Word of God” to that of the world surrounding the sea.

“Mystically, God at the beginning of the world surrounding the sea with his own hollow channel as though a womb, and with their coasts as though limits he looked back on this figure to an anti-figure, namely to the Blessed Virgin, whom he was about to make the Mother of God, so that she in the like manner should conceive in her womb and enclose the Word of God, which is the sea and the abyss of wisdom, of power, of virtue and of a thing and of good, according to the phrase in Job 38:8: “Who has enclosed the sea with entrances, when it broke out proceeding as thoughrom

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231 A Lapide, 226, “Quando circumdabat mari terminum suum et legem ponebat aquis ne transirent fines suos quando adpendebat fundamenta terrae.”

232 A Lapide, 236, “Symbolice, Deus fluctibus maris, id est tentationibus et tribulationibus saeculi, limites ponit, cum ob Christi merita earum impetum imminuit et reprimit, ac dideles ita corroborat, ut illi resistendo sint; cumque facit ut non diu durent, ne sua longitudine taedio afficiant et dejiciant pugilem Christi, ac tandem post conflictum optatam animae tranquillitatem pacemque imperititur.”

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a womb; when should I place a cloud as its covering, and wrap it with darkness as though with swaddling clothes of infancy?" 233

Using his philological knowledge, a Lapide deciphers the name “Mariam” in Hebrew. Here he offers six interpretations, including the rendering of Mary as “Mistress of the sea”

“Hence the name given to her Mary, which in hebrew first of all means bitterness of the sea from mar, that is bitterness, and iam that is of the sea; because she encircles the sea already spoken about, namely Christ, who sweetened all the bitterness of the human race, indeed turned it into pure sweetness.” 234

“Thirdly, some derive Mariam from yara which in hiphil hora is the same as to show, to teach, to direct . . . Mariam is a woman teacher or woman enlightener of the sea, because she teaches all invoking her in this age as though on a stormy sea, she enlightens, and directs to the port of eternal salvation.” 235

“Fourthly, some interpret Mariam as the rain of the sea:” 236

“Fifthly, may explain Mariam, that it should be the same as Mistress of the sea.” 237

“Sixthly, some interpret Mariam by way of an anagram as though rum yam, that is the height of the sea, or rama miam, that is higher than the sea.” 238

233 A Lapide, 236, Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I. “Mystice, Deus initio mundi mare circumdans suo alveo quasi alvo, suisque liitoribus quasi terminis respexit in hoc typo ad antitypum, puta ad B. Virginem, quam facturus erat Deiparam, ita ut illa simili modo suis visceribus conciperet et concluderet Dei Verbum, quod est mare et abyssus sapientiae, potentiae, virtutis omniumentis et boni, juxta illud Job XXXVIII, 8: Quis conclusit ostis mare, quao do erumpbat quasi de vulva procedens; cum ponerem nubem vestimentum ejus, et calignie illud quasi pannis infantiae obvolverem?”

234 A Lapide, 89, “Hinc nomen ei inditum Maria, quod hebraice primo, significat amaritudinem maris a *mar, id est amaritudo, et *iam, id est maris; quia ipsa mare jam dictum ambiti, puta Christum, qui omnem amaritiem generis humani, dulcoravit, immo in meram dulcedinem convertit.”

235 A Lapide, 236, “Tertio, alii Mariam derivant a *iara, quod in hiphil* hora idem est quod ostendere, docere, dirigere. Unde *more est doctor; hinc Mariam est doctrix vel illuminatrix maris, quia ipas omnem in hoc saeculo velut mari procellose se invocatnes docet, illumat, et ad portum salutis aeternae dirigit.”

236 A Lapide, 236 “Quarto, alii Mariam interpretantur pluviam maris.”

237 A Lapide, 236, “Quinto, multi Mariam exponunt, ut idem sit quot Domina maris.”

238 A Lapide, 236, “Sexto, alii Mariam interpretantur per anagramma quasi *rum iam, id est celsitudo maris, vel *rama miam, id est excelsior mari.”
"Because she by far overcomes and transcends all the hardships of this age, persecutions, tribulations, deaths, and so forth. Wherefore she as she is a virgin from her purity, and the mother of all the living from her piety more truly than Eve, so equally she conceives in herself, encloses, absorbs the pains and afflictions of all, while she consoles, cares for, heals, cheers, enlivens, strengthens those who send their sighs to her."\textsuperscript{239}

\textbf{Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 8:29 and Mary}

In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily \textit{The Jerome Biblical Commentary},\textsuperscript{240} \textit{The New Jerome Biblical Commentary},\textsuperscript{241} and \textit{A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture},\textsuperscript{242} there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide’s interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture. He also uses his knowledge of Hebrew to explain the holy name of Mary.

\textsuperscript{239}A Lapide, 237, "Quia ipas omnes hujus saeculi aerumnas, persecutiones, tribulationes, mortes, etc., longe superat et transcendit. Quare ipsa sicut puritate est virgo, et pietate mater omnium viventium verius quam Eva, sic pariter omnium dolores et afflictiones ipsa in se concipit, concludit, absorbet, dum eos ad se suspirantes solatur, curat, sanat, exhilarat, vivificat, corroborat."

\textsuperscript{240}Brown, SS, 500, \textit{The Jerome Biblical Commentary}.

\textsuperscript{241}Brown, SS, 457, \textit{The New Jerome Biblical Commentary}.

\textsuperscript{242}Fuller, DD, PhD, LSS, (eds), 511, \textit{A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture}.
A Lapide's commentary on Pr 8:30 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I

Proverbs 8:30 - “I was with him forming all things...”

I was with him forming all things: and was delighted every day, playing before him at all
times;”

In chapter eight of Proverbs a Lapide accommodates this thirtieth verse to the Blessed Virgin
Mary because the author of this sapiential book notes that God nourishes human beings with the gifts
of wisdom and holiness. This gift comes from God alone. Who would be better than the Blessed
Virgin Mother, the Panagia, The Holy One, the Seat of God’s Wisdom, to exemplify or personify
these divine qualities in a human being?

As is noted in other commentaries, there is the fact that a Lapide quotes from the great Marian
Church Father, John Damascene, to support his exegesis.

“Mystically, you might apply all these words to the Blessed Virgin. For she
as though the peculiar and proper daughter of God, was nourished in his presence in
every wisdom and holiness; she in turn nourishes all humans in the same things,
composes, promotes and brings it about that the whole Church, indeed the soul of
whatever faithful and holy one, may be harmozousa, that is harmoniously and very
orderly chosen as an image of a stringed instrument playing very sweetly, as the
Damascene says, in oration On the Nativity of the Virgin, and so the image of heaven
and the world, which is named from its own form in Greek “kosmos,” that is,
adornment and beauty. For she was the living heaven, and a certain world
overworldly and divine. Our Salazar cleverly and piously pursued and confirmed the
same thing here in many ways. I will not treat what was done, and with brevity
eagerly proceed to further things.”

243 A Lapide, Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I 238 “Ccum eo eram cuncta conponens et delectabar
per singulos dies ludens coram eo omni tempore.

244 A Lapide, 238, “Mystice, haec omnia adaptes B. Virgini. Ipsa enim quasi peculiaris et propria filia Dei,
apud illum in omni sapientia et sanctitate enutrita fuit; ipsa vicissim in istdem omnes homines enutrit, componit,
promovet, efficitque ut tota Ecclesia, imo anima cujuslibet fidelis et sancti, sit armazousa, id est harmonice et
ordinatissime coaptata instar citharae suavissime modulantis, ut ait Damascenus, orat. De Nativit. Virg., adeoque
instar coeli et mundi, qui a sui specie graece cosmoε, id est ornatus et pulchritudo, nuncupatur. Fuit enim ipsa
coelum animatum, et mundus quidam supramundanus ac divinus. Multis idipsum hic ingeniose et pie prosequitur et
confirmat noster Salazar. Ego actum non agam, et breviti studens ad ulteriora pergo.”
In conclusion, Mary is endowed with the gifts of Wisdom and holiness, which come from God. In Proverbs 8:30, a Lapide demonstrates that Mary benefits from God's goodness. She, in turn, nourishes all human beings in the same way. A Lapide's poetic and pious sentiments regarding Mary are evident in this particular passage of his commentary.

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 8:30 and Mary**

A Lapide's sentiments which are accommodated to the Blessed Virgin in this eighth chapter of Proverbs find support in the “Mass of Mary, Seat of Wisdom” found in *The Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*.

“Beginning with the tenth century we find in Masses of Our Lady, mother of the incarnate Wisdom of God, that readings are often from the Wisdom literature (or “sapiential” epistles), especially Sirach and Proverbs. In these texts the Church, though listening primarily to the voice of eternal Wisdom, hears also the voice of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for in them, according to the common understanding of the medieval writers, the Wisdom of God speaks in a certain sense, ‘in the person of the Virgin.’”

It is interesting to note that there is no particular Mariological application of this verse in the Contemporary Catholic commentaries nor in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*. In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, and *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic

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246 Brown, SS, 505 *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*.


248 Fuller, DD, PhD, LSS, (eds), 511, *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*. 

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scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide's interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.
A Lapide's commentary on Pr 8:35 and Mary presented in *Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I*

**Proverbs 8:35** - “He that shall find me, shall find life . . .”

“He that shall find me, shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord.”

A Lapide’s method of exegesis for these passages from Proverbs consists in translating a word from the verse and uncovering its meaning in different languages (as in Hebrew) or in different Biblical translations (as in the Chaldean). From this point, a Lapide develops the meaning of the biblical verse from his own etymological comparisons. In this case, he uses the word “life” and defines its meaning. A Lapide also defines the will of God. He cites Augustine and his call to conversion in the *Confessions* (Chapter 8) to illustrate that the will does good and that the “enlightenment of the intellect to know good, are from God alone.”

So it is “mystically, one who seeks and invokes the assistance of the Blessed Virgin, finds her and follows her in this matter, and from Holy Mary as from the sea draws an abundance of all honored things.”

He then further explains the visit of the Blessed Mother to her cousin Elizabeth and the effect it had on John the Baptist. Quoting from Guerric of Igny, in a sermon *De Joanne Baptisti*: “When Mary’s voice sounded in the ears of Elizabeth, it penetrated to the heart of John, it animated his spirit and nourished it with joy.” Another quote, this time from St. Anselm, demonstrates the powerful

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249 *Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I* 243 “Qui me invenerit inveniet vitam et hauriet salutem a Domino.”

250 A Lapide, 243, “. . . illuminationes intellectus ad bonum cognoscendum, sunt a solo Deo.”

251 A Lapide, 243 “Mystice, qui quaerit et invocat opem B. Virginis, illam illic invenit et assequitur, atque ex S. Maria quasi ex mari haurit copiam honorum omnium.”

252 A Lapide, 243 “Vox, ait, Mariae dum in auribus Elisabeth sonat, ad cor Joannis penetrat, spiritum ejus animat, gaudioque salutari vegetat.”

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intercession of Mary to her son Jesus. "Sometimes salvation is quicker in calling the name of the only son Jesus. And she does not become greater and more powerful than he is (for he is not great and powerful through her, but she through him.)." \(^{253}\) This verse demonstrates a Lapide's own devotion and love for the Blessed Virgin Mary, that she will not abandon the prayers of her children who cry out to her. In the liturgy, this particular verse is part of the readings for the Masses of "Mary, Seat of Wisdom" and "Mary, Mother and Teacher in the Spirit." \(^{254}\)

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 8:35 and Mary**

Under the title of Our Lady, Mother and Teacher in the Spirit, the Carmelites have preserved Mary's memory in the liturgy because she was the perfect disciple of Jesus, yet still a mother who offers her children support and an example in perfect charity. As in Proverbs 8, Our Lady is celebrated as "a mother, who gently invites us to go up to "the mountain of the Lord, which is Christ himself; a mother through whom wisdom says: 'Those who find me, will find life."' (Prov 8:34).

In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily *The Jerome Biblical Commentary,* \(^ {255}\) *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary,\(^ {256}\) and A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture,\(^ {257}\) there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide's

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\(^ {253}\) A Lapide, 243, "Velocior est, ait, nonnunquam salus memorato nomine ejus, quam invocato nomine Jesu unici filii sui. Et id quidem non ideo fit, quod ipsa major et potentior eo sit (neque enim ille magnus est et potens per eam, sed illa per ipsum."


\(^ {257}\) Fuller, DD, PhD, LSS, (eds) 511 *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture.*
interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.
A Lapide's commentary on Pr 9:2 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I

Proverbs 9:2 - "She hath slain her victims . . ."

"She hath slain her victims, mingled her wine and set forth her table." 258

A Lapide, in commenting on this verse, uses Eucharistic language and symbols and even applies the title of priest to Mary. He also uses an interesting set of images about Mary as table of intellectual faith and of virtues.

"Mystically, the Blessed Virgin set out and put up a table for us, when she gave birth to and gave to us Christ as the true bread of souls. Thus St. Epiphanius, sermon On the Praise of the Virgin: "She is, he says, the table of intellectual faith, which supplied the bread of life to the world." And a few words later: "Most dear one, the table is rich and full of virtues, abundant in the best and whatever foods, which the earth enjoys. O virginal candelabrum," and so forth. And Andrew of Crete, homily 2 On the dormition of the Virgin: 'She shows, he says, her own most Holy table, inasmuch as she who orderly carried in her womb the entire life-giving bread itself our Lord Jesus, who is life eternal, who contains created nature, a bread made from the yeast of Adam's sprinkling; who brings back those, who approach him in a holy way, to a more recent life, and renders them perfected in God. Indeed in this way he also purifies them, and renders them immortal, who are joined to him by [he] his participation of that new and beautiful communion of his, and become his friends." 259

In his commentary on Proverbs 9:2, a Lapide refers to the great saints of the Church such as St. Ephriem, St. Peter Damian and St. Epiphanius in comparing Mary to a table of faith who offers

258 A Lapide. Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I, 253 "Immolavit victimas suas miscuit vinum et proposuit mensam suam."

259 A Lapide, 253, "Mystice, B. Virgo mensam nobis instruxit et proposuit, cum Christum panem animarum verum nobis peperit et dedit. Ita S. Epiphanius, serm. De Laud. Virg.: Ipsa est, ait, fidei mensa intellectualis, quae vitae panem mundo suppedavit. Et post paucas: Locuples est, carissima, et virtutibus plena, mensa virginea, optimis quiusque cibis abundans, quius terra fruatur. O candelabrum virgineum, etc. E Andreas Cretensis, hom. 2 De dormit. Virg.: Ostendi, ait suam sanctissimam mensam, upote quae ipsum totum vivificum panem Dominum nostrum Jesum, qui est vita aeterna, qui creatam continent naturam, ex fermento Adamicae conspersionis panem factum in utero gestavit oeconomic; qui eos qui sancte ad eum accedunt, reduct ad vitam recentioriem, et reddit in Deo perfectos. Quo quidem modo eos quoque expurgat, et reddit immortales, qui participacione novae illius et pulchrae ejus communionis eiconjuguntur, fiuntque familiares."
food, a banquet of heavenly proportions. This food is, of course, Her Son Jesus, who is the Bread of
Life.

"Whence St. Ephrem, On the Praises of the Virgin: "I call the Virgin, he says, just as equally a priest and altar, who indeed bearing a table, gave to us heavenly bread for the remission of sins." And Blessed Peter Damian, sermon On the Nativity: "Eve, he says, handed down food (Some read she ate), through which she harmed us with a hunger for an eternal banquet; Mary gave us food, which exposed for us an entrance to a heavenly banquet." Later our Fernandez in Genesis 3, number 7, correctly explained the phrase she mixed the wine. What, I ask, he says, have you, o mother of God, mixed into the blood of your son, whom we drink? Is it the very clear water of tears, which you very abundantly and very sorrowfully poured out in the circumcision, and which (you poured out) as his mother, standing near the cross of Jesus, from those virginal eyes, and was seen as that commingling of the blood of the son and the tears of the mother? O if only that torrent of delight might flow for me, by which my soul might be moistened! With the best right D. Epiphanius calls the Virgin the mother of God, a table of faith. Certainly God proposed in the Virgin his most worthy mother everything which divine love thought as types of banquets, and foods, and condiments, and liquids, by which the soul of the pious and impious could also be fed, nourished and strengthened." 260

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 9:2 and Mary

In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily

The Jerome Biblical Commentary, 261 The New Jerome Biblical Commentary, 262 and A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture, 263 there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular

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263 Fuller, DD, PhD, LSS, (eds) 511, A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture.
text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide’s interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.
A Lapide’s commentary on Pr 14:1 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I

Proverbs 14:1 - “A wise woman buildeth her house. . .”

“A wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish will pull down with her hands that also which is built.”\textsuperscript{264}

In this fourteenth chapter, verse of one of Proverbs, a Lapide “metaphorically” applies the wise woman who builds her house to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The wise woman is seen as a firm foundation for a house to be built. Mary is that “rule,” the “foundation,” like so many strong wise women before her (i.e, Ruth, Sarah, Abigail).

“The life of the mistress of the house is the rule of the whole house.” Thus Ruth built a house for Boaz, “Rachel and Lia have built a house for Israel,” \textit{Ruth} 4,11; Sarah a house for Tobias, Abigail a house for Nabal, and so forth... Mystically this statement is fulfilled in the Church of the Gentiles and the Synagogue of the Jews.”\textsuperscript{265}

“Metaphorically, the wise woman is the Blessed Virgin who built through Christ, and daily builds the Church in the number and strength of the faithful, namely the Apostles, Martyrs, Virgins, Confessors, and so forth, as I have said in many places.”\textsuperscript{266}

\textbf{Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 14:1 and Mary}

In Proverbs 14:1, the wise woman who builds her house is understood as an accommodation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary is the rule and foundation. In this passage, Mary is understood as the wise woman who builds the Church in numbers and strength through apostles, martyrs and saints.

\textsuperscript{264} A Lapide, \textit{Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I}, 402, “Sapiens mulier aedificavit domum suam insipiens instructam quoque destruet manibus.”

\textsuperscript{265} A Lapide, 402, “Matrisfamilias vita totius domus est regula. Sic Ruth aedificavit domum Booz, Rachel et Lia, aedificarunt domum Israel, Ruth IV, 11; Sara domum Tobiae, Abigail domum Nabal, etc. Mystice haec sententia impiea est in Ecclesia Gentium et Synagoga Judaerorum.”

\textsuperscript{266} A Lapide, 402, “Allegorice, mulier sapiens est B. Virgo quae per Christum aedificavit, et in dies aedificat Ecclesiam numero et virtute fidelium, puta Apostolorum, Martyrum, Virginum, Confessorum, etc. uti pluribus dixi cap. VIII, 22 et cap. IX 1.”

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In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*,\(^{267}\) *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*,\(^{268}\) and *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*,\(^{269}\) there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide's interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.

\(^{267}\)Brown, SS, 500, *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*.

\(^{268}\)Brown, SS, 457,*The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*.

\(^{269}\)Fuller, DD, PhD, LSS, (eds) 505, *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*. 

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A Lapide's commentary on Pr 31:10 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis II

Proverbs 31:10 - “Who shall find a valiant woman?”

“Who shall find a valiant woman? Far and from the uttermost costs is the price of her.”

In this thirty-first chapter of Proverbs, a Lapide uses the “metaphoric” sense of scripture to understand that Mary is the brave, valiant woman of this passage and that she is priceless in the eyes of God and man

“Metaphorically, the brave woman, indeed the very brave heroine of all, and first one of martyrs and queen is the Blessed Virgin, who, as St. Bernard says, sermon 9, among the small items: She was so brave, that she crushed the head of that serpent, to whom it was said by the Lord:”

Noll cites the exegetical work of a Lapide by reminding the reader that Mary cooperated in the work of Her Son as the Redeemer of the World.

“The picture as presented of the 'Atlas Ecclesiae' and that of Mary is used to fulfill the reference to Mary found in Proverbs 31,10 as the 'mulier fortis' thus she serves as a moral model and representative to be understood in the material sense: and as a lasting champion which is critical to the Church.”

Using this verse from Proverb, Noll also mentions that this image of Mary s the valiant woman prefigured in Proverbs 31:10 is a model of virtue and courage, especially in light of the attacks on the Catholic faith by the Protestant Reformers.

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270 A Lapide, Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis II 490, Proverbs 31:10: “Teth gustavit quia bona est negotiatio eius non extinguetur in nocte lucerna illius.”

271 A Lapide, 490, “Tropologice, mulier fortis, imo heroina omnium fortissima, ac martyrum princeps et regina est B. Virgo, quae, ut ait S. Bernardus, serm. 9 inter parvos: Adeo fortis fuit, ut illius serpentis caput contereret, cui a Domino dictum est.”

272 Noll, 229, “Das Bild vom 'Atlas Ecclesiae' und das auf Maria angewandte und in ihr sich erfüllende Schriftwort von der 'mulier fortis' (Spr 31,10), will sie nicht nur als vorbildhafte Gestalt und moralisches Vorbild darstellen, sondern möchte seinhaft, im Sinne realer Vermittlung verstanden werden: als Trägerin und bleibender Haltepunkt der Kirche.”
“In the Exegesis to Proverbs 31,10: “Mulierem fortem quis inveniet,” there is expressed the co-redemptive work of Mary in the work of Redemption. “This is good reasoning for she herself gaver her flesh and accordingly the whole human race to the Son of God and as a result to the entire Holy Trinity.”

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 31:10 and Mary**

In the *Dictionary of Mary*, Cazelles elaborated on the virtues of the ideal wife in Proverbs 31 and compares the wife primarily to the Blessed Virgin Mary but also to the faithful, valiant women of the Old Testament, namely, Esther and Judith.

“It is the ideal wife that concludes the book of Proverbs (ch. 31): by her intelligent activity she becomes the glory of her husband and the happiness of his house. It is the timid Esther who has the courage to confront Xerxes (Ahasuerus) for the salvation of her people. And the devout Judith it is who takes the bold decision by which the city is delivered.

These figures represent the better side of Israel and Judah, and no doubt enter into the faithful Jew’s image of the mother of the Messiah, bearer of total and definitive salvation. The Evangelists suppose them known whenever they speak of Mary simply as Mother of Jesus Christ.”

In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, and *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide’s

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273 Cazelles, 259 - 260, *Dictionary of Mary*.

274 Brown, SS, 505 *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*.

275 Brown, SS, 461 *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*.

276 Fuller, DD, PhD, LSS, (eds) 511, *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*. 129
interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.

In *Mary of Galilee, Vol. II*, Buby makes no mention of this particular verse in his commentary on Proverbs and the Blessed Virgin Mary.\textsuperscript{277}

\textsuperscript{277}Buby, SM, 186, *Mary of Galilee, Vol II*. 
A Lapide’s commentary on Pr 31:18 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis II

Proverbs 31:18 - “She hath tasted and seen that her traffic is good . . .”

“She hath tasted and seen that her traffic is good: her lamp shall not be put out in the night.”  

In this thirty-first chapter of Proverbs, the eighteenth verse, a Lapide makes use of metaphors when speaking about Mary, that Mary is understood as “intercessor” or “negotiator” before God on behalf of all people; Mary is compared to the pearl beyond price of value, as he quotes from St. Augustine:

“Where noted that the Blessed Virgin is called The negotiation of all the ages: first of all, passively and objectively, because namely all the ages direct themselves to her. . . in the second place, actively because she is “negotiation,” that is a female negotiator before God on behalf of the faithful of whatever age and she does it with great care and zeal, so that she seems to be not only a female negotiator but also the negotiation itself of anything; for thus she has in her heart the negotiation of any salvation”

Using rich, lofty imagery, a Lapide compares the Blessed Virgin Mary to a priceless and treasured pearl. He also cites St. Augustine to support his image of Mary.

“Wherefore Blessed Mary is the pearl, which surpassed all price: for she is more valuable than all the angels and humans and the entire world, and as St. Augustine says, “She is the price of her own adornment.”

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278 Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis II 682, Proverbs 31:18: “Teth gustavit quia bona est negotiatio eius non extinguetur in nocte lucerna illius.”

279 A Lapide, 505, “Ubi nota B. Virginem vocari negotium omnium saeculorum: primo, passive et objective, quia scilicet ad ipsam tendunt omnia secula, ut ad eam ornandam et coronandam omnia saecula negotiari, id est perpetuo volvi, laborare et operari videantur; secundo, active, quia ipsa est negotium, id est negotiator apud Deum pro fidelibus cujusvis saeculi, idque facit tanta cura et studio, ut non tam negotiator quam ipsum negotium cujusque esse videatur; adeo enim cordi habet cujusque salutis negotium.”

280 A Lapide, 490, “Quocirca B. Maria est margarita, quae omne pretium superat: pluris enim valet quam omnes angeli et homines mundusque universus et, ut ait S. Augustinus, Ornamenti sui ipsa pretium est.”
A Lapide uses this image of Mary as "lamp" to say that she was light flickering in the darkness, pointing to the ultimate Light, Jesus. As the apostles looked or hoped in the Jesus who died and rose to new life, Mary points to the "Light," the Risen Savior.

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 31:18 and Mary**

In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily *The Jerome Biblical Commentary,²⁸¹ The New Jerome Biblical Commentary,²⁸²* and *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture,*²⁸³ there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide’s interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.

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²⁸³ Fuller, DD, PhD, LSS, (eds) 511, *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture.*
A Lapide's commentary on Pr 31:29 and Mary presented in *Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis II*

Proverbs 31:29 - “... thou hast surpassed them...”

“Many daughters have gathered together riches: thou hast surpassed them all.”

In this lengthy exegetical interpretation of Proverbs 31:29, a Lapide seeks to understand the meaning of “many daughters” in this proverbial verse. He recalls that many women have done great things in regards to prophecies, prayers, fastings, almsgiving. These women have spoken in tongues. They knew mysteries and drove out demons.

“Figuratively, you might apply these things to a heroic soul, as for example St. Paul, St. Augustine, St. Athanasius, St. Dominic, St. Francis, St. Ignatius, and so forth, who transcended the common virtues of the rest of the Saints, grace and glory, through the more illustrious grace of God and through the heroic workings of the virtues. Therefore in this heroine is described a mosaic of an heroic soul and virtue, to whom it is easy to apply each and every maim from these words.”

“But singularly and outstandingly the Fathers and Doctors apply this maximum of Solomon to the Blessed Virgin.”

A Lapide cites a mariological dimension to this passage. Noll confirms this.

“The comments made on *Proverbs 31,29* ‘Multae filiae congregaverunt divitias: tu supergressa es universas,’ receives from Cornelius a detailed mariological interpretation which acts as an advantage towards Mary.”

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285 A Lapide, 524, “Tropologice haec adaptes animae heroicae, quails fuit S. Pauli, S. Augustini, St. Athanasii, S.Dominici, S. Francisci, S. Ignatii, etc., qui communes caeterorum Sanctorum virtutes, gratiam et gloriæm, per illustriorem Dei gratiam et per heroicas virtutum operations transcederunt. Igitur in hac viragine descriptur emblema heroicae animae et virtutis, cui singulas gnomas ex dictis facile est adaptare.”

286 A Lapide, 524, “Singulariter vero et eximie hnc Salomonis gnomen B. Virginis sic adaptant Patres et Doctores.”

In this passage, a Lapide uses St. Bonaventure and St. Jerome in extolling the virtues of Mary. She is the one who surpasses all women in riches. He also gives her various titles which magnify her power of intercession and influence over the saints in heaven.

"Secondly, St. Bonaventure in the *Mirror*, chapter 2: "He says, God had prepared not only greatness for Mary, but also a multitude of good things in heaven, so that no Angel, none of the Saints can be equal to her in the multitude and the assemblage of heavenly goods, according to that (phrase): Many daughters have gathered riches, you alone have surpassed all women, Proverbs 31. If we should understand these daughters (to be) holy souls, or the angelic intelligences, you have surpassed the riches of all haven’t you, since she herself is the first of Virgins, the mirror of Confessors, the rose of Martyrs, the bookmark of the Apostles, the oracle of Prophets, the daughter of the Patriarchs, queen of Angels? What, then, is lacking of the riches of all these? For St. Jerome says: If you look at Mary more carefully, there is no virtue, no beauty, no splendor and glory, which does not shine in her."286

In this passage, a Lapide quotes from St. Bonaventure and emphasizes the Incarnation of Christ, Mary’s role in the work of salvation and her obedience and fidelity to the Will of God.

"Thirdly, St. Bernardine, volume 2 *Public Discourses*, sermon 51, article 3, chapter 10 says that the Blessed Virgin by that act of faith and obedience, by which she gave her assent to the Angel announcing the Incarnation of Christ, and by giving her assent she disposed herself very worthily, and fittingly deserved to bet he mother of God, deserved more than all the Angels and Saints have deserved in all their deeds, because namely (as Suarez explains, disputation 12, section 4) by this act she deserved at least fittingly this dignity (the maternity of God) to which a more excellent grace

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286 A Lapide, 525, "Secundo, S. Bonaventura in *Speculo*, cap. II: Mariae, ait, Deus praeparaverat non solum magnitudinem, sed et multitudinem bonorum in coelo, ita ut nullus Angelus, nullus Sanctorum ei aequari positis in multitudine et congregazione bonorum coelestium, juxta illud: Multae filiae congregaverunt divitias, tu sola supergressa est universas, Prov. Xxxi. Si filias istas intelligamus animas sanctas, vel intelligentias angelicas, numquid non supergressa es divitiis omnium, cum ipsa sit primitiva Virginum, speculum Confessorum, rosa Martyrum, registrum Apostolorum, oraculum Prophetarum, filia Patriarcharum, regina Angelorum? Quod enim de divitiis omnium horum defuit? S. Hieronymus enim ait: Mariam si diligentius aspicias, nihil virtutis est, nihil speciositatis, nihil candoris et gloriae, quod in ea non resplendeat."
and glory in some way were owed."\textsuperscript{289}

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**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Pr 31:29 and Mary**

In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily \textit{The Jerome Biblical Commentary},\textsuperscript{291} \textit{The New Jerome Biblical Commentary}\textsuperscript{292}, and \textit{A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture},\textsuperscript{293} there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide’s

\textsuperscript{289} A Lapide, 525, "Tertio, S. Bernardinus, tom. II \textit{Concionum}, serm. 51, art. 3, cap. x, dicit B. Virginem actu illo fidei et obedientiae, quo Angelo Christi incarnationem annuntianti assensit, et assentiendo sese condigne disposuit, ac de congruo meruit ut esset mater Dei, plus meruisse quam meruerunt omens Angeli et Sancti in omnibus actibus suis, quia scilicet (ut explicat Suarius, disp. 12, sect. Iv) eo actu meruit saltem de congruo eam dignitatem (maternitatem Dei) cui excellentior gratia et gloria quodam modo debeatur."

\textsuperscript{290} A Lapide, 525 "Tertio, S. Bernardinus, tom. II \textit{Concionum}, serm. 51, art. 3, cap. x, dicit B. Virginem actu illo fidei et obedientiae, quo Angelo Christi incarnationem annuntianti assensit, et assentiendo sese condigne disposuit, ac de congruo meruit ut esset mater Dei, plus meruisse quam meruerunt omens Angeli et Sancti in omnibus actibus suis, quia scilicet (ut explicat Suarius, disp. 12, sect. Iv) eo actu meruit saltem de congruo eam dignitatem (maternitatem Dei) cui excellentior gratia et gloria quodam modo debeatur."

\textsuperscript{291} Brown, SS, 505 \textit{The Jerome Biblical Commentary}.

\textsuperscript{292} Brown, SS, 461, \textit{The New Jerome Biblical Commentary}.

\textsuperscript{293} Fuller, DD, Ph.D., LSS, (eds) 511 \textit{A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture}. 

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interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.
Comparison/ Conclusion: Proverbs

A Lapide uses many of the verses in Proverbs 8, 9, 14, and 31 to understand, or accommodate, various texts in the Wisdom literature to the Blessed Virgin Mary. In Proverbs 8:1, using the mystical sense, he understands that Mary was in the mind of God as he brings forth wisdom and prudence in the world. Buby cites St. Athanasius in supporting his understanding of the text as a foreshadowing of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In Proverbs 8:16, a Lapide sees Mary as the Queen of all Saints and the Mother of the Crowned King; therefore, he connects royalty with Mary. He uses typology to understand Wisdom as Mary, Seat of Wisdom.

In Proverbs 8:18, a Lapide uses the mystical sense to see Mary among the glorious riches and justice that the Lord provides for his people.

In Proverbs 8:13, the fruit referred to in this passage is better than gold meaning that Mary’s fruit i.e. Jesus Christ, is more precious than gold. He uses his knowledge of original language and Philology to arrive at a deeper meaning of this text. He also quotes from St. Bonaventure who says of the Elizabethan words to Mary at the Visitation, “Better is my fruit, the fruit of my womb better than gold and precious stones.” More than likely, a Lapide uses the Septuagint, the Vulgate and the Hebrew text to accommodate this text to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In Proverbs 8:23, a Lapide uses Trinitarian language to support his exegesis and the use of Marian titles related to the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity. He calls Mary, “Virgin Mother of God,” “Spouse of the Holy Spirit,” and “Sister of God the Father.” He uses the mystical sense to identify Mary, who was ordained from eternity and is the magnificent work of God. He quotes from St. Ambrose to demonstrate the great love that the Church has for the Blessed Virgin Mary.
In Proverbs 8:29, a symbolically and mystically interprets the passage that womb of Mary, enclosing her Son, Jesus, is analogous to the sea surrounding the foundations of the earth. In this particular passage, a Lapide offers an etymology of Mary’s name, rendered Miriam in Hebrew, which helps us understand Mary as the “Star of the Sea,” a title bestowed on her in the Litany of Loreto.

In Proverbs 8:30, a Lapide accommodates this passage to Mary and uses the mystical sense to see her as the proper daughter of God who is nourished in God’s presence with wisdom and holiness. He cites St. John Damascene and Salazar to support his exegesis. A Lapide’s interpretation has a poetic and pious tone to it, evidenced in this particular passage.

In Proverbs 8:35, a Lapide sees, in a mystical sense, that Mary is the one who finds life and salvation in the Lord. He quotes from St. Anselm and Guerric of Igny to support his interpretation.

In Proverbs 9:2, Mary is compared to a table set forth, mingled with wine. Mary is called a table of intellectual faith and of virtues. In this passage, there are Eucharistic overtones within the passage. Once again, a Lapide uses typology to understand this particular passage from Proverbs. He also cites St. Andrew of Crete, St. Epiphanius and St. Peter Damian to support his analysis of Mary as the table of faith who offers a heavenly banquet, namely, her Son Jesus in the Eucharist.

In Proverbs 14:1, the wise woman who builds her house is understood as an accommodation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary is the rule and foundation. In this passage, Mary is understood as the wise woman who builds the Church in numbers and strength through apostles, martyrs and saints.

In Proverbs 31:10, Mary is the valiant woman understood in the metaphoric sense, much like Proverbs 14:1. He quotes from the medieval saints, particularly one of his favorites, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, who likens Mary to the woman in Genesis 3:15, she who crushed the head of the serpent.
In Proverbs 31:18, Mary is seen as the lamp, who casts light in the darkness. Mary is seen as the intercessor and the negotiator of all ages. She is the light flickering in the darkness, always pointing to her Son, Jesus, and the light of the world.

In Proverbs 31:29, Mary is seen as the one who has surpassed in riches the many daughters mentioned in Proverbs.

Buby states that the Liturgy has accommodated the texts of Proverbs 8, 9, 14, and 31 to Mary, Seat of Wisdom. Proverbs 8 is seen as a manifestation of God through the feminine image of Wisdom. Chapter 8 describes the birth of Wisdom. Because of the Liturgy, Buby accommodates the book of Proverbs to Mary; however, he does not specifically use all the different verses that a Lapide analyzes to compare Wisdom to Mary.
A Lapide's commentary on Sg 4:4 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I

Song of Songs 4:4 - “Thy neck is as the tower of David . . .”

“Thy neck is as the tower of David, which is built with bulwarks; a thousand bucklers hang upon it, all the armour of valiant men.”

Most of the titles of Loreto are associated with the prophecies and symbolism of the Old Testament which foresaw the role of Mary played in the mystery of salvation. Several of these center on her sanctity and maternity. For instance, the Tower of David stood prominently and strongly on the highest summit of the mountains surrounding Jerusalem. Such a tower was part of the defense of the city. From it, warnings would be given of approaching enemies. Mary is compared to the Tower of David because of her holiness, being recognized as full of grace and having been conceived free of original sin. By her prayers and example, she is part of God's “defense

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294 A Lapide, Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis I 693, Song of Songs 4:4: “Sicut turris David collum tuum quae aedificata est cum propugnaculis mille clypei pendent ex ea omnis armatura fortium.” (Latin was translated to English by Dr. William Napiwocki, Ph.d., Professor of Latin and Greek, Archbishop Quigley Preparatory Seminary.)

295 M. A. Clarahan, 601, “Litany.” The New Catholic Encyclopedia. Second Edition. “Litanies addressed exclusively to the Virgin Mary began to emerge beginning in the twelfth century. Names of saints were replaced with Marian titles such as “Mater purissima” (Mother purest), “Regina apostolorum” (Queen of the apostles), and “Rosa Mystica” (Mystical Rose). The most well known Marian litany is probably the so-called Litany of Loreto, named for the Italian village where a revered house is reported to have been miraculously transported from Palestine by angels.”

296 C. H. Bagley, (eds). 603, “Litany of Loreto.” The New Catholic Encyclopedia. Second Edition, “The titles of the litany fall into four categories. In the first 20, after being saluted as Holy Mary, The Blessed Virgin Mary is addressed first as Mother, then as Virgin, by titles indicative of the dignity of her relationship to God and man, and of her excellence as prototype, after her divine Son, of Christian perfection. She is Mother of God, of our Creator and Savior, and hence mother most pure, most admirable, possessed of perfect integrity of heart and perfect harmony of mind and body, of unalloyed goodness and perfect love, wise, powerful, gentle and true. Then follow 13 beautiful titles associated with Old Testament prophecy and symbolism, and four whose origins are lost in antiquity tell of her power and office. Finally she is addressed 12 times as queen in terms that declare the broad extent and character of her queenship. The litany ends with the Collect from the Common Mass of Blessed Virgin Mary, which prays for health of body and spirit and deliverance from present sorrow to a future joy.”
mechanism” by which the kingdom of God will stand undefeated and sin will always be conquered.  

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Sg 4:4 and Mary**

In contemporary Catholic scholarship, the following citations are relevant to this title (Tower of David) applied to Mary.

“The second selection from Song of Songs 4 emphasizes both the interior and exterior beauty of the bride in a poetic and not an allegorical way. The fountain theme which runs through the final verses is accommodated to Mary as the fountain or source of health and salvation. There is a picture of ecstatic wholesomeness in the description of the bride as a garden of delights which heals, soothes, and intoxicates with joy the lover who suffers from being away from the bride.”  

In *The Navarre Bible: The Psalms and The Song of Solomon*, Casciaro compares Mary to a bride awaiting her spouse.

“In St. Ambrose, particularly, there is a Marian typology in which the bride stands for the Blessed Virgin and is, therefore, the model for the Christian virgin who becomes the spouse of God.”  

In *Mary of Galilee, Vol II*, Buby states this understanding of a foreshadowing of Mary in this text from Song of Songs which has been prevalent throughout the Church’s history of exegesis.

“The Mariological interpretation of the Song of Songs is a constant in the history of the Church from Origen to the most recent liturgical use of texts in the masses in honor of the Blessed Virgin.”

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298 Buby, SM, 175 *Mary of Galilee, Vol II*.


After the Council of Trent, the first groups of Protestants viewed the Song of Songs with an ecclesial-historical interpretation. The “bride” was identified as either the individual human soul or the Virgin Mary. However, Roman Catholics had a broader scope of medieval Christian interpretation, continuing favor throughout the sixteenth century and beyond. Notably these efforts are for the close observation they adhered to the Hebrew text, in addition to their exhaustive reference to the labor of medieval Jewish interpreters of the Middle Ages. Pope Pius V, who convened the Council of Trent, saw the Song of Songs as a metaphorical play on the Incarnation, which emphasized the Marian analogy of the “bride.” The sixteenth-century meditations on the Song written by the Spanish Carmelite mystics, St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, stand in the customary thinking of the “spiritual marriage” of the personal soul with the Savior.\(^{301}\) It is well known that the biblical commentary of Cornelius a Lapide defended Catholic orthodoxy and attempted to pull together these several lines of customary observation.

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Sg 4:4 and Mary**

Much like a Lapide, Stefano M. Manelli, FFI states that the Fathers of the Church supported Mary as applied to the texts within the Song of Songs.

“It is interesting to note that the *sensus fidei* of the Church as expressed by the liturgy when applying to Mary the passages of the Song of Songs, is in full accord with the Mariological interpretation supported by such Fathers, and ecclesiastical writers of the Church as St. Hippolytus, St. Ephrem (above all), St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Epiphanius, St. Sophronius, St. John Damascene, St. Germain, St. Peter Damian, Rupert of Deutz, Alan of Lille, etc.”\(^{302}\)

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\(^{302}\)Manelli, FFI, 73, *All Generations Shall Call Me Blessed.*
In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*,[^303] *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*,[^304] and *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*,[^305] there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide’s interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.

[^303]: Brown, SS, 508 *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*.


[^305]: R. Fuller, DD, Ph.D., LSS, (eds) 527. *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*. 

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Comparison / Conclusion: Song of Songs 4:4

A Lapide uses accommodation to compare Mary to the Tower of David, because she is holy, full of grace, and conceived without sin. Mary is part of God’s defense against those who would do harm to the Lord. This text from Song of Songs is an accommodation to the Blessed Virgin Mary and a Lapide uses typology to understand Mary in this text.

Buby states that the fountain theme that runs in the final verses of this chapter is accommodated to Mary who is the source of health and salvation. Mary is likened to a bride who heals and soothes the lover who suffers from being away from the bride. Buby emphasizes the poetic sense of this passage, but not the allegorical. Buby states that this particular passage is used in the masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
A Lapide's commentary on Si 24 and Mary 
presented in Commentaria in Ecclesiasticum II 

Sirach 24 - “Wisdom shall praise her own self . . .”

“Wisdom shall praise her own self, and shall be honoured in God, and shall glory in the midst of her people,

2 And shall open her mouth in the churches of the most High, and shall glorify herself in the sight of his power,

3 And in the midst of her own people she shall be exalted, and shall be admired in the holy assembly.

4 And in the multitude of the elect she shall have praise, and among the blessed she shall be blessed, saying:

5 I came out of the mouth of the most High, the firstborn before all creatures.

6 I made that in the heavens there should rise light that never faileth, and as a cloud I covered all the earth:

7 I dwelt in the highest places, and my throne is in a pillar of a cloud.

8 I alone have encompassed the circuit of heaven, and have penetrated into the bottom of the deep, and have walked in the waves of the sea,

9 And have stood in all the earth; and in every people.

10 And in every nation I have had the chief rule:

11 And by my power I have trodden under my feet the hearts of all the high and low: and in all these I sought rest, and I shall abide in the inheritance of the Lord.

12 Then the creator of all things commanded, and said to me: and he that made me, rested in my tabernacle,

13 And he said to me: Let thy dwelling be in Jacob, and thy inheritance in Israel, and take root in my elect.

14 From the beginning, and before the world, was I created, and unto the world to come I shall not cease to be, and in the holy dwelling place I have ministered before him.

15 And so was I established in Sion, and in the holy city likewise I rested, and my power was in Jerusalem.

16 And I took root in an honourable people, and in the portion of my God his inheritance, and my abode is in the full assembly of saints.

17 I was exalted like a cedar in Libanus, and as a cypress tree on mount Sion.

18 I was exalted like a palm tree in Cades, and as a rose plant in Jericho:

19 As a fair olive tree in the plains, and as a plane tree by the water in the streets, was I exalted.

20 I gave a sweet smell like cinnamon and aromatical balm: I yielded a sweet ordour like the best myrrh:

21 And I perfumed my dwelling as storax, and galbanum, and onyx, and aloes, and as the frankincense not cut, and my odour is as the purest balm.

22 I have stretched out my branches as the turpentine tree, and my branches are of honour and grace.

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23 As the vine I have brought forth a pleasant odour: and my flowers are the fruit of honour and riches.
24 I am the mother of fair love, and of fear, and of knowledge, and of holy hope.
25 In me is all grace of the way and of the truth, in me is all hope of life and of virtue.
26 Come over to me, all ye that desire me, and be filled with my fruits.
27 For my spirit is sweet above honey, and my inheritance above honey and the honeycomb.
28 My memory is unto everlasting generation.
29 They that eat me, shall yet hunger: and they that drink me, shall yet thirst.
30 He that hearkeneth to me, shall not be confounded: and they that work by me, shall not sin.
31 They that explain me shall have life everlasting.
32 All these things are the book of life, and the covenant of the most High, and the knowledge of truth.
33 Moses commanded a law in the precepts of justices, and an inheritance to the house of Jacob, and the promises to Israel.
34 He appointed to David his servant to raise up of him a most mighty king, and sitting on the throne of glory for ever.
35 Who filleth up wisdom as the Phison, and the Tigris in the days of the new fruits.
36 Who maketh understanding to abound as the Euphrates, who multiplieth it as the Jordan in the time of harvest.
37 Who sendeth knowledge as the light, and riseth up as Gehon in the time of the vintage.
38 Who first hath perfect knowledge of her, and a weaker shall not search her out.
39 For her thoughts are more vast than the sea, and her counsels more deep than the great ocean.
40 I, wisdom, have poured out rivers.
41 I, like a brook out of a river of a mighty water; I, like a channel of a river, and like an aqueduct, came out of paradise.
42 I said: I will water my garden of plants, and I will water abundantly the fruits of my meadow.
43 And behold my brook became a great river, and my river came near to the sea:
44 For I make doctrine to shine forth to all as the morning light, and I will declare it afar off.
45 I will penetrate to all the lower parts of the earth, and will behold all that sleep, and will enlighten all that hope in the Lord.
46 I will yet pour out doctrine as prophecy, and will leave it to them that seek wisdom, and will not cease to instruct their offspring even to the holy age.
47 See ye that I have not laboured for myself only, but for all that seek out the truth.\(^{306}\)

\(^{306}\)Commentaria in Ecclesiasticum II, 734-735, "Sapientiae laus sapientia laudabit animam suam et in Deo honorabitur et in medio populi sui gloriaritutur et in ecclesis Altissimi aperiet os suum et in conspectu virtutis illius gloriaritutur in medio populu exaltabitur et in plenitudine sancta admirabitur in multitudo selectorum habebit laudem et inter benedictos benedicetur dicens ego ex ore Altissimi prodivi primogenita ante omnen creaturam/ego in caelis feci ut oriretur lumen indeficiens et sicut nebula texi omnen terram ego in altis habitavi et thronus meus in columna
Throughout a Lapide’s commentary on Sirach 24, Mary is understood as the embodiment of Wisdom. Noll confirms this analysis of the text.

“This interpretation is found in the commentary on Sirach 24, 13 (VG.); ‘Et Dixit mihi: in Jacob inhabita, et in Israel haereditate, et into electis meis radice.’ This is a good example of the method used by Cornelius. First it shows the choosing of the Jewish People by God and also it shows the assigned inheritance to a descendent of Jacob, i.e., the Israelites.”

In his commentary on Sirach 24, a Lapide translates Mary's name from the Hebrew, using philology to assist the reader in understanding Mary's role in salvation history. He also stresses Mary's role as the Theotokos.

"And for this reason she was called Mary, that highest, sublime, outstanding, from the root ram, that is, he was the highest; or Mary, that is, mistress, teacher, and first one; more for it is lord, teacher, first one, from the root iara, that is he taught, he directed, although others wish Maria to be the same as myrrh or the bitterness of suffering, from the root marar, that is, he was bitter. It happens, that the Blessed Virgin may be the mother of God without a father, for she supplied the place of father and mother. Wherefore she is more the mother of God, than might be the mothers of human beings: for these do not give the whole substance to the child, but simply one part; this is true because the father gives the other, and special one."\textsuperscript{308}

Here, a Lapide bestows a new title on Mary, calling her the "Mother of eternal Wisdom," similar to her title "Seat of Wisdom" found in the Litany of Loreto. He uses the mystical sense to understand Mary's role as leader, teacher, mother and guardian of the faithful. He also parallels his commentary here in Sirach 24 with his interpretation of Mary in Proverbs 8.

"Mystically, the Blessed Virgin as the Mother of eternal Wisdom dwelled in Jacob; because born from the Jews she dwelled among the Jews, and there she gave birth to Christ and Christians: therefore among these as though chosen by God, he sent the first roots of the Christian Church. For he began these works of the Blessed Virgin and the Apostles in Sion and the inhabitants of Sion, that is, the Jews converted to Christ. Again the Blessed Virgin is the leader, mother, teacher, and guardian of the chosen. Whence serious theologians teach that the sign of predestination and divine selection is the cult and continual devotion toward the Blessed Virgin, according to that phrase, which the Church mystically attributes to

\textsuperscript{308}A Lapide, 627, "Atque hac de causa vocata est Maria, id est, excelsa, sublimes, eminens, a radice ram, id est excelsus fuit; vel Maria, id est domina, magistra et princeps: more enim est dominus, magister, princeps, a radice iara, id est docuit, direxit, licet alii Maria idem esse velint quod myrrha vel amaritudo passionis, a radice mara, id est amarus fuit. Accedit, quod B. Virgo sit mater Dei sine patre, ipsa enim supplevit vicem patris et matris. Quare magis est mater Dei, quam sint matres hominum: hae enim non dant totam substantiam filio, sed partem unam duntaxat; nam alteram, eamque praecipuam, dat pater."
her: "He who shall find me, shall find life, and will drink salvation from the Lord."
Proverbs 8"^{309}

A Lapide quotes from Salazar to show the reader that Mary was predestined from eternity to be a model of holiness for all the saints. He then bestows on Mary the title of "queen and mistress of all creatures."

"Mystically, you may easily apply all these to the Blessed Virgin, as I will show more profusely in Proverbs 8, 22; in the meantime look for our Salazar who treats these items in a learned and pious way. This is true because the Blessed Virgin was predestined from eternity, that she should be the principle of the works of God, namely of all pure creatures. Secondly, that she should be the model of holiness, according to which she might shape the holy Angles, Apostles, Martyrs, Virgins, Confessors and Religious. Therefore, when God conceived in mind and predestined the Blessed Virgin, he predestined all these, and so all the faithful. Thirdly, he decreed the first place of grace and glory to her, and he added the first place of dominion as well: for he destined her, that she should be first, the queen and mistress of all creatures."^{310}

In this passage, a Lapide cites Rupert of Deutz and St. John Damascene to understand Mary’s role as "handmaid of the Lord" and an "abyss of miracles," stressing her great intercessory powers. This would be very much in line with the Post-Tridentine Mariology, prevalent in the time of a Lapide.

^{309} A Lapide, 628, "Mystice, B. Virgo aeternae Sapientiae mater habitavit in Jacob; quia ex Judaeis nata inter Judaeos habitavit, ibique genuit Christum et Christianos: in his ergo quasi electis a Deo, misit primas radices Ecclesiae Christianae. Haec enim coepit in Sion et Sionidis, id est Judaeis ad Christum conversis, opera B. Virginis et Apostolorum. Rursum B. Virgo electorum est dux, mater, magistra et custos. Unde graves theology docent signum praedestinationis et electionis divinae esse cultum et devotionem assiduam ergo B. Virginem, juxta illud, quod ei mystice attribit Ecclesia: 'Qui me invenerit, inveniet vitam, et hauriet salutem a Domino,' Proverb. VIII."

"Wherefore Rupert in chapter 2 Canticle represents the Blessed Virgin speaking thus about herself: "Before I was born, I was present to God; before I came to be, I was well known by him. He chose me before the establishment of the world, so that I should be holy and immaculate in his sight in charity. And if his delights are to be with the sons of human beings, how much more he was delighted with that handmaid of the Lord, with a miracle of all the sons of human beings?" Rupert says these things. For which reason the Damascene, in sermon 1 On the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, calls her "the abyss of miracles, the workshop of miracles." A Lapide emphasizes Mary's queenship in heaven, using the anagogical sense. He also links her role as Queen with the liturgical feast of the Assumption.

"Anagogically, these words have been applied to the inheritance of the heavenly Jerusalem, in which as though a queen the Blessed Virgin reigns and triumphs. Whence the Church applies these words to her on the feast of her Assumption."

A Lapide uses the writings of St. Peter Canisius and Christopher of Castro to describe Mary's early life in the temple from the age of three until fourteen, when the angel Gabriel brought her the news from God that she would become the mother of the Lord. He describes her hidden life in the temple with great detail.

"Mystically, the Blessed Virgin ministered to God in the temple, when as a three year old she was presented in it, indeed she truly presented herself. Whence the Church reads these words for the Epistle on the feast of the same's Presentation. For she from age three to 14, when she was espoused to Joseph, and, with the Angel announcing, she conceived Christ, served God continuously in the temple, devoting herself to continuous prayers, meditations, pious readings, discourses, and manual work for the ministry of the temple, so

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311 A Lapide, 629, "Quocirca pulchre Rupertus in cap. II Cantic., B. Virginem ita de se loquentem inducit: "Priusquam nascerer, Deo praesensaderam; antequam fierem, bene illi cognita fueram. Elegi me ante mundiconstitutionem, ut essem sancta et immaculata in conspectus ejus in charitate. Et si deliciae ejus esse cum filiis hominum?" Haec Rupertus. Qua de cuasa Damascenum, serm. 1 De Navitate B. Virg., can vocat "miraculumabyssum, miraculorum officinam."

312 A Lapide, 629, "Anagogice, haec adapta haereditati Jerusalem coelestis, in qua quasi regina regnat et triumphat B. Virgo. Unde haec ei adaptat Ecclesia in festo Assumptionis ejusdem."
that she might adapt and dispose herself for the conception of the Word. See our Canisius in *Marian Items* and Christopher of Castro *On the Life of the Mother of God.*

A Lapide uses the **mystical** sense in comparing the Virgin Mary to the victorious Judith. He describes Judith as a **type** of Mary.

"Mystically, you may apply all these words to the Blessed Virgin. Therefore you might truly proclaim her that, which the Israelites proclaimed to the victorious Judith on account of the slain Holofernes: 'you are the glory of Jerusalem, you are the joy of Israel, you are the honor of our people' Judith 15, 10."

Once again, a Lapide describes Mary with the rich images offered through the twenty-fourth chapter of Sirach. He calls her a "beautiful olive tree" and the "mother of mercy," who brings aid and assistance to the sick and the weary, as well as travelers who are weary from the heat of the sun.

"You may apply all these words to the Blessed Virgin, who is rightly called a beautiful olive tree, and that in the fields, both because in every time and place, and on behalf of every type of sickness, as though a mother of mercy, to all those wanting to invoke her, she was accessible to bring aid; and because to us wayfarers in the heat of temptations, as though afflicted by the heat of the sun, exposed in the fields, where similar trees do not exist, she offers a desired place of rest in her own shadow; and because as Mother of God she is as though a field without a cultivator, because she gave birth to Christ without the help of a man, and showed him to all coming to her."

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313 A Lapide, 629-30, "Mystice, B. Virgo ministravit Deo in templo, cum in eo fuit praesentata triennis, imo ultro praesentavit seipsam. Unde Ecclesia haec pro Epistola legit in festo Praesentationis ejusdem. Isra enim ab anno aetatis tertio usque ad 14, quo fuit despontata Joseph et, nuntiante Angelo, concept Christum, continuo Deo ministravit in templo, vacans perpetuis orationibus, meditationibus, piis lectionibus, concionibus, ac operi manuali ad miserieria templi, ut se aptaret et disponeret ad conceptionem Verbi. Vide nostrum Canisium in Mariali et Christophorum a Castro De Vita Deiparae."

314 A Lapide, 630, "Mystice, haec omnia adaptes B. Virgini. Illi ergo verius acclames id, quod Israelitae acclamarunt victrici Judith ob caesum Holofernen: Tu gloria Jerusalem, tu laetitia Israel, tu honorificentia populi nostri Judith xv, 10."

315 A Lapide, 641, "Haec omnia mystice adaptes B. Vigini, quae recte dicitur oliva speciosa, idque in campis, tum quia omni tempore et loco, ac pro omni morborum genere, quasi mater misericordiae, omnibus eam invocare volentibus, ad opitulatunm est exposita; tum quia nobis viatoribus tentationum aestu, tanquam solis ardore afflictis, in campis aperitis, ubi similes arbores desunt, optatum suo umbraculo praebet refregreum; tum quia Deipara est veluti campus absque colono, quia sine viri opera Christum genuit, eumque omnibus accedentibus exposuit."
Here, he compares Mary to the plane tree with broad branches and describes Mary as a shelter and a refuge. The titles a Lapide uses for the Blessed Virgin Mary are taken from Sirach and mirror the Marian titles of the Litany of Loreto.

"Again the plant represents the Blessed Virgin. This is true because the plane tree is spread out with broad branches, has leaves like ones of oblong or half-moon shields; thus the Blessed Virgin is as though a plane tree, spread out with broad branches, in which se hides and protects all human beings; she is a refuge, a protection, a shield and asylum for all fleeing to her."316

In this passage, a Lapide compares the Virgin Mary to cinnamon and balsam, because her aroma and fame have spread throughout the world. He also likens Mary and balsam to her fleeing Egypt to protect her child Jesus from King Herod when he slew the first-born boys of the Israelites.

"Hence it is plain how correctly wisdom, the wise and the saints, and especially the Blessed Virgin, are compared to cinnamon and balsam. This is true because first of all, the balsam was proper to Judea, but was brought from there and honored throughout the whole world; so also the Blessed Virgin born, brought up, living and dying in Judea, sprinkled her aroma and fame throughout the whole world. She, just as fleeing Herod from Judea, brought the balsam with herself into Egypt; and so she brought the true knowledge and worship of God, namely Christianity, from the unbelieving Jews over to the Egyptians and other nations."317

In a poetic manner, a Lapide emphasizes the doctrinal aspect of Mary's virginity while stating that the aroma of her goodness and sanctity is imitated and venerated by both men and women of the Church.

316 A Lapide, 642, "Rursum, platanus repraesentat B. Virginem. Nam platanus patulis diffunditur ramis, habet folla instar scutorum et peltarum; sic B. Virgo est quasi platanus, patulis diffusa ramis, quibus unversos hominess ascondit et protegit; perfugium est, protecto, scutum et asylum omnium ad se confugientium.

317 A Lapide, 644, "Hinc patet quam recte sapientia, sapientes et sancti, ac imprimis B. Virgo, comparetur cinnamomo et balsamo. Nam primo, balsamum proprium fuit Judaeae, sed inde delatum et celebratum per totum orbem; sic et B. Virgo nata, educata, vivens et defuncta in Judaeae, sui odorem et famam sparsit per totum mundum. Eadem, sicut ex Judaeae fugiens Herodem, balsamum secum traxit in Aegyptum; ita et veram Dei cognitionem cultumque, puta Christianismum, ipsa a perfidies Judaeaeis transitulit ad Aegyptios caeterasque gentes."
"For she was a virgin, indeed a man-like maiden, who seized not only women, but also faithful men in admiration and imitation of her, as they say: 'We will run in the aroma of your ointments.'"\textsuperscript{318}

A Lapide takes the imagery of myrrh offered in the text from Sirach and connects the myrrh with Mary's mortification as she stood at the food of her Son's cross, to be His companion and associate in His crucifixion and death on earth.

"In addition it is clear that the Blessed Virgin was devoted to myrrh, that is to mortification, both from the fact that she willed to stand near to Christ her son crucified, so that she might be the companion and associate of his death and mortification; and from her name: for Maria, as many wish, is said to be from marar, that is, he was bitter."\textsuperscript{319}

Another Lapidean title offered to Mary is "the path, the way of the impassable road of sinners." He connects Mary with a stream which flows from Christ and the Holy Spirit.

"Therefore Mary is the path, that is, the way on the impassable road of sinners, she the way on the double path of those who have strayed. The very way on the triple path of those in doubt, and safely of those returning to the native country in heaven: She flows from a stream, that is from the Holy Spirit, or from Christ, whose water is immense, immense his redemption, and abundance of graces flowing from her."\textsuperscript{320}

Using the \textit{mystical} sense and quoting from St. John Damascene, a Lapide calls Mary a "sea of graces" and an "abyss of grace."

"Mystically, the grace which the Blessed Virgin received in the first instant of her conception, for 72 years, in which through continuous acts and equal to grace

\textsuperscript{318} A Lapide, 644, "Ipsa enim fuit Virgo, imo virago, quae non tantum feminas, sed et viros fideles in sui admirationem et imitationem rapuit, ut dicerent: In odorem unguentorum tuorum curremus."

\textsuperscript{319} A Lapide, 645, "Porro myrrhae, id est mortificationi fuisse addictam B. Virginem patet, tum ex eo quod adstare voluit Christo filio suo cruci affixo, ut moris et mortificationis ejus esset social et consors; tum ex nomine: Maria enim, ut multi volunt, dicta est a marar, id est amarus fuit."

\textsuperscript{320} A Lapide, 664, "Maria ergo est trame, id est, via in invio peccatorum, ipsa via in bivio deviantium, ipsa via in trivio dubitantium, et secure ad patriam in coelum redeuntium: manta ex fluvio, id est ex Spiritu Sancto, vel ex Christo, cujus aqua immense est, immense ejus redemptio, et gratiarum copia ex ea profluens."
she continually increased it, and constantly duplicated them, increased as though into an immense size, so that truly Mary could be said and was the sea of graces; whence she is called the abyss of grace by the Damascene, in oration 2 On the Assumption. 321

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Sirach 24 and Mary

Buby explains that chapter twenty-four in Sirach has been preserved by the Church in the liturgy, referring to Mary as “Seat of Wisdom.”

“The Catholic Catechism uses Sirach 24 along with Proverbs 8 in explaining how Mary is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit and the Son: “In this sense the Church’s Tradition has often applied the most beautiful texts on wisdom in relation to Mary. Mary is acclaimed and represented in the liturgy as the “Seat of Wisdom.” 322

Rene Laurentin in his book A Short Treatise on the Virgin Mary, offers some further reflections on the use of Sirach 24 in the Liturgy of the Church, comparing Mary to Wisdom.

“Where should the classical comparison of Mary to Wisdom be situated? Apparently it is neither prophecy nor typology. Wisdom is, in truth, a hypostasis of God – the Word, the second Person of the Trinity. Its application to Mary seems therefore to be an accommodation. It cannot be so used without restriction. Mary is a creature and not a divine hypostasis; she has no real preexistence. The liturgy has popularized the comparison of Mary to Wisdom. It is enlightening to learn how this come about.

Sirach 24:3-21, In omnibus requiem quaesivi,” was first used as a supplementary epistle reading for the feast of Ss. Agnes and Agatha, virgins and martyrs. Its use is attested from the beginning of the seventh century, in the Würzburg Comes (edited by G. Morin in Rev. Bén. 25, 1910, pp. 41-74). When the feast of the Assumption was established at Rome in the middle of the seventh century this same reading was assigned to it.” 323

321 A Lapide, 665, "Mystice, gratia, quam B. Virgo in primo instanti conceptionis accipit, per 72 annos, quibus per continuos et gratiae adaequatos actus jugiter eam auxit, et assidue conduplicavit, excrevit quasi in immensum, ut vere Maria dici posset esse etque mare gratiarum: unde a Damasceno, orat. 2 De Assumptione, vocatur gratiae abyssus."

322 Buby, SM, 190. Mary of Galilee, Vol II,

323 Laurentin, 282 A Short Treatise on the Virgin Mary.
"At the command of the Creator wisdom settles in Israel. 8b ‘assigned a place for my tent’, lit. ‘made my tent to rest,’ VL (126) renders ‘rested in my tent,’ opening the way to the Mariological application; see below on 18 (RSVm)" 324

"Mary is acclaimed and represented in the liturgy as Mary, Seat of Wisdom." 325

"From the 6th century onwards this passage appears in The Mass of the Birth of Mary (September 8) showing that the church recognizes that, just as the Word of God for all eternity, and is active in the creation of the world, The Mother of the Savior must have been in someway present in the mind of God at the beginning. (vv. 22-23)" 326

Much like the interpretation of a Lapide in his commentary on the Book of Sirach, so too A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture 327 denotes a Mariological interpretation of this particular text. However, both The New Jerome Biblical Commentary 328 and The Jerome Biblical Commentary 329 make no mention of a Mariological interpretation. Therefore, there is some agreement with a Lapide in A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture. 330

In conclusion, Sirach 24 currently is used in the following four Masses:

1. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Seat of Wisdom
2. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Divine Hope
3. The Holy Name of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

324 Fuller DD, PhD, LSS, (eds) 555, A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture.
325 Montague, SM, 190, The Navarre Bible: Joshua-Kings.
326 Montague, SM, 190 The Navarre Bible: Joshua-Kings.
327 Fuller DD, PhD, LSS, (eds) 555, A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture.
330 Fuller, DD, PhD, LSS, (eds) 555, A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture.
4. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Fairest Love.\textsuperscript{331}

In the liturgy, the notion that Mary is "all beautiful" has been preserved in these four votive Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary listed above. These Marian titles from the biblical and patristic periods were customarily used in the liturgy. The "way of beauty" designated a path of Christian holiness and perfection. Christians have been invited to unite their walk with the Blessed Virgin Mary, a holy woman who walks in the paths of God's justice.

\textsuperscript{331} Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Vol. II, Lectionary. 102, 114, 155 and 158
Comparison/ Conclusion: Sirach

In *Mary of Galilee, Vol. II*, Buby stresses that “many of the symbols and themes from Wisdom Literature have been used for Mary in the Liturgy.”\(^{332}\) The praise of Wisdom in Sirach parallels what we have seen in Proverbs about Wisdom personified as woman. We see in Mary many symbols and themes found throughout Chapter 24 of Sirach. We see Wisdom as the Torah, as Jerusalem, the City of God, and as the People of God. Once again the symbols and themes in Wisdom are accommodated to Mary and used in the Liturgy, especially in the Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

\(^{332}\) Buby, SM, 176, *Mary of Galilee, Vol. II.*
A Lapide's commentary on Esther 2:7 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in librum IV Regum, I et II, Esdrae, Tobiae, Judith, Esther, I et II
Machabaeorum

Esther 2:7 - “And he had brought up his brother’s . . .”

“And he had brought up his brother's daughter Edissa, who by another name was called
Esther: now she had lost both her parents: and was exceeding fair and beautiful. And her
father and mother being dead, Mardochai adopted her for his daughter.”

In Esther 2:7, a Lapide uses the allegorical sense in the case of Esther in order to make a
statement about the Blessed Virgin Mary. In his commentary a Lapide brings in prayer and devotion
and describes Mary as the one who “protects sinners and brings justice to the afflicted.”

A Lapide uses the devotional aspect in his writings to say that the Church honors Mary as the “Hail Holy
Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness, our hope.”

The hymn “Salve Regina” became a symbol of Tridentine mariology and Catholic Reformation devotion. A Lapide uses the “Salve Regina” as an apologetical device to defend Mary’s place in salvation history against the teaching
of the Reformers. “She is the mother of all graces, and the mother of mercy, who helps us in the
hour of death.” On the feast of the Assumption, St. Bernard recalls the Virgin Mary as the one
who helps her children in all their needs.

333 Commentaria in librum IV Regum, I et II, Esdrae, Tobiae, Judith, Esther, I et II Machabaeorum 368
Esther 2:7: “Qui fuit nutricius filiae fratris sui Edessae quae altero nomine Hester vocabatur et utrumque parentem
amiserat pulchra nimis et decora facie mortuisque patre eius ac matre Mardocheus sibi cam adoptavit in filiam.”

334 A Lapide, 368, “…ipsa enim sub alis suis recipit et protegit peccatores et justos afflictos . . .”

335 A Lapide, 369, “Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae, vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve . . .”

336 A Lapide, 369, “Maria mater gratiae, mater misericordiae, tu nos ab hoste protege, et in hora morits
suscipe.”

337 A Lapide, 369, “Audi S. Bernardum, serm 4 De. Assumpt.. “…Virgo beata, si quis est qui invocatam te
in necessitatum suis sibi meminerit defuisse.”

158
A Lapide’s analysis of Mary in Esther 2:7 uses the great hymns of the Church such as the “Salve Regina” to compare the two (Mary and Esther) as both “Queen” and “Mother.” Esther’s name is Chaldean, a Lapide states, and it means “hilarity.” Her name also renders mirth and joy, much like Mary who is “Cause of our joy” and fills the Church with hope. Esther is also seen as the one who liberates a man from death. This, too, is the prayer of the Church with Mary, that she will be with us at the hour of death.

A Lapide’s interpretation of Esther as a type of Mary is seen both in the writings of a post-Vatican II exegete as well as the liturgy of the Church.

“Mary, the mother of Jesus, is similar to Esther in prayer and in her intercessory power with God. She also advances the good of both Jewish people and the Christian people through her role as Queen Mother.”

In two of the collections of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the same connection is made between Mary and Esther. In the two Masses, “Holy Mary, Queen and Mother of Mercy” and “The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother and Mediatrix of Grace,” Mary is seen as the one who prays for her people Israel and for all disciples. So, too, Esther prays for her people Israel. The prayer of Esther cries out with the poor of Yahweh, the anawin. Esther depends upon the hesed, the mercy of God in her prayer and in her actions.

Therefore, while a Lapide’s interpretation of Esther as a type of Mary is supported in the liturgy of the Church and with some Vatican II scripture scholars, today most would not make this same interpretation of this passage.

338 Buby, SM, 110, Mary of Galilee, Vol. II.
Esther is a personal type for Mary.

In the light of Esther's role, a Lapide shows Mary's history for Israel and also likens Mary's virtues to those of Esther's name. A Lapide shows from his knowledge of Hebrew that Esther's name means mirth and joy.

Then a Lapide shows Mary's protective mantle over the sinner as well as the just (ecclesiology, Communion of Saints); a Lapide says he applies Esther's personal gifts and role to Mary through an allegorical interpretation. (one of the four senses or meanings of Scripture).

Mary is compared to Esther in the Liturgy. Esther is the Queen and central figure of a Woman who is at the center of a story of deliverance.

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Esther 2:7 and Mary**

Buby states that the prayer of Esther in this passage "resonates with the outcry of the anawim, or poor, of Yahweh. She depends totally on the mercy, hesed, of God...just as Esther prays so poignantly for her people, so too, does Mary pray for her people Israel, and all her believers."\(^{341}\)

In consultation with three different Post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*,\(^{342}\) *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*\(^{343}\) and *A New Catholic Commentary*\(^{344}\) on Holy Scripture, there is no mention of a Mariological application of this text, chapter or verse compared with that of a Lapide. This particular verse is not used in the liturgy. However, the readings from Esther (2:12, 14-15, 25, 30; 8:3-8, 16-17a) are used in the Masses of

\(^{341}\) Buby, SM, 173 *Mary of Galilee, Vol. II*

\(^{342}\) R. Brown, SS, *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* 629

\(^{343}\) R. Brown, SS, *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* 577

\(^{344}\) R. Fuller, DD, Ph.D., LSS, (eds) *A New Catholic Commentary* 410

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"Holy Mary, Queen and Mother of Mercy" and "The Blessed Virgin, Mother and Mediatrix of Grace."

This particular verse is not used in the liturgy. However, the readings from Esther (2:12, 14-15, 25, 30; 8:3-8, 16-17a) are used in the Masses of "Holy Mary, Queen and Mother of Mercy" and "The Blessed Virgin, Mother and Mediatrix of Grace."

In contrast to these above mentioned commentaries a Lapide's interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses.
Comparison / Conclusion: Esther

In Esther 2:7, a Lapide uses the meaning of the name Esther to help us understand the connection between Mary and Esther. In Chaldean, her name means mirth and joy. A Lapide compares Esther to Mary, who is the cause of our joy, which is one of the invocations in the Litany of Loreto. Esther is seen as a personal type of Mary; therefore, a Lapide uses etymology, as well as the allegorical sense, to understand Mary in this text.

“The book of Esther is not explicitly quoted in the New Testament, but in their teaching on the Christian life the Fathers and ecclesiastical writers do draw on it. The events narrated in the book are seen as a paradigm of God’s providence towards his people: he delivers Israel from a powerful enemy by causing men unexpectedly to change their policies. But the book also stresses that God expects cooperation. Esther is often praised for risking her life on behalf of other members of her people.”

In the liturgy of the Church, Esther is seen as a figure of the Virgin Mary on account of her royal dignity, her greatness of soul, and effectiveness of her intercession with the King. The liturgical memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes applies to Our Lady’s words taken from this book.

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A Lapide commentary on 1 K 26:41 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Josue, Judices, Ruth et in libros I, II et III Regum

1 Kings 26:41 - “And she arose and bowed herself down with...”

“And she arose and bowed herself down with her face to the earth, and said: Behold, Let thy servant be a handmaid, to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord.”

In this verse from the first book of Kings, chapter 26, verse 41, a Lapide exalts Abigail as a type of the Virgin Mary.

“Abigail... Whence she herself was a type of the Blessed Virgin, who chosen by God as a spouse, and as mother by the Word made flesh in her, said to Gabriel the Archangel: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your word.”

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on 1 K 26:41 and Mary

The Navarre Bible: Joshua: Kings upholds this tradition of calling Abigail a prefigurement of Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

“Christian tradition has seen these women as prefiguring the Virgin Mary, an exceptional woman in salvation history who, by becoming the Mother of the Saviour, gave sin a death blow and overcame mankind’s enemy. Elizabeth’s greeting to Mary, ‘Blessed are you among women (Lk 1:42), echoes the words in praise of Jael found in the Song of Deborah’ (cf. 5:24). ‘Throughout the Old Covenant the mission of many holy women prepared for that of Mary. [...] Against all human expectation God chooses those who were considered powerless and weak (cf. 1 Cor 1:27) to show forth his faithfulness to his promises: Hannah, the mother of Samuel (cf. 1 Sam 1): Deborah; Ruth; Judith, and Esther; and many other women. Mary ‘stands out among the poor and humble of the Lord, who confidently hope for and receive salvation from him. After a long period of waiting the times are fulfilled in her, the exalted Daughter of Sion, and the new plan of salvation is established (Lumen Gentium, 55)’ (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 489).”

346 Commentaria in Josue, Judices, Ruth et in libros I, II et III Regum 418 1 Kings 26:41: “Quae consurgens adoravit prona in terram et ait ecce famula tua sit in ancillam ut lavet pedes servorum domini mei.”

347 A Lapide, 418 “Unde ipsa typus fuit B. Virginis, quae electa a Deo in sponsam, et a Verbo in ea incarnando in matrem, dixit Gabrieli Archangelo: Ecce ancilla Domini, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.”

In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*,\(^{349}\) *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*\(^{350}\), and *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*,\(^{351}\) there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide's interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.

\(^{349}\) Brown, SS, 181 *The Jerome Biblical Commentary.*

\(^{350}\) Brown, SS, 175 *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary.*

\(^{351}\) Fuller, DD, Ph.D., LSS, (eds) 339 *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture.*
Comparison / Conclusion: 1 Kings 26:41

This passage from the first book of Kings is accommodated to Mary by a Lapide. Abigail is seen as a type of the Blessed Virgin Mary who was chosen by God as a spouse.

Buby does not comment on this particular passage. However, in the *Navarre Bible: Joshua-Kings*, the author sees a prefiguring of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Abagail. He sees Mary as the one who stands out among the poor and humble of the Lord. 352

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352 *The Navarre Bible: Joshua-Kings,* 125-126
A Lapide’s commentary on Jg 4:21 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Josue, Judices, Ruth et in libros I, II et III Regum

Judges 4:21 - “So Jael Haber’s wife took . . .”

“So Jael Haber’s wife took a nail of the tent, and taking also a hammer: and going in softly, and with silence, she put the nail upon the temples of his head, and striking it with the hammer, drove it through his brain fast into the ground: and so passing from deep sleep to death, he fainted away and died.”

In this fourth chapter of Judges, verse 21, a Lapide upholds the idea that Jael and Deborah are types of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He uses the allegorical sense to prove this point.

“Allegorically Deborah and Jael represent the Church of God and represent the Church of God and metaphorically a soul, holy, strong and zealous for God.”

Again, a Lapide supports his accommodation of Jael to The Blessed Virgin Mary by quoting St. Bernard of Clairvaux.

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Jg 4:21 and Mary

In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily The Jerome Biblical Commentary,355 The New Jerome Biblical Commentary356, and A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture,357 there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. In contrast to these above-mentioned

353 A Lapide, Commentaria in Josue, Judices, Ruth et in libros I, II et III Regum 136, Judges 4:21: “Tulit itaque lahel uxor Aber clavum tabernaculi adsumens pariter malleum et ingressa abscondite et cum silentio posuit supra tempus capitis eius clavum percussumque malleo defixit in cerebrum usque ad terram qui soporem morti socians defecit et mortuus est.”

354 A Lapide, 136, “Allegorice Debbora et Jael representaent Dei Ecclesiam, et tropologice animam sanctam, fortem et pro Deo zelantem.”


357 R. Fuller, DD, Ph.D., LSS, (eds) 297, A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture.

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commentaries, a Lapide’s interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.

In *Mary of Galilee, Vol. II*, Buby states whether there is a connection between Mary and Jael. He begins by citing the Church Fathers who see a Marian interpretation in Genesis 3:15 where the woman is crushing the head of the serpent. This compares with Deborah and Jael’s actions in Judges 4:21 and 5:24 where they are seen as judge and prophetess. Buby suggests that these two images may also portray Mary. He also offers a contrast between Mary and Jael.

“One final word about Jael. In the Canticle of Deborah, Jael receives a blessing: ‘Blessed among women be Jael, blessed among tent-dwelling women.’ Similar words are used of Mary by Elizabeth, Mary, however, is more of a city-dwelling woman than a tent-dweller.”

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358 Buby, SM, 102 *Mary of Galilee, Vol. II.*
A Lapide's commentary on Jg 5:8 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Josue, Judices, Ruth et in libros I, II et III Regum

Judges 5:8 - “The Lord chose new wars, and he...”

“The Lord chose new wars, and he himself overthrew the gates of the enemies: a shield and spear was not seen among forty thousand of Israel.”

In chapter 5 of Judges, verse 8, a Lapide demonstrates Deborah as a type of the Blessed Mother.

“Allégorically Deborah was a type of the Blessed Virgin Mary.”

“Thus the Blessed Virgin gave forth to us the divine Word, while she embodied him in her womb with human flesh and gave his birth. Again she is Deborah, because she gave forth that most holy, most sonorous, most sweet canticle: ‘My soul magnifies the Lord,’ and so forth, to which Deborah alluded in this her own canticle. To these (words) she herself as though a prophetess uttered constantly the words and oracles of God.”

Here we note that a Lapide knew of nuances in the use of Hebrew - a sign of linguist and classicist in tune with the culture of his times. His explanation of Deborah renders “honey bee” from the word “davar,” meaning to utter, speak, say, sound, or “hum.”

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Jg 5:8 and Mary

In his commentary on this passage, Buby states that Deborah is known as a prophetic leader with remarkable skills as a leader. Mary does not mirror all of Deborah’s qualities but the two

359 A Lapide, Commentaria in Josue, Judices, Ruth et in libros I, II et III Regum 255, Judges 5:8: “Nova bella elegit Dominus et portas hostium ipse subvertit clypeus et hasta si apparuerint in quadraginta milibus Israhel.”

360 A Lapide, 139, “Allégorice Debbora fuit typus B. Mariae Virginis.”


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women (Deborah and Mary) do share the practical gift of wisdom, reflected in Mary’s Magnificat as well as this passage from Judges 5:8.\textsuperscript{362}

In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily \textit{The Jerome Biblical Commentary},\textsuperscript{363} \textit{The New Jerome Biblical Commentary},\textsuperscript{364} and \textit{A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture},\textsuperscript{365} there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide’s interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.

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\textsuperscript{362} Buby, SM, 102, \textit{Mary of Galilee, Vol. II}. \\
\textsuperscript{363} Brown, SS, 153. \textit{The Jerome Biblical Commentary}. \\
\textsuperscript{364} Brown, SS, 137, \textit{The New Jerome Biblical Commentary}. \\
\textsuperscript{365} R. Fuller, DD, Ph.D., LSS, (eds), 297, \textit{A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture}.
Comparison / Conclusion: Judges

In the Book of Judith, a Lapide compares Deborah as a type of the Virgin Mary. He will use the allegorical sense to understand Deborah as a foreshadowing of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He uses the image of Mary as daughter, spouse and parent of God. A Lapide uses the Liturgy to support his analysis that Judith is also a type of Mary because Judith is described as the “glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel and the honor of God’s people.” (Judith 15:10)

Buby also sees Judith as a type of Mary. Buby also quotes the Liturgy itself in the liturgical readings of Masses in honor of Mary to demonstrate that the blessing of Judith is similar to the angel Gabriel’s greeting to Mary in Luke’s gospel. Buby calls Judith a “heroine of the deuterocanonical book.” Buby also describes her as a righteous person, who observes the law and the feasts of Yahweh and is a chaste widow. Judith is rich and beautiful, and held in high esteem, and the same can be said of Mary, who places her absolute trust and confidence in her God.366

In these two passages from Judges, a Lapide compares Jael and Deborah. He uses typology to support his exegesis. He uses this metaphorical sense to say that, as Deborah and Jael are holy, strong and zealous for God, so too Mary is seen in the same manner. He quotes from St. Bernard of Clairvaux to support his exegesis.

Buby compares Deborah and Jael to Mary. He states, “Deborah, in her canticle (Jg 5) shows total confidence in God and attributes the victory to God’s power over the foreign kings. She does display a similar gift of practical wisdom, and in her Magnificat canticle, sings of the power of God

366 Buby, SM, 108-9, Mary of Galilee, Vol. II.
over Israel's enemies. Mary compares with Jael in sharing a similar macarism: 'Blessed are you among women.'"367

367 Buby, SM, 102, Mary of Galilee, Vol. II.
A Lapide’s commentary on Jdt 13:10 and Mary
presented in *Commentaria in Josue, Judices, Ruth et in libros I, II et III Regum*

Judith 13:10 - “And she struck twice upon…”

“And she struck twice upon his neck and cut off his head, and took off his canopy from the pillars, and rolled away his headless body.”³⁶⁸

In this passage from Judith, Deborah is upheld as a type of the Virgin Mary. A Lapide uses the allegorical sense to understand Deborah as a foreshadowing of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

“Allégorically Holofernes is the type of the Devil, whose head Judith in Truth, that is the Blessed Virgin trod underfoot according to the oracle issued by God, *Genesis* 3. Judith struck down Holofernes the terror of the East in a one and only contest, as though in a duel, with his own Persian short sabre without a wound as though playfully, and what was more difficult, brought back modesty intact from the midst of the camp of the immodest, triumphant and with the richest spoils. But the Blessed Virgin has laid low countless battalions of demons by her singular duel, and daily lays them low, and has celebrated and celebrates the triumph of chastity not only in herself, but in all the virgins and her chaste followers: indeed, that fact that she surpasses all the rights of nature, she is a Virgin and at the same time Mother of God, and she alone rejoices in a triple name:

She alone is equally daughter, spouse and parent of God.”³⁶⁹

A Lapide continues to sing Mary’s praises by comparing Judith to the Mother of God, as she is remembered in the Church’s liturgy.


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“Daily in her hymns the Church acclaims the Blessed Virgin: ‘All generations will call you blessed’: Judith had an admirable form, so that all were amazed at her. The Church sings to the Blessed Virgin: ‘Grace has been spread on your lips, you have been made beautiful and sweet in your delights, holy mother of God;’ indeed Christ himself in the Canticle: “you are all pretty, my friend, my beautiful, my dove.” Indeed the beauty of Judith roused Holofernes to excess: but the form of the Blessed Virgin roused those gazing to chastity.”

“The mother of the Lord visited John the Baptist, and not undeservedly he remained whole in body, whom in three months, she administered a certain oil of her presence and ointment of wholeness.”

Quoting St. Bernard, there is a comparison made between Mary’s protection of her children with Judith’s protection of her people.

There is a comparison between Judith and Mary in terms of their love for the Lord and then willingness to sacrifice for Yahweh.

“Mystically, you may apply all these words to the Blessed Virgin. Therefore you might truly proclaim to her that, which the Israelites proclaimed to the victorious Judith on account of the slain Holofernes: ‘You are the glory of Jerusalem, you are the joy of Israel, you the honor of our People.’” Judith 15, 10."

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371 A Lapide, 346, “Visitavit Joannem Baptistam, nec immerito mansit integer corpore, quem in tribus mensibus, oleo quodam suae praesentiae at integritatis unguento Domini mater exercuit.”

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Jdt 13:10 and Mary

In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*,\(^ {373}\) *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*,\(^ {374}\) and *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*,\(^ {375}\) there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide’s interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.

In his commentary on Judith, Buby refers to her as “the heroine of the deuterocanonical book with the same name. She exemplifies the ideal woman of later Jewish Piety. (150-100 B.C.E.)\(^ {376}\)

“This is another reason why we find in Christian tradition references to similarities between Judith and the Blessed Virgin. Note the parallel between Uzziah’s blessing in 13:18 and Elizabeth’s in Luke1:42: “Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb.”\(^ {377}\)

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\(^ {373}\) Brown, SS, 607, *The Jerome Biblical Commentary.*


\(^ {375}\) R. Fuller, DD, Ph.D., LSS, (eds) 405, *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture.*

\(^ {376}\) Buby, SM, 108, *Mary of Galilee, Vol. II.*

A Lapide's commentary on Jdt 15:10 and Mary

presented in *Commentaria in Josue, Judices, Ruth et in libros I, II et III Regum*

Judith 15:10 - “And when she was come out to him . . .”

“And when she was come out to him, they all blessed her with one voice, saying: Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, thou art the joy of Israel, thou art the honour of our people.”

Citing the Fathers of the Church such as Cyril of Alexandria, St. Ephrem, St. John Chrysostom and St. John Damascene, a Lapide identifies Judith as a type of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A Lapide refers to Mary as the inextinguishable lamp, the crown of virginity, joy of the saints, the glory of the human race, to name a few of the titles given to Mary, based on his comparison of Judith to the Mother of God.

“*Allegorically* Judith was a type of the Blessed Virgin. For this woman is the exultation, the honor and glory, not only of Jerusalem, but of the entire world; not only of Israel, but of all; St. Gregory of Nazianzen in his *Tragedy, The Suffering Christ*, speaks thus of her: Queen, Mistress, the food of the human race, Be you always a friend to mortals, And for me the greatest salvation in whatever place.

Cyril of Alexandria, in homilies *Against Nestor*: May there be, he says, praise to your, holy mother of God; for you are the precious pearl of the world, you the unextinguishable lamp, the crown of virginity, the scepter of the orthodox faith.” St. Chrysostom, in a homily *About the Mother of God*, greets her thus: “Hail, mother, the sky, the throne of our Church, the honor, the glory, and the firmament.” St. Ephrem, in a sermon *On the Praises of the Virgin*, calls her “the one and only hope of the Fathers, the glory of the Prophets, the celebration of the Apostles, the honor of Martyrs, the joy of the Saints, and the light of the very tested Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the glory of Aaron, the splendor of Moses, the fleece of Gideon and the uniting of the Hierarchs, the crown of all the Saints and virgins, because of your immense brightness and inaccessible splendor.” The Damascene in oration *1 On the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin*: “O Daughter, he says, worthy of God, the adornment

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378 *Commentaria in Josue, Judices, Ruth et in libros I, II et III Regum* 7 Judith 15:10: “Quae cum exisset ad illum benedixerunt illam omnes una voce dicentes tu gloria Hierusalem tu laetitia Israel tu honorificentia populi nostril.”
of women, the glory of the human race, you are an eternal delight for the Patriarchs, the perennial exultation for the Prophets.” 379

“For Judith was a shadow and type of the Blessed Virgin; whence it follows;” 380

“. . . in doubtful matters think of Mary, call upon Mary, may she not depart from your mouth, may she not depart from your heart.” 381

Contemporary Catholic Commentaries on Jdt 15:10 and Mary

In Mary of Galilee, Vol. II, Buby describes the blessing of Judith to the angelic greeting of Angel Gabriel to Mary in Luke’s gospel. This comparison of Judith to Mary has been preserved in the liturgy.

“In the liturgical reading of masses in honor of Mary, the blessing of Judith is similar to the angelic salutation of Luke ‘Blessed are you, daughter, by the Most High God, above all the women on earth’ (Jdt 13:18). Frequently in song and response the praise of Judith is celebrated also in Mary: ‘You are the glory of Jerusalem, the surpassing joy of Israel; You are the splendid boast of our people; (Jdt. 15:9), and finally from her own hymn (Jdt 16:13-14).” 382

The Navarre Bible Commentary: Wisdom Books offers an interpretation of Judith as a type of Blessed Virgin Mary.


380 A Lapide, 348, “Judith enim fuit umbra et typus B. Virginis; unde sequitur.”

381 A Lapide, 348, “...in rebus dubii Mariam cogita, Mariam invoca, non recedat ab ore, non recedat a corde.”

382 Buby, SM, 109, Mary of Galilee, Vol. II.
"As in other sapiential passages, Wisdom is personified here. But she is also idealized she is a model unattainable by man. Hence, Christian tradition has applied this passage to Jesus Christ and also to the Blessed Virgin who is "full of grace: and therefore a gift from God. This explains why devotion to our Lady has borrowed the words in v. 18, 'mother of beautiful love'. Of course, the meaning of that phrase is different in Christian piety from the meaning of the words in the context of Sirach Ego quasi vitis frucificavi . . .": like the vine I sprouted beautiful branches and my blossoms gave forth savoury and rich fruits'. [ . . . ] May our souls and the souls of all Christians be full of that sweet fragrance which is devotion to our Mother, and may it bring us to trust entirely in her who watches over us at all times. "I am the Mother of fair love, and of fear, and of knowledge and of holy hope." These are the lessons which Mary reminds us of today. The lesson of fair love of living a clean life, of having a sensitive and passionate heart, so that we may learn to be faithful in our service to the Church. This is no ordinary love. It is Love itself. There is no room here for betrayal, or calculation, or forgetfulness. It is fair, a beautiful love, because its beginning and end is God, who is thrice Holy, who is all beauty, all Goodness and all Greatness" (St. J. Escrivá, Friends of God, 277).383

In his book, A Guide to the Bible, Fuentes offers this reflection on the relationship between Judith and Mary as the Immaculate Conception.

"This is why Catholic piety sees in Judith a symbol of Mary Immaculate who, without being affected by the promptings of the tempter, crushes the head of the infernal serpent."384

In consultation with three different post-Vatican Catholic biblical commentaries, primarily The Jerome Biblical Commentary,385 The New Jerome Biblical Commentary,386 and A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture,387 there is no mention of a Mariological application of this particular text, chapter and verse compared with that of a Lapide. This text is given little or no import by


384 Fuentes, 91, A Guide to the Bible.

385 Brown, SS, 607 The Jerome Biblical Commentary.


387 Fuller, DD, PhD, LSS, (eds), 406, A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture.
contemporary Catholic scholars. In contrast to these above-mentioned commentaries, a Lapide’s interpretation of this particular verse accommodates the text to the Blessed Virgin Mary by using one or more of the four senses of scripture.

"Divine Office passages sing of the Jewish heroine passage applied to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Book of Judith in one of the deuterocanonical books of the Old Testament, that is, it does not form part of the Hebrew canon. The book expresses hope in God who does not forget his people, particularly when they are in difficulty, and who comes to their rescue when he is invoked with an upright heart."388

Comparison / Conclusion: Judith

In the Book of Judith, a Lapide compares Deborah as a type of the Virgin Mary. He will use the allegorical sense to understand Deborah as a foreshadowing of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He uses the image of Mary as daughter, spouse and parent of God. A Lapide uses the Liturgy to support his analysis that Judith is also a type of Mary because Judith is described as the "glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel and the honor of God’s people." (Judith 15:10)

Buby also sees Judith as a type of Mary. Buby also quotes the Liturgy itself in the Liturgical readings of Masses in honor of Mary to demonstrate that the blessing of Judith is similar to the angel Gabriel’s greeting to Mary in Luke’s gospel. Buby calls Judith a “heroine of the deuterocanonical book.” Buby also describes her as a righteous person, who observes the law and the feasts of Yahweh and is a chaste widow. Judith is rich and beautiful, and held in high esteem, and the same can be said of Mary, who places her absolute trust and confidence in her God.389

389 Buby, 108-9, Mary of Galilee, Vol. II.
CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER THREE

In Chapter Three of the dissertation, Cornelius a Lapide’s exegetical methodology was presented along with twenty-five passages from the Old Testament which are accommodated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The presentation of a Lapide’s commentary is immediately followed by the exegesis of Bertrand Buby, SM from his trilogy of biblical works, *Mary of Galilee, Vol. I, II, and III*. After each text is presented and analysis given, then a comparison of the principles used by each exegete, a Lapide and Buby, is offered along with a conclusion.

The study of the Texts was presented in chronological order. Thus the first two Old Testament texts from the Pentateuch, Genesis 3:15 and Exodus 15:20, were analyzed. These texts were followed by the major Prophets, primarily Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2-3. Following the Prophets are the writings from the Wisdom Literature which was studied as a unit. Various verses from Proverbs 8, 9, 13 and 14 along with Songs of Songs 4:4 and Sirach 24. Finally the writings of Esther 2:7, Judith 13:10 and 13:18 and 15:10 along with 1 Kings 26:41 and Judges 4:21 and 5:8 are analyzed. These particular Old Testaments texts are used by a Lapide to focus on Marian dogmas, according to the dissertation of Raymond Noll.

Throughout the Old Testament analysis, a Lapide uses the four senses of Scripture to understand the Mariological underpinnings in these biblical texts. In a particular way, *allegory* and the *spiritual* or *mystical* sense is often cited in foreshadowing the presence of the Blessed Virgin in these texts. He also employs the principle of typology to see in these texts the different prophetic and historical Old Testament book, a type of Mary in the Biblical figures of Judith, Esther, Deborah and Jael.
In comparison with a Lapide's exegetical style, Buby will employ the historical-critical method to these same texts. Buby holds a great value for Catholic tradition, especially in the wisdom of the Church Fathers. However, Buby also maintains a delicate, yet importance balance between the critical methodologies and the liturgical life of the Church, particularly in the liturgies of the Blessed Virgin Mary that preserve many of these Old Testament texts as passages accommodated to Mary.

In Chapter Four of the present study, we will present and analyze nineteen New Testament passages which are directly or indirectly associated with the Blessed Virgin Mary, using the post-Tridentine biblical commentaries of Cornelius a Lapide, SJ and comparing them primarily with the post-Vatican II exegetical works of Bertrand Buby, SM. After all the texts of each book have been presented, a comparison/conclusion of the methodologies of a Lapide and Buby will be presented.
CHAPTER FOUR: THE VIRGIN MARY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT


Methodology: Similar to Old Testament Passages

In the present study, the Old Testament texts accommodated to the Blessed Virgin Mary were analyzed. In this fourth chapter a similar approach will be applied to the Marian texts of the New Testament.

The texts will be studied in chronological order. Therefore, the first two texts to be analyzed are Paul's letters to the Galatians (1:19 and 4:4). Second, the two passages from Mark's Gospel (3:31-35 and 6:1-6) will be studied. Third, the infancy narratives (Chapter 1 and 2) of both Matthew's and Luke's gospels will be analyzed. In John's gospel, three passages will be studied (1:13, 2:1-12 and 19:25-27). Also, Acts 1:14 (Mary and Prayer) will be studied. The final passage to be studied will be "The woman clothed with the sun" in Revelation (12:1-7).

In terms of methodology, a Lapide's actual text will be interpreted, including his use of the patristic writings, the four senses of scripture and other devotional writings. Then, a presentation of the writings will also be used to analyze these New Testament Marian texts, Buby's interpretation will be compared and contrasted with that of a Lapide from a post-Vatican II exegetical perspective.
II. Passages in New Testament:

A Lapide's Commentary on Galatians 1:19 and Mary presented in Commentaria divi Pauli Epistolarum I.

Galatians 1:19 - “But other of the apostles I saw none...”

“But other of the apostles I saw none, saving James, the brother of the Lord.”

In his commentary on Paul’s letter to the Galatians, a Lapide states that the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary is understood because Jerome interprets “brother” as “cousin.”

“Ver 19. – ‘But other of the apostles I saw none, saving James, the brother of the Lord.’ I.e., a cousin or relation of Christ’s, for the Hebrews call cousins brothers. S. Jerome adds that S. James was called the Lord’s brother before all the Apostles, even those related to Christ, on account of his lofty character, his incomparable faith and wisdom, which made him seem like a brother to Christ. For the same reason he was surnamed the Just. Secondly, S. Jerome says that Christ, when going to His Father, commended to James, as to a brother, the eldest children of His mother, i.e., those in Judea who believed on Him; for this James, the son of Alphæus, the son of Mary, wife of Cleophas, one of the twelve Apostles, was the first Bishop of Jerusalem. This is why, in the First Council of Jerusalem, he was the first after Peter to pronounce judgement (Acts xv. 13). A Canonical Epistle of his is extant.”


Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Galatians 1:19 and Mary

In Mary of Galilee, Vol. I, Buby states that this epistle to the Galatians was written in Ephesus in 54 AD. The town of Ephesus would later become a great Marian center when the Council of Ephesus in 431 AD would proclaim Mary as the “Theotokos” or God Bearer. In his commentary, Buby identifies who Paul is referring to as the “brother of the Lord” and also offers an explanation for the meaning of the term “brother” in the time of Paul.  

Buby says:

“In our first text, Galatians 1:19, we read that Paul considered the followers of Jesus: ‘I did not meet any other apostles except James, the brother of the Lord...’ This James is not to be confused with James, son of Zebedee nor with James son of Alphæus. He is called the ‘brother’ of the Lord (adelphos tou Kyriou) and was considered the first overseer (espiscopos) of Jerusalem (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, 2.23.1) Since this term in Greek (adelphos) primarily can mean blood brother, this text becomes a factor in any considerations about the perpetual virginity of Mary. In both the New Testament and in the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures the term brother can mean kinsman in an extended family such as is the custom of calling one a brother in Africa or in the Arab speaking nations today. It can also mean a relative or cousin as attested in Greek papyri.” 

Buby states this text from Galatians has implications for the virginity of Mary. A Lapide would defend Mary’s virginity even in this text, in the light of his agreement with Clement of Alexandria on Galatians 4:4.

“In reading different commentaries on this text one will discover that the interpretation normally takes on the position with regard to Mary’s virginity that this is held or not held by other religious persuasion to which the interpreter belongs. Catholics, Roman and Orthodox, therefore, do not understand the texts as referring to another son of Mary, the mother of Jesus.”


395 Buby, SM, 6.

396 Buby, SM, 6-7.
A Lapide's commentary on Galatians 4:4 and Mary presented in *Commentaria in omnes divi Pauli Epistolarum I.*

Galatians 4:4 - "Foreshadowing of a woman."

"But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law:" 397

A Lapide’s interpretation of this Pauline Passage is very much in line with Cyril of Alexandria. “God sent forth his Son, made of a woman . . .” means that made only of a woman, that is, from a virgin. Another Church Father, Theodore of Mopsuestia, would implicitly agree with this interpretation of Cyril of Alexandria. A Lapide seems to depend on the interpretation of woman as the “Virgin Mary” by both Cyril and Theodore because they must have relied on a tradition which helped them draw this same conclusion.

“Woman here denotes, not corruption, but the female sex, and applies as well to a virgin as to another woman. *Made of a woman* denotes Conception without a male, from the sole substance of the mother. From this it clearly follows that Christ did not assume a heavenly body, which He brought to earth by passing through the Blessed Virgin as through a pipe, as the Valentinians formerly, and the Anabaptists now teach, but that His body was formed from the Virgin.” 398

The liturgy of the Church supports a Lapide’s interpretation from Galatians because it uses this pericope as the second reading in the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (January 1) as well as the Dedication of St. Mary Major (August 5).

A Lapide would take a more traditional approach to the interpretation of this passage, that

397 A Lapide, *Commentaria in omnes divi Pauli Epistolarum I.* 215 “At ubi venit plenitudo temporis misit Deus Filium suum factum ex muliere factum sub lege.”

398 A Lapide, 550 “Mulier hic non corruptionem, sed sexum mulierbrem significant, competitque virgini, quails fuit beatissima Virgo Maria. Factum ex muliere significant Christum sine patris semine conceptum et formatum ex sola matris substantia et purissinis sanguinibus. Hinc patet Christum non sumpsisse corpus e coelo, quod transeundo per beatom Virginem quasi per canalem in terram detulerit, uti olim docuerunt Valenti niani, et jam Anabaptistae; sed Christi corpus ex Virgine factum ac formatum esse.”
“born of a woman” is a foreshadowing of the Blessed Virgin Mary, even though the passage is directly concerned with Jesus Christ.

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Galatians 4:4 and Mary**

Here is the following interpretation from Bertrand Buby’s *Mary of Galilee, Vol. I*, regarding this passage from Galatians:

“In the text of Galatians 4:4 Paul gives us his most explicit reference to a Jewish woman giving birth to the Messiah under the Law of Judaism. This is the most important text of Paul for any Marian study or reflection even though it is also very general and indeterminate. Up to about 1800 C.E. the text was understood as an implicit reference to the mother of the Son of God. Since that time, theologians and exegetes have been divided into four groups. They are: (1) Those who pass over the question of Mary’s virginity in silence; (2) Those who categorically state that Paul does not speak of a virgin-mother for the Son of God; (3) Those who say that Paul neither says anything about Mary’s virginity nor anything against it; and (4) Those who maintain that the virginity of Mary is affirmed by this text.”  

A Lapide is supported by scholars like Buby in viewing this passage from Galatians 4:4 as a foreshadowing of a woman. The woman, the Blessed Virgin Mary, is important because of her relationship with Jesus as Messiah.

In *Mary of Galilee, Vol. I*, Buby cites Albert Vanhoye, SJ in his study of this text that the “divine maternity is affirmed by Galatians 4:4.” He continues, “This is important for Mariology for we can say anachronistically this is Paul’s first principle of Mariology. She is the mother of the Messiah who is Son of God ...” Buby further states that Paul has set the stage through this passage

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399 Buby, SM, 7.

400 Buby, SM, 8.


402 Buby, SM, 8 *Mary of Galilee, Vol. I*
“for the Jewishness of Jesus through the woman from whom he is born into Salvation history at the appointed time God has chosen.”\textsuperscript{403}

Buby also refers to one the Church fathers Tertullian to demonstrate that this passage is used by Paul as a Marian reflection on her virginity.

“Tertullian concludes she is called woman merely as a generic term, and a virgin more specifically. In the present passage, then, so far from denying her virginity, Tertullian is proved to have believed in the virginity \textit{ante partum}, while saying nothing whatever of virginity \textit{in partu} and \textit{post partum}. These two he does deny in another writing.”\textsuperscript{404}

\textsuperscript{403} Buby, SM, 11 \textit{Mary of Galilee, Vol I}

\textsuperscript{404} A Lapide, \textit{Commentaria in omnes divi Pauli Epistolaram I}, 550, “Mulier hic non corruptionem, sed sexum mulierbrem significant, competitque virgini, quails fuit beatissima Virgo Maria. Factum ex muliere significant Christum sine patris semine conceptum et formatum ex sola matris substantia et purissimis sanguinibus. Hinc patet Christum non sumpsisse corpus e coelo, quod transeundo per beatam Virginem quasi per canalem in terram detulerit, uti olim docuerunt Valenti niani, et jam Anabaptistae; sed Christi corpus ex Virgine factum ac formatum esse.”
Comparison/Conclusion: Galatians

In Galatians 1:19, a Lapide uses Philology to understand this text, which helps us understand the perpetual virginity of Mary. A Lapide quotes Jerome in interpreting the word “brother” as “cousin.”

In Galatians 4:4, a Lapide uses the Patristics to understand that the woman foreshadowed in this passage is the Blessed Virgin Mary. He uses Cyril of Alexandria and Theodore of Mopsuestia to support his exegesis. He also uses the Liturgy, particularly, the feast of Mary, Mother of God, and the feast of the Dedication of St. Mary Major, as a way to support his accommodating the verse to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Buby sees Mary in this passage as other Catholic scholars. However, he emphasizes the christological import of the text and places less importance on the Mariological aspect of the Pauline text. Buby uses the Church’s teaching from John Paul II’s Marian encyclical Redemptoris Mater to affirm that Mary is the mother of the Messiah, who is also the Son of God. He notes, however, “there are exegetes who do not see the divinity of Christ implied in this expression, and, even less so, a basis for Mariology.” In Buby’s commentary, like a Lapide, he cites Theodore of Mopsuestia who “may have implicitly seen in the text of Galatians 4:4 a reference to Mary as the only parent of Jesus. There may have been an earlier tradition from which both Cyril and Theodore drew. John Chrysostom, another contemporary, uses the text of Galatians 4:4 with the accommodated use of Baruch 3:38 in his second homily on the feast of the Nativity of Christ (Christmas was just beginning to be celebrated as a feast at this time) to show the reality of Christ’s human nature in the

405 Buby, SM, 8 Mary of Galilee, Vol I.
effectiveness of the Redemption." Buby concludes that Paul sets the stage to show the Jewish

ess of Jesus from whom he is born into Salvation History (Gal 4:4).

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406 Buby, SM, 10-11
A Lapide’s commentary on Mark 3:31-35 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Ss. Matthaæum et Marcum

Mark 3:31-35 - “Who is my mother and my brethren?”

“And his mother and his brethren came; and standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him; and they say to him: Behold thy mother and thy brethren without seek for them.

‘And answering them, he said: Who is my mother and my brethren?’
‘And looking round about on them who sat about him, he saith: Behold my mother and my brethren.’

A Lapide does not interpret this particular text in his Gospel of Mark commentary. The exclusion of the text from his writings is rather puzzling. It is worthwhile to note that this particular passage from Chapter three of Mark’s gospel is not often seen as a Mariological text, per se. However, because the “mother and brothers of Jesus” are mentioned, it becomes a point of interest for the Mariological exegete.

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Mark 3:31-35 and Mary

Bertrand Buby offers this explanation for the inclusion of such a pericope among Marian biblical texts.

“In contrast to Paul, the Marcan image of Mary is no longer obscure, but more definite, precise and explicit. To Mark we owe the honor of naming Mary for the first time in Chapter 6. The only direct appearance of Mary in this Gospel is Ch. 3:31-35. In Chapter 3, the context of a mother and relatives coming to rescue their family reputation and their privacy is quite normal and realistic. What is uncharacteristic, however, is the response of Jesus who rejects their anxious concerns. He offsets family ties and possibly the selfish concerns of his brothers, sisters and mother.

The real family of Jesus consists of those who do God's will."

One of the reasons a Lapide did not comment on Mary's role in this Marcan text is that the evangelist Mark does not really treat Mary in a concrete or positive manner. There is more of a reference to a peripheral Blessed Virgin.

\footnote{Buby, SM, 40-41 \textit{Mary of Galilee, Vo. I.}}
A Lapide’s commentary on Mark 6:1-6 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Ss. Mattheum et Marcum

Mark 6:1-6 - “Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary?”

“And going out from thence, he went into his own country; and his disciples followed him. 2 and when the sabbath was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were in admiration at his doctrine saying: How came this man by all these things? And what wisdom is this that is this that is given to him, and such mighty works as are wrought by his hands? 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joseph, and Jude, and Simon? Are not also his sisters here with us? And they were scandalized in regard of him. 4 And Jesus said to them: v A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and in his own house, and among his own kindred. 5 And he could not do any miracles there, only that he cured a few that were sick, laying his hands upon them. 6 And he wondered because of their unbelief, and he went through the Villages round about teaching.”

A Lapide’s commentary on this biblical text from Mark’s sixth chapter does not appear as one with any Mariological significance. A Lapide’s exegesis explains that Jesus could perform no miracle in his own hometown.

“He went into His own country, i.e., to Nazareth, where He was brought up. Ver. 2. They were in admiration at His doctrine: Literally, they admired in His doctrine. This is Hebraism. For the Hebrews use 2 as a preposition of contact either corporal or mental in the place of an accusative. Thus they say, I touch in the hand, instead of, I touch the hand; I believe in God, instead of, I believe God; I admire in wisdom, for I admire wisdom.”

409 A Lapide, Commentaria in Ss. Mattheum et Marcum, 48, “Et egressus inde abiit in patriam suam et sequebantur illum discipuli sui et facto sabbato coepit in synagoga docere et multi audientes admirabantur in doctrina eius dicentes unde hic baec omnia et quae est sapientia quae data est illi et virtutes tales quae per manus eius efficiuntur. nonne iste est faber filius Mariae frater Iacobi et Ioseph et Iudae et Simonis nonne et sorores eius hic nobiscum sunt et scandalizabantur in illo et dicebat eis Jesus quia non est propheta sine honore nisi in patria sua et in cognitione sua et in domo sua et non poterat ibi virtutem ullam facere nisi paucos infirmos inpositis manibus curavit.”

410 A Lapide, 396, “Et egressus inde abiit in patriam suam. Admirabantur in doctrina ejus. Id est admirabantur doctrinam ejus tam sanctam. Est Hebraismus. Hebraei enim usurpant contactus, sive corporalis, sive mentalis, loco accusativi, ut dicant: Tango in manu, id est tango manum; credo in Deo, id est credo Deum; admiror in sapientia, id est admiror sapientiam.”

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"Because,' says Victor of Antioch on this passage, 'two things must coincide for the attaining of health, namely, the faith of those who need healing, and the power of him who will heal; therefore, if either of these be wanting, the blessing of a cure will not readily be attained."\(^{411}\)

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Mark 6:1-6 and Mary**

Buby offers this explanation of the Marian text:

"Mark’s description of the villagers and of the brothers and sisters of Jesus, and even of Mary his mother, confirms what we saw earlier. The relatives of Jesus are of the same opinion as their neighbors. They are shocked and concerned that Jesus is different. He was trained as a carpenter or craftsman, what business does he have teaching in our synagogue? Why should an ordinary Galilean assume the role of prophet both in speech and healing people? Jesus is not different than they are. Why all this attention? Perhaps he is crazy, that is, possessed."\(^{412}\)

Those who thought they knew Jesus could not see him with eyes of faith, and so they were scandalized over him (6:3b), that is, they found him an obstacle and they stumbled over him.

As in Mk 3:31-35, this text is seen as "anti-mariological" by some scripture scholars. René Laurentin states in his book *Mary in Faith and Life in the Age of the Church* that the "primitive Church had to combat a genealogical conception of Christianity which risked re-emphasizing blood relationships over those of the spirit, that is, of the faith. That is why classical Mariology sometimes designates these texts (also thus also Lk 2:50 and Jn 2:4) as 'anti-mariological.' They treat them as Protestant objections which must be countered by apologetics. However, these biblical texts are, in the full sense, the Word of God."\(^{413}\)

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\(^{411}\) A Lapide, 396, "Quia enim, ait hic Victor Antiochenus, ad impetrandam sanitatem utrumque coire debet, nimirum eorum qui cura egent, fides, et illius rursum qui curaturus est, virtus: si alterum horum defuerit, non temere sanitatis beneficium obveniet."

\(^{412}\) Buby, SM, 40-41 *Mary of Galilee, Vol. I.*

Again, a Lapide does not find value of Marian import in this particular text because the
Counter-Reformists did not find these passages as significant in understanding the Mother of Jesus.
Comparison / Conclusion: Gospel of Mark

A Lapide does not interpret Chapter 3:31-35 in Mark’s gospel. He actually does not offer any commentary on this passage. In Mark Chapter 6, a Lapide offers commentary on this passage, but does not give any of Mariological import.

However, Buby credits Mark’s gospel as the first to cite an appearance of the mother of Jesus, even though she speaks no words. He uses the historical critical method to understand the passage. He also uses low Christology that “springs from the first stage of the Jesus tradition in the gospels. From such a perspective it is a Christology that has paralleled the pericope just studied in Mark 3:31-35.” Buby points out that the expression “son of Mary” is found in no other place in the New Testament except Mark’s gospel. It is not customary to identify a son using his mother’s name. Buby uses the Church Father Origen to assist him in understanding the Marcan text.414

414 Buby, SM, 43, Mary of Galilee, Vol. I.
A Lapide's commentary on Mt 1:1-17 and Mary presented in *Commentaria in Ss. Matthaeum et Marcum*

Matthew 1:1-17 - Genealogy of Jesus

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the son of Abraham:

2 Abraham begot Isaac. And Isaac begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Judas and his brethren.

3 And Judas Begot Phares and Zara of Thamar. And Phares begot Esron. And Esron begot Aram.

4 And Aram begot Aminadab. And Aminadab begot Naasson. And Naasson begot Solomon.

5 And Salomon begot Booz of Rahab. And Booz begot Obed of Ruth. And Obed begot Jesse.

6 and Jesse begot David the king. And David the king begot Solomon, of her that had been the wife of Urias.

7 And Solomon begot Roboam. And Roboam begot Abia. And Abia begot Asa.

8 And Asa begot Josaphat. And Josaphat begot Joram. And Joram begot Ozias.

9 And Ozias begot Joatham. And Joatham begot Achaz. And Achaz begot Ezechias.

10 And Ezechias begot Manasses. And Manasses begot Amon. And Amon begot Josias.

11 And Josias begot Jehonias and his brethren in the transmigration of Babylon.

12 And after the transmigration of Babylon, Jehonias begot Salathiel. And Salathiel begot Zorobabel.

13 And Zorobabel begot Abiud. And Abiud begot Eliacim. And Eliacim begot Azor.

14 And Azor begot Sadoc. And Sadoc begot Achim. And Achim begot Eliud.

15 And Eliud begot Eleazar. And Eleazar begot Mathan. And Mathan begot Jacob.

16 And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

17 So all the generations, from Abraham to David, are fourteen generations. And from David to the transmigration of Babylon to Christ are fourteen generations."

Matthew’s gospel begins with the family tree or genealogy that introduces the believer to the descendants of Jesus. A Lapide observes that the genealogy mentions five women: Mary, Tamar, Rahab, Bathsheba and Ruth. Of the four women mentioned, he calls three of them harlots (Tamara, Rahab and Bathsheba). Why would the genealogy name these particular women in the family tree of Jesus Christ? A Lapide offers this explanation:

“...only four females are made mention of, three of them harlots – Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba – and the fourth a Gentile, Ruth the Moabitess. Rahab, too, was a Gentile, being an inhabitant of Jericho. If the reason of all this be asked, SS. Jerome, Chrysostom, Ambrose answer, that it was so because Christ would signify that “He who came for the abolishing and putting away of sins wished to be born of sinners.” This reason is true, but allegorical. The literal and simple reason is, that these women were united to their husbands, not in the ordinary way, but after a new and extraordinary manner; and so they became types of the Church of Christ, which, when the Jews were rejected, was gathered out of the Gentiles by a new vocation, and after a new manner. Tamar, because Shelah was denied her in marriage, or rather because her union with him was deferred, using deceit, prostituted herself to Judah. Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, was united to David, first by adultery, then in marriage. Rahab married Solomon because she hospitably received and protected the Hebrew spies who were sent by Joshua to Jericho, and so she became of the same faith and religion. Ruth married Boaz when she had passed with her mother-in-law, Naomi, from Moab into Judea.”

In his commentary on the Matthean genealogy, a Lapide explains that Elizabeth, like Mary,
was from the tribe of Judah. Elizabeth’s husband Zechariah was from the tribe of Levi.

“The tropological sense is to show us the vanity of pride of birth, and that true nobility consists, not in ancestry, but in our own good disposition and virtues.”

Cornelius a Lapide’s commentary in chapter one, verse 16 of Matthew’s Gospel is his most important exegetical work as he describes Mary’s virginity.

“Christ was the Son, not of Joseph, but of the Virgin Mary, especially if S. Mary were able, as it might appear, to marry a man of another tribe, as her cousin Elizabeth, who was of the tribe of Judah, like Mary herself, married Zachariah, a priest, and therefore of the tribe of Levi.”

“The answer is, that Jewish women might, indeed, marry into another tribe: but if they themselves, in the failure of heirs male, become heiresses of their fathers, they were in that case obliged to marry husbands of their own tribe and family, that their inheritance might not pass by marriage into another tribe.”

It is interesting to note that a Lapide would consider the genealogies of Joseph and Mary as the same, even though they are from different tribes.

“Joachim, the father of the Blessed Virgin, had no male children, a fact which S. Matthew here omits, as something perfectly well known in the age in which he writes. Hence it became the duty of S. Mary to marry a husband of her own tribe and family, that is to say, Joseph. Thus the genealogy of Joseph became the genealogy of the Blessed Virgin, and consequently of Christ, the Lord. Thus, too, it is that the

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417 A Lapide, 6, “Tropologica causa est, ut ostendatur generis et prosapiae vanitas, ac nobilitatem non in avorum stemmate, sed in propria indole et virtute consistere.”

418 A Lapide, 9, “Quaeres, quomodo ex genealogia Joseph, hic colligatur genealogia Christi, cum Christus Mariae Virginis, non autem Josephi fuerit filius, praesertim cum, ut videtur, B. Maria potuerit nubere viro non suae, sed alterius tribus, sicut Elisabeth cognata ejus, adeoque orta ex tribu Juda, nupsit Zachariae sacerdoti, ideoque oriundo ex tribut Levi? Respondetur feminas quidem apud Judaeos potuisse nubere viro alterius tribus; sed tamen si ipsae, deficiente prole mascula, in haereditatem patris succedebant, ne illa haereditas per conjugium ad aliam tribum transiret, debuisse ex lege, Num. Cap. Ult., 7, nubere viro ejusdem tribus et familiae.”

419 A Lapide, 9, “Respondetur feminas quidem apud Judaeos potuisse nubere viro alterius tribus; sed tamen si ipse, deficiente prole mascula, in hereditatem patris succedebant, ne illa haereditas per conjugium ad aliam tribum transiret, debuisse ex lege, Num. cap. ult., 7, nubere viro ejusdem tribus et familiae.”
Fathers teach universally that Joseph and Mary were of the same tribe and family.  

A Lapide makes clear that the genealogy of Joseph is most important for the Jewish people.

"It may be yet further asked, why S. Matthew unfolded the genealogy of Joseph rather than of Mary, since Christ was born of her alone, being a Virgin? I answer:—First, because among the Jews, and other nations, genealogy is customarily reckoned through fathers and husbands, not through mothers and wives. Second, because Joseph was the true and lawful father of Christ, after the manner which I shall explain presently. And Christ was the heir of David’s throne and scepter, not through Mary, but through Joseph, according to God’s promise to David, 2 Sam. VII.12."  

"He is only a father by adoption, but Joseph was father of Christ by marriage."

"Joseph was the husband of the Blessed Virgin, and the father of Christ as I have already shown. He was therefore the head and superior both of the Virgin, and of Christ as He was man."

A Lapide’s exegetical analysis of verse sixteen from chapter one of Matthew’s gospel is very accurate and is in agreement with contemporary historical-critical methodology. 

"Of whom was born Jesus. The form of expression is here changed. The Evangelist does not say, Joseph begat Jesus, as he had said of Abraham and the rest. Neither does he say, Mary begat Jesus, but of whom was born Jesus. By this expression he signifies — 1. That Jesus was born of Mary, not by natural means, but

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421 A Lapide, 10, “Instabis, cur S. Mattheaeus rexit potius genus Josephi quam B. Mariae, cum ex hac sola, utpote virgine, natus sit Christus? Resp. Primo, quia apud Judaeos aliasque gentes genealogia solebat texti per patres et viros, non per matres et feminas. Secundo, quia Joseph fuit verus et legitimus Christi pater, ea ratione et modo quem mix explicabo, ac per Josephum, non per B. Mariam, Christus fuit haeres sceptri et solii Davidis, prout Deus Davidi promiserat, II Reg vii, 12.”

422 A Lapide, 11, “Hic enim tantum est pater adoptivus, Joseph vero fuit pater matrimonialis Christi.”

be supernatural—the is to say, by the operation of the Holy Ghost. 2. That Jesus was not sprung from His father Joseph, but born of His mother alone, she being a virgin, and therefore that Joseph had no other connection with the genealogy of Christ than by right of his wife, the Virgin Mary.**424

St. Bernard, the great mariologist, is often quoted by a Lapide in his commentaires. Here, St. Bernard extols the virtues of Mary’s virginity.

“S. Bernard—“Very beautiful as the mingling of humility and virginity; nor is that soul in only a slight degree pleasing unto God, in which humility commends virginity, and virginity adorns humility; but of what veneration must she be worthy whose fruitfulness exalteth humility, and childbirth consecrates virginity?” And again—“Such a nativity became God, that He should not be born save of a Virgin: such a birth became a Virgin, that she should bring forth only God.” 425

A Lapide affirms here the teaching of the Church that Jesus was born of an earthly woman, yet he was both God and Man.

“The expression—Of whom was born Jesus—signifies that the Virgin was the real mother of Jesus—i.e., of that Man who, being hypostatically united with God, was both God and man.”426

A theme which a Lapide treats throughout his commentaries is the Incarnation. Here he quotes the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas, as well as St. Bede the Venerable to extol Mary’s virtues as the Theotokos, the Mother of God.

“S. Thomas teaches that God could not perform a greater work than the

**424 A Lapide, 14, “de qua natus est Jesus. – Mutat phrasim, non enim ait: Joseph genuit Jesum, uti de alii dixit: Abraham genuit Isaac, Isaac genuit Jacob, Jacob genuit Judam, etc. nec etiam dicit: Maria genuit Jesum, et si id verum sit, sed: De qua natus est Jesus, qua phrasi significat: Primo Jesum de Maria natum, non virtute naturali, sed supernaturali, vi et operatione Spiritus sancti. Secundo, Jesum non esse genitum a patre Josepho sed natum ex sola matre, ideoque ex virgine, ac proinde Joseph non aliter pertinere ad genealogiam Christi, quam ratione uxoris, scilicet B. Mariae, ex qua natus est Christus.”

**425 A Lapide, 15, “Praeclare S. Bernardus, hom. I super Missus est: Pulchra, ait, permixtio virginitatis et humilitatis; nec mediocriter placet Deo illa anima, in qua et humilitas commendat virginitatem, et virginitas exornat humilitatem; sed quanta veneratione digna est, in qua humilitatem exalat facunditas, et partus consecrat virginitatem! Et rursus: Talis, inquit, nativitas decebat Deum, ut non nisi ex virgine nascetur: talis partus decebat virginem, ut non pararet nisi Deum.”

**426 A Lapide, 15, “Haec phrasis, de qua natus est Jesus, significat B. Virginem veram esse matrem Jesu, id est hujus hominis qui hypostatico unitus Deo simul est Deus et homo.”
Incarnation of the Word, and the maternity of the Blessed Virgin, because she is the very Mother of God—God than whom nothing greater can be imagined. Hence Bede saith, “O most blessed Virgin, in thee alone that rich, yea, more than rich, King emptied Himself.” For to be Mother of God is the highest affinity, consanguinity, and union with God. By that motherhood the Blessed Virgin Mary is in as close relationship with God as a mother is with her son.”

A Lapide demonstrates the great importance of Mary’s role in giving birth to Christ since he was conceived without an earthly father.

“Of whom was born Jesus, signifies that He was born of His Mother only, so that she alone contributed to Christ all that flesh and substance which other fathers and mothers are wont to contribute conjointly to their children. For sons derive a portion of their substance from their fathers, a portion from their mothers. Wherefore the Blessed Virgin contributed more to Christ than other mothers are wont to contribute to their sons, because she alone was, in a manner, both father and mother of Christ.”

This passage expresses the Church’s belief in the work of the Holy Spirit which brought forth the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. Cornelius quotes from the father of Mariology, Francis Suarez, to explain the meaning of hypostatic union; the natural moment of Christ’s birth (born of a woman) and the supernatural miracle of His Nativity (conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit).

“The expression Of whom was born, signifies that the Holy Ghost was the most potent and efficient cause of the Nativity of Christ, who, within the Blessed Virgin, of her most pure blood, formed the Body of Christ, organized It, and gave It life, and hypostatically united It to the Word in the first moment of Its conception. Still the Blessed Virgin was a secondary cause, and a true Mother of Christ for the purpose of generation, not merely as passively furnishing the material, but as actively concurring therein by way of forming, disposing, and organizing that material. See

427 A Lapide, 16, “Quocirca S. Thomas docet Deum non posse facere opus majus quam sit incarnatio Verbi et maternitas B. Virginis, quia ipsa est mater Dei, quo nil majus concipi potest; unde Beda: O beatissima Virgo, inquit, in te sola Rex ille dives et praedives exinanitus est; maternitas enim Dei est summa affinitas, consanguinitas, et conjunctio cum Deo: per illam ergo B. Virgo tam affinis et consanguinea est Deo, quam mater filio.”

428 A Lapide, 16, “De qua natus est Jesus, significat eum ex sola matre natum, ac proinde illam solam Christo dedisse omnem carmen et substantiam quam caeteris filiis dant pater et mater conjunctim; filii enim partem substantiae accipient a patre, partem a madre, imo plus accipient a patre quam a matre; pater enim potior est causa generationis filii quam sit mater. Quare B. Virgo plus dedit Christo quam filiis suis dant caeterae matres, quia ipsa dedit quoque id quod pater date solet.”
Francis Suarez, 3p., q. 3, art., 4 ac., q. 33, art. 4. where he teaches that Christ’s generation of the Virgin was supernatural, as far as its manner and swiftness were concerned, because, in one moment, it was perfected by the Holy Ghost as the efficient cause. And so the action whereby Mary became a mother was natural; the mode was supernatural.  

Clearly, a Lapide uses the four senses of Scripture, as well as Origen and the Fathers of the Church, to describe the significance of forty-two generations in Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus.

"Symbolically, Origen and S. Jerome remark, that those forty-two generations correspond to the forty-two stations of the Israelites in the wilderness, by which they arrived at the land of Canaan promised to Abraham."

“Again, the number fourteen, because it contains twice seven, by which the sevenfold grace of the Holy Ghost is signified, denotes the gift of the same Holy Spirit in two-fold abundance to man, as it was in Christ, who, indeed, by a like symbol, having suffered on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, when the moon was full, redeemed us by His death, and merited abundance of graces for us.”

“Anagogically, the number forty-two is composed of six into seven, For six times seven makes forty-two.”

“Tropologically, by this forty-fold number of generations is signified the life...

429 A Lapide, 17, “De qua natura est, significat potissimam causam et activitatem nativitatis Christi fuisse Spiritum sanctum, qui in B. Virgine ex purissimis ejus sanguinis corpus Christi formavit, organizavit, animavit, ac Verbo hypostatico univit in primo conceptionis ejus instanti. B. Virgo tamen quoque ut causa secunda, et vera mater ad generationem Christi, non tantum passive subministrando materiam, sed et active illam formando, disponendo, organizingo concurrit. Vide Franciscum Suarez, III p. Q. XXXII, art. 4, ac Q. XXXIII, art. 4, ubi docet generationem Christi ex virgine fuisse supernaturali et quoad modum et velocitatem, quia in instanti perfecta est a Spiritu sancto, velut causa efficiente. Actio ergo periei in ea fuit naturalis, sed modus fuit supernaturalis.”

430 A Lapide, 20-21, “Symbolice Origenes, homil. 27 in Num.; et S. Hieronymus, epistol. ad Fabiolam de 42 mansionibus, notant 42 generationes respondere 42 mansionibus Hebraeorum in deserto, quibus ipsi ad terram Chyanaan Abrahae a Deo promissam pervernerunt.”

431 A Lapide, 21,”Rursum numerus 14, quia geminatum continet septenarium quo septenae Spiritus sancti gratia declaratur, duplicatam in homine designat ejusdem Spiritus lariatatem, qualis fuit in Christo, qui proinde eodem symbolo die 14 mensis Nisan, cum luna plena est, puta in Paschate, passus morte sua nos redemit et gratiarum copiam nobis promeruit.”

432 A Lapide, 21, “Anagogice, numerus 42 constat ex sex et septem; sexies enim septem faciunt.”

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of the body, as compounded of the four elements."\(^{433}\)

**Contemporary Commentary on Mt 1:1-17 and Mary**

In his commentary on Matthew's genealogy, Buby states that the family tree of Jesus Christ shows that the Messiah is a descendant of David and Abraham. David's role in the lineage offers a human aspect of the Messiah in the "promises made to David by God and the rootedness of Jesus in Judaism."\(^{434}\)

"To show the extraordinary birth of Jesus, Matthew has the five women enter the genealogy to extend this Messiahship to all peoples and to illustrate through salvation history that God works in unexpected and surprising ways. Matthew will continue to use the symbolism of numbers which are considered sacred, for example, five, seven, ten, twelve. There are the five dreams in this Gospel, the five great discourses, the five loaves, sevens are indicative of fulfillment or completion. Fourteen is made up of two sevens, etc."\(^{435}\)

Through Abraham there is a lineage of faith for all believers, a spiritual aspect to the genealogy.

"This also explains the importance of the women who represent the spiritual and faith dimension of Jesus Christ. Mary his mother is the fifth and culminating person in this genealogy and it is through the action of the Spirit that Jesus is born of her."\(^{436}\)

The key verse of this genealogy is Matthew 1:16, which names Joseph, husband of Mary, as the father of Jesus. Buby mentions that Mary is the fifth and final woman in Matthew’s genealogy. Buby also offers an explanation for the symbolism of numbers in the genealogy.

\(^{433}\) A Lapide, 21, "Tropologice quadragenario hoc generationum numero significatur nostra vita corporis quattuor elementis constantis."

\(^{434}\) Buby, SM, 50, *Mary of Galilee, Vol. I.*

\(^{435}\) Buby, SM, 50

\(^{436}\) Buby, SM, 50
Mary enters as the fifth and final woman in the genealogy. She is presented in an entirely different way from the two patterns Matthew has used both for the male ancestors and for the women: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and the wife of Uriah. Mary is the lawful wife of Joseph. There is no irregularity within the marriage; however, the manner in which the Messiah is to be born is of the Spirit. Matthew links the physical birth of the Messiah to his mother and not to Joseph.\footnote{Buby, SM, 52}
Matthew 1:18-25 - The Birth of Jesus

18. “Now the generation of Christ was in this wise. When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child, of the Holy Ghost.

19. Whereupon Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing publicly to expose her, as minded to put her away privately.

20. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying: Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.

21. And she shall bring forth a son: and thou shalt call his name Jesus. For he shall save his people from their sins.

22. Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying:

23. *Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us.*

24. And Joseph rising up from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him, and took unto him his wife.

25. And he knew her not till she brought forth her firstborn son and he called his name Jesus.”

A Lapide presents the nativity of Jesus Christ in Matthew’s gospel as the fulfillment of what had been predicted by the prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures. A Lapide offers particular attention to the “real” marriage of Joseph and Mary and how this union affected the birth of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. In verse 18, a Lapide writes,

“God willed the Blessed Virgin to be betrothed to Joseph – Because Joseph appears to have been the nearest heir of David’s kingdom, that it might devolve from

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A Lapide, *Commentaria in Ss. Mattheum et Marcum*, 3-4, “Christi autem generatio sic erat cum esset desponsata mater eius Maria Joseph antequam convenirent inventa est in utero habens de Spiritu Sancto. Joseph autem vir eius cum esset iustus et nollet eam traducere voluit occulte dimittere eam haec autem eo cogitante ecce angelus Domini in somnis apparuit ei dicens Joseph fili David noli timere accipere Mariam coniugem tuam quod enim in ea natum est de Spiritu Sancto est. Pariet autem filium et vocabis nomen eius Iesum ipse enim salvum faciet populum suum a peccatis eorum hoc autem tosum factum est ut adimpleretur id quod dictum est a Domino per prophetam dicentem. Ecce virgo in utero habebit et pariet filium et vocabunt nomen eius Emmanuel quod est interpretatum Nobiscum Deus exsurgens autem Joseph a somno fecit sicut praecepit ei angelus Domini et accipit coniugem suam et non cognoscebat eam donec peperit filium suum primogenitum et vocavit nomen eius Iesum.”

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him upon Christ, as from a father to a son, but due order and right of succession, as I have said ver. 16.”

In his commentary, a Lapide presents a number of reasons why the espousal of the Virgin Mary to St. Joseph may have been a marriage act and not simply an engagement or betrothal.

“But others think, with better reason, that the Virgin was espoused not merely by betrothal, but by marriage, per verba de praesentii – by an actual nuptial contract. This is proved:– 1. Because Joseph is called in the verse following; and in ver. 16, the husband of Mary. This must mean that he had married her. 2. Joseph wished to put her away, as being with child, as it is said in the verse following. He had therefore taken her to him to wife; for no one puts away what he has not. 3. Because “betrothed” (Luke ii. 5) is interpreted to mean married. Yea, Joseph called her his wife.”

A Lapide responds to any query presented which may present danger to the legitimacy of Jesus’ birth, especially according to Jewish law.

“That there was, however, a real marriage between Joseph and the Blessed Virgin is certain from the words of the Gospel, and the common agreement of theologians; and the axiom of lawyers, that – “consent, not consummation, validates marriage.” Whence S. Augustine … says – “The good of marriage was fulfilled in those parents of Christ. There was offspring, fidelity, a sacrament. We recognize the offspring, the Lord Jesus Himself; the fidelity, for there as no adultery; the sacrament, …for there was no divorce.”

A Lapide furthers the understanding of Jesus’ birth within the context of a legitimate marriage

439 A Lapide, 22 - 23, “Queris, an B. Virgo furerit hic desponsata Josepho per sola duntaxat sponsalia, an vero etiam per matrimonium reipsa contractum et nuptias celebratas; ac consequenter, an Christus incarnatus et conceptus sit ex Virgine desponsata tantum, an vero etiam conjugata? Nam ad Virginem sic desponsatam missus est Gabriel nuntiis incarnationem Christi, Luc. 1, 27; Virgoque ejus nuntio consentiens, dicensque: Ecce ancilla Domini, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum, illico eodem instanti concepit Christum. Multi censent B. Virginem tantum desponsatam fuisset, sive per verbo de futuro, quibus tantum fit promissio matrimonii.”

440 A Lapide, 23 “Verum melius aliis censent B. Virginem desponsatam fuissent non tantum per sponsalia, sed etiam per matrimonium per verba de praesentii, et nuptias reipsa contractas. Probatur primo, quia vers. sequentem, ac vers. 16, Joseph vocatur vir, id est maritus Mariae. Jam ergo per matrominium illam sibi maritaret. Secundo, Joseph voluit eam, utpote gravidam, dimittere, ut dicitur vers. sec. Ergo jam eam acceperat in uxorem; nemo enim dimititur id quod non habet. Tertio, quia desponsatam Luc. Cap. II, 5 interpretatur conjugatam, imo eam vocat uxorem Josephi.”

441 A Lapide, 25 “Porro verum fuisset matrimonium inter Josephum et B. Virginem, certum est ex dictis et ex communi Theologorum et Jurisperitorum axiomate: Matrimonium facit non copula, sed consensus.”
between Mary and Joseph.

"This right of cohabitation, and quasi dominion over a wife, in the case of married virgins, has several true and real, not fictitious consequences. The first is, that a virgin bride cannot marry another husband. The second is, that although the vow be broken by cohabitation, it is not fornication. The third, that offspring divinely granted and born (as Christ in the present instance was conceived of the Holy Ghost: is accounted legitimate as being born in wedlock." 442

In his commentary, a Lapide expounds upon the subject that has been debated by the Church Fathers: whether Joseph and Mary were in a legitimate union of marriage, considering her “vow” of virginity to God.

"From all this, it may be gathered that the marriage of the Blessed Virgin Mary with Joseph was not only real matrimony, but lawful, yea, holy— real, because the essence of wedlock consists in the mutual delivery of power over each other’s body, even though this power be never exercised." 443

A Lapide reiterated the tradition of the Church regarding Joseph’s chaste married love for the Blessed Virgin Mary as well as his role as Guardian and Educator of the Redeemer.

"It is, moreover, probable that the Blessed Virgin Mary had revealed this, her vow to Joseph before marriage, and that he had consented to it. Some add, that he had promised to be the guardian of her vow. It was holy marriage, because by means of it Joseph protected the good repute and the virginity of Blessed Mary; and became the guardian, nourisher, and educator of the Child Jesus. What were more holy than this?" 444

442 A Lapide, 25, “Jus autem hoc copulae, et quasi dominium conjugis, in virginibus conjugatis habet aliquos effectus non fictos, sed veros et reales. Primus est, ut conjux virgo non possit alteri nudare. Secundus, ut, licet per copulum votum violent, non tamen sit fornicatio. Tertius, ut proles divinitus data et nata (uti Christus hic conceptus ex Spiritu Sancto) sit et habeatur legitima, utpote ex legitimo conjugio prognata.”

443 A Lapide, 25, “Ex dictis collige non tantum verum, sed et licitum, imo sanctum fuisse conjugium B. Mariae cum Josepho. Verum, quia essentia matrimonii consistit in mutua traditione et potestate corporum, etiamsi haec potestas nunquam in actum redigatur.”

444 A Lapide, 26, “Et verissimile est B. Virginem hoc suum votum Josepho ante matrimonium revelasse, et Josephum in illud consensisse. Addunt aliqui et promisisse se illud custoditurum. Sanctum, quia per matrimonium hoc Joseph tutatus est famam et virginitatem B. Virginis, ac puerum Jesum custodivit, aluit, educavit. Quid eo sanctius?”

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“And he adds that here might be a fifth reason why the Mother of the Lord was espoused and a virgin, in order that in her person both virginity and matrimony might be honoured against the heretics, who attack either one or the other.”

A Lapide always has the method in the four senses of Scripture as the framework for his commentary. Using these senses (tropological, symbolic), a Lapide derives a deeper meaning from the biblical text.

“Observe her, tropologically, in the Blessed Virgin and Joseph the utmost height of angelic purity and virginity.”

Using the symbolic sense, a Lapide uses the doctrine of the Trinity to describe the Holy Family.

“Symbolically, in this marriage and family union of Joseph with Mary there was an image of the Sacred Trinity.”

“This family was then, as it were, a heaven upon earth – a family, not so much of three human persons as of three embodied angels– yea, symbolically, as it were, of three Divine Persons. Therefore it is not doubtful that it was thronged with angels, ministering to the Virgin, as Queen of Heaven, and to Christ, as their Lord and their God.”

A Lapide continues to interpret the text from a moral sense, using the tropological understanding of the Scripture.

“Tropologically, Let husbands and wives imitate the Blessed Virgin and Joseph in purity, in sanctity, in patience, and charity, bearing one another’s burdens. There was in this family of Joseph, Mary, and Christ, the utmost concord amongst all,


446 A Lapide, 26, “Tropologice: nota hic in B. Virgine et Josepcho summum angelicae castitatis et virginitatis gradum.”

447 A Lapide, 27, “Symbolice: in hoc matrimonio et familia Joseph cum Maria fuit imago S. Trinitas.”

448 A Lapide, 28, “Fuit ergo haec familia quasi coelum quoddam terrenum, trium non tam hominum quam corporeorum Angelorum, imo trium quasi personarum divinarum symbolice. Quare non dubium illum plenam fuisse Angelis ministrantibus Virgini, quasi Reginae coelorum; ac Christo, quasi Domino Deoque suo”
the utmost love, the utmost reverence, humility, piety, help and mutual compliance.”

As the Church Fathers before him, a Lapide explains the role of St. Joseph in the first two chapters of Matthew’s gospel.

“She was found with child by the Holy Ghost. Observe that Joseph understood by her appearance, that his wife, the Blessed Virgin, had conceived. But whether he knew that she was with child by the Holy Ghost, or not, is doubtful.”

A Lapide allows the reader to understand the humanity of St. Joseph in his attempt to understand why Mary is with child before marriage.

“But, plainly and surely, Joseph, seeing the Blessed Virgin with child, was astonished at the novelty of the thing, and his mind was agitated by contending and fluctuating emotions, and he reasoned somewhat in this way: “I know that this Virgin is most holy, wherefore I do not believe that she has been false to her troth, plighted to me. Still, she is with child, and I know not by me. But by whom I know not. Can it be by a former husband? Or can she have suffered violence on her journey, when she went to visit Elizabeth? Can she have suffered illusion from some spirit during sleep? Or, what would be more consonant with her sanctity, is she with child by an angel, or by the Deity Himself?”

“Wherefore I will resign her, and put her away from me.”

Because Joseph is from the royal lineage of David, a Lapide underlines the importance of Joseph’s role in the conception and birth of Christ in Matthew’s gospel.


450 A Lapide, 28, “inventa est in utero habens de spiritu sancto. Nota josephem ex tumore uteri deprehendisse b. virginem conjugem suam concepisse, sed an sciverit eam concepisse de Spiritu Sancto, dubium est.”


452 A Lapide, 32, “Quare illam ei resignabo et a me dimitam.”
“God permitted this to take place in order that the conception of the Blessed Virgin by the Holy Ghost might be attested unto all, both by Joseph and by the Angel.” 453

A Lapide offers his own theory on why Mary would not have to reveal to Joseph the mystery of Christ’s conception.

“The Blessed Virgin was unwilling, of her own accord, to make known this divine secret to Joseph, in order that she might not seem to boast of her own gifts, so wonderful and so divine; but she confided all to God, and God’s providential care, most certainly trusting that God would defend her good repute and her innocence, and either in His own time open out the whole matter, as she had seen that He had lately done in the case of her cousin Elizabeth, or else would order all things to His own greater glory, and therefore to the greater honour and reverence of this, the conception.” 454

Earlier, a Lapide offers a very human portrait of St. Joseph’s human dilemma in dealing with the birth of Christ and understanding God’s Will. Here, however, a Lapide quotes from the great biblical scholar, St. Jerome, and offers a spiritual understanding of the conception and birth of Christ from St. Joseph’s point of view.

A Lapide continues to educate the reader regarding the role of St. Joseph in the birth of the Messiah. A Lapide indicates Joseph lacked a general understanding of Mary’s holiness until she gave birth to Jesus.

“Thus S. Jerome says “This is the testimony to Mary’s purity, that Joseph, knowing her chastity, and wondering at what had happened, hides in silence the mystery of which he was ignorant.” 455

453 A Lapide, 32, “Id permisit Deus, ut conceptus Virginis ex Spiritu sancto, tum a Josepho, tum ab Angelo omnibus testatus fieret.”

454 A Lapide, 33, “B. Virgo, autem, ex modestia, noluit ultero secretum hoc divinum Josepho pandere, ne sua dona tanta et tam divina jactare videretur, sed Deo, Deique providentiae et curae cujus totum hoc opus erat, idipsum resignavit, certissime confidens Deum suam innocentiam et famam tutatum, ac rem totam opportune vel patefactum, uti paulo ante Elisabethae cognatae patefactum esse experita erat, vel directurum omnia ad majorem suam gloriam, et consequenter ad majorem conceptionis hujus honorem et venerationem.”


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“As the Jews were not able to look upon and recognize the face of Moses on account of the rays of light which God had, as it were, breathed into him when He talked with him on Mount Sinai, so neither was Joseph able to look upon and to know the Blessed Virgin, forasmuch as she had God in her womb, and therefore her face was most radiam. But after Christ was born, this glory and effulgence left her face, and then she could be seen and known by Joseph.”

“Joseph knew her not in mind. He did not discover the sanctity and the dignity of the Blessed Virgin, his wife, until she brought forth Christ. But these expositions are either incorrect or else symbolical and mystical.”

A Lapide defines the conception of Jesus Christ with a traditional explanation, as understood by the Church Fathers.

“According, therefore, to the true literal meaning, to know one’s wife signifies in Scripture the conjugal act. This, therefore, is excluded with reference to Christ, so as to signify that He was not conceived of Joseph, but by the Holy Ghost.”

In his apologetic approach to Scripture, a Lapide defends the perpetual Virginity of Mary against the critique of this Catholic doctrine by the Reformers.

“From hence the heretics have taken occasion to say that Joseph knew her after she had brought forth her Son. Whence they deny that the Blessed Virgin always remained a Virgin, and that after bearing her Child she lost her virginity.”

Again, a Lapide quotes from Church teaching that Jesus is the only Son of God, born of Mary, not simply Mary’s first born.

456 A Lapide, 40, “Sicut Judaei non potuerunt inspicere et cognoscere faciem Mosis oob radios lucis, quos quasi cornua illi Deus afflaverat, dum cum eo colloqueretur in Sina, Exod. XXXIV, 29 et seq.; sic nec Joseph poterat intueri et cognoscere B. Virginem, utpote quae Deum habebat in utero, ideoque facie erat radiatissima; nato autem Christo, fulgor hic et gloria faciei desit, tumque a Josepho videri et agnosci potuit.”

457 A Lapide, 40, “Joseph mente non cognovit, nec penetravit sanctitatem et dignitatem B. Virginis suae sponsae, donec ipsa peperit Christum. Verum haec vel aliena sunt, vel symbolica et mystica.”

458 A Lapide, 40, “Ergo ad litteram genuine cognoscere conjugem in Scriptura significat copulam maritalem, sive actum conjugalum; hunc enim excludit a Christo, ut significet eum non ex Josepho, sed ex Spiritu sancto conceptum.”


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"For, in Scripture, any one is called a first-born son, who has no elder brothers, even though he be an only son. This is plain from Exod. Iv. 22, 2. The word "first" denies the existence of any previous sons, but does not require, or presuppose, that there were any subsequent. Thus, an only son is even now called the first-born." 460

In typical apologetic style, a Lapide defends the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity.

"Therefore it is a doctrine of the faith that the Blessed Virgin always remained a virgin, as is plain from S. Luke i, 34, Ezek. xliv. 2, and by the universal consent of the Fathers, and the common consent, and perpetual tradition of the Church." 461

Contemporary Catholic Exegesis on Mt 1:18-25 and Mary

Bertrand Buby in Mary of Galilee: Vol. I explains the importance of St. Joseph's role in the genealogy of the Messiah. Joseph is a key person in this passage and in the infancy narrative of Matthew's Gospel. Joseph is just, an upright man who follows the revelation of God in the fullest sense. Buby further states that Joseph is kind and compassionate. Joseph is made aware of God's plan for Mary and stands in great awe before the mystery. Joseph is fully observant of the Law.

"Matthew carefully links this verse to the beginning of his Gospel by speaking of the birth of Jesus who is named the Christ (Messiah or Anointed One). The reason for the genealogy will be seen in the first part of this verse . . . "His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph." The virginal conception which was hinted at in verse 16 now becomes explicit . . . "it was found that she was with child through the Holy Spirit." These phrases contain what will be the mystery of Jesus Christ: he is legally a descendant of David through Joseph; he is likewise, through the operation of the Holy Spirit in the virgin Mary, Jesus, the Savior. The latter implies He is God's Son because of the Holy Spirit. This parallels one of the oldest creedal statements about Jesus which Paul uses in the Epistle to the Romans. Paul is probably dependent on an earlier tradition for it: "the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness (or . Spirit ) by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rm 1:3-4). Both in Matthew and in Romans we have the tension of Jesus

460 A Lapide, 41,"Primogenitus enim in Scriptura dicitur omnis is ante quem nemo est natus, etiamsi sit unigenitus, ut patet Exodi. IV, 22 et cap. XIII, 2; enim promo negat tantum anteriores fuisse filios, nec requirit aut praesuponit posteriores extitisse: sic etiamnum primogenitus vocatur is qui est unigenitus."

461 A Lapide, 41,"Igitur B. Virginem semper mansisse virginem dogma est fidei, ut patet Luc. 1, 34; Ezek. XLIV, 2, et ex consensu Patrum omnium ac communi Ecclesiae sensu, jugique traditione."
being a son of David according to the flesh and a Son of God according to the Spirit."\textsuperscript{462}

\textsuperscript{462}Buby, SM, \textit{Mary of Galilee}, Vol. I.
Matthew 2:1-12 The Visit of the Magi

"When Jesus therefore was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of King Herod, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

2 Saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to adore him.

3 And king Herod hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

4 And assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born.

5 But they said to him: In Bethlehem of Juda. For so it is written by the prophet:

6 And thou Bethlehem the land of Juda art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come forth the captain that shall rule my people Israel.

7 Then Herod, privately call in the wise men, learned diligently of them the time of the star which appeared to them;

8 And sending them into Bethlehem, said: go and diligently inquire after this child, and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I also may come and adore him.

9 Who having heard the king, went their way; and behold the star which they had seen in the east, went before them, until it came and stood over where the child was.

10 And seeing the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

11 And entering into the house, they found the child with Mary his mother opening their treasures, they offered him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

12 And having received an answer in sleep that they should not return to Herod, they went back another way into their country."

A Lapide commences his commentary on the visit of the Magi by Matthew in chapter two by situating the reader within the world of the biblical text, somewhere in the country of Persia.

"Behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? Wise men, Gr. Magi a common word among the Persians, whence the Persian translation of S. Matthew has here Magusam, Magi, or
wise men, or astrologers, or philosophers.\textsuperscript{464}

A Lapide cites the great Church Fathers in understanding the meaning of the word, “Magi” and what country it derives from.

\textit{“From the east, . . . from eastern parts}, as though these Magi came from several regions or provinces of the east. You as from what country the Magi came?\textsuperscript{465}

“Clemens Alex, S. Chrysostom, Cyril Alex., and S. Leo, cited by Baronius, think that they came from Persia. But the distance would seem too great. For Persia is 300 leagues from Judæa, which the Magi would scarcely traverse in thirteen days.”\textsuperscript{466}

A Lapide is always precise in understanding the calendar and the geography of a particular biblical text.

“And the more common opinion of the Fathers and Doctors is that the Magi came to Bethlehem on the thirteenth day from the first appearance of the star and the birth of Christ, and there adored Him, and that this is the force of the word \textit{lo}.\textsuperscript{467}

A Lapide always links the biblical text with the liturgical calendar and its celebration in the life of the Church.

“Whence also the Church commemorates this mystery on the thirteenth day

\begin{footnotes}

\textsuperscript{464} A Lapide, 70-71, “Ecce Magi ab Oriente venerunt hierosolymam, dicentes: ubi est qui natus est rex Judæorum? Magi est nomen usitatum apud Persas (unde Evangeliun Persicum hoc loco habet Magusam, hoc est Magi, sapientes, astrologi) significans sapientes et philosophos.”

\textsuperscript{465} A Lapide, 71, “Ab Oriente, id est ab Orientibus, quasi ex diversis Orientalis regionibus vel provinciis venerint hi Magi. Quaeres ex qua regione venere Magi?”

\textsuperscript{466} A Lapide, 71, “Clemens Alexandrinus, S. Chrysostomus, Cyrillus Alexandrinus et S. Leo, quos citat Baronius, censent venisse ex Persia, haec enim orientalis est respectu Judæae. Verum obstat distantia nimia. Persia enim tecentis leucis distat a Judæae, quod iter tredecim diebus aegre conficere potuissent Magi.”

\textsuperscript{467} A Lapide, 71, “Communior enim Patrum et Doctorum sententia est Magos die decima tertia ab ortu stellae et a nativitate Christi, venisse in Bethlehem Christumque adorasse, idque innuit \textit{ecce}.”

\end{footnotes}
after Christmas."  

Understanding the identity of the Magi is of utmost importance to a Lapide as he expounds upon the ethnic origin of these Eastern “astrologers.”

“Others with more probability think that the Magi were Chaldæans, both because the Chaldæans were addicted to astrology; and these Magi recognized Christ by the teaching of a star, and because they themselves were followers of Abraham, who was called by God out of Chaldæa into Judæa.”  

“And most probably, these magi were eastern Arabians. Whence Tacitus (lib. 5, Histor.) says that Judæa was bounded by Arabia on the east.”

A Lapide deals with the question of the identity of the Magi. Are they kings or astrologers from the East? He begins with the laity’s understanding of the identity of the Wise Men.

“The common opinion of the faithful is that these Magi were kings, that is petty kings, or princes.”

“S. Matthew, however, does not call them kings, but Magi, because it was the part of these last to recognize Christ by the star. Hence also in Ps. lxxii., they are called “kings of Tharsis,” and “kings of Arabia and Saba.” Again, that they were three in number, from the three species of gifts which they offered—gold, frankincense and myrrh,—is taught by Augustine,”

A Lapide draws from the tradition in giving names to the three who are considered Magi. He

468 A Lapide, 71, “Unde et Ecclesia hoc mysterium recolit et celebrat die tredecim a natali Christi.”

469 A Lapide, 71, “Alii verisimilius putant Magos fuisse Chaldaeos, tum quia Chaldaei erant astrologiae dedit, sicut Magi hi ex intitu stellae agnoverunt Christum; tum quia ipsi posteriori erant Abrahae, qui a Deo e Chaldaea evocatus est in Judaeaem.”

470 A Lapide, 72, “Et verisimilime, Magi hi fuere Arabes orientales. Unde Cornelius Tacitus, ait Judæam ob Oriente habere Arabiam.”

471 A Lapide, 72, “Communis fidelium vox et sensus est Magos hos fuisse reges, id est regulos, sive principes.”

472 A Lapide, 72, “S. Mattheus tamen eos non vocat reges, sed magos, quia ex stella Christum agnoscer magorum fuit, non regum. Hinc et Psalm. LXXI vocantur: ‘Reges Tharsis, reges Arabum et Saba.’ Rursum eos numero tres fuisse, secundum tria munerae genera, puta aurum, thus et myrrham, quae Christo obtulerunt, docent S. Augustinus.”
also mentions the three gifts that the Magi brought to the Christ Child and the religious significance of the gifts.

“The first is said to have been called Melchior, an old man, grey-headed, with flowing beard and locks; he presented gold to the Lord the King. The second was Gaspar, young, beardless, and ruddy; He with frankincense, as an oblation worthy of God, honoured God. The third as Fuscus’ he had a full beard, and by means of myrrh signified that the Son of Man should die.”

“I say, therefore, that the Magi knew Christ was born by the token of a star. Because Balaam had prophesied of it.”

How did the Magi know to follow the star? A Lapide offers this explanation.

“More probably, they knew by a divine instinct and revelation; for the Magi were endowed with a hidden celestial _afflatus_. “This they heard,” says S. Augustine (Serm. 2 de Epiph.), “telling them in the language of heaven, as it were, that Christ was born in Judaea. Thus they followed the star on to Bethlehem and the cradle of Christ.”

A Lapide cites ritual explanation for the Star which guided the Magi to the Christ Child.

“The brightness and majesty of the star were so great that the Magi understood that something divine was portended, even that God, as the Holy Spirit suggested to them, had become incarnate.”

A Lapide’s understanding of the star has a celestial tone to it. A Lapide has a flair for the poetic.

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473 A Lapide, 72, “Prium dicitur fuisse Melchior, senex et canus prolixa barba et capillis; hic aurum obtulit Regi Domino. Secundus Gaspar, juvenis, imberbis, rubicundus, thure, quasi Deo oblatione digna, Deum honoravit. Tertius Fuscus, integre barbatus, per myrrham Filium hominis moriturum professus est.”

474 A Lapide, 75, “Dico ergo Magos cognovisse Christum natum ex stellae indicio: Primo, quia id prophetarat Balaam.”

475 A Lapide, 75, “Potius id cognoverunt ex instinctu et revelatione divina; Magi enim secretiourí coelestis numinis aflatu instincti, hanc quasi coeli linguam, ait S. Augustinus, serm. 2 de Epiph., loquenter (natum esse in Judaea Christum) audierunt, canque usque ad Behlehem et ad cunas Christi prosecuti sunt.”

476 A Lapide, 75, “Tanta enim claritas et majestas fuit stellae, ut divinam esse ac divinum quid portendere Magi intellexerunt, scilicet Deum incarnatum esse, uti eis suggerebat Spiritus sanctus.”

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“This star was a new meteor formed by the angels from the atmosphere, and filled with an immense light, and moved by an angel, like the pillar of fire and cloud, which guided the Hebrews through the desert to the promised land.”

Once again a Lapide offers a theological explanation, then an interpretation of the text, using each one of the four senses.

“Alegorically, Christ is “the bright and morning star.”

“Christ is the star: for a Star shall rise out of Jacob, and a man come forth of Israel.”

In his use of Philology, a Lapide further extrapolates the meaning of Mary’s name as it relates to the Marian title “Star of the Sea.”

“Again, the star of the sea, that is, of this storm-tossed world, who shows us thereby the way, and goes before us to the harbour of safety, is the Blessed Virgin, whence her name, Mary. The Hebrew Mariam means teacher, or mistress, or guide of the sea. Behold the star, invoke Mary,” says S. Bernard. Hence, also, the Church invokes her, saying, “Hail, star of the sea, bounteous Mother of God.”

The star derives further meaning in a Lapide’s commentary on Matthew as he uses the moral sense to understand this passage. He cites five definitions for the meaning of the “star.”

“Tropologically, the star is, 1. The faith of a believer. 2. Prudence. 3. Precepts. 4. Evangelical counsels, especially obedience to a superior. 5. Holy inspirations infused into the mind by God, whereby He calls the soul to some action,
in a more perfect state, as, for example, virginity, or martyrdom.\textsuperscript{481}

The eternal sense of the text is also given by a Lapide. The star points to heaven, to the final destination for the Christian.

\textit{"Anagogically, doctors and whoever instruct many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."}\textsuperscript{482}

"Lastly, the star invites and calls us to heaven, that, by means of a heavenly life, we may come to the most blessed company of the angels and all the heavenly citizens."\textsuperscript{483}

Catholic tradition has believed that the Magi were astronomers and the commentary here reflects that traditional understanding of the Three Wise Men.

"Lastly, the Magi were appropriately called by a star, because they were astronomers. Hence they knew that this star was not a common one, but a prodigy, and portended some divine event. Thus they understood that the Maker and Lord of the stars, to whom all the stars are obedient, was born."\textsuperscript{484}

A Lapide once again links his commentary with the liturgical calendar of the Church.

"Hence the Church celebrates with so great solemnity the Feast of the Epiphany, in which the Magi were called to adore Christ, because in them and by them was begun the calling and salvation of the Gentiles.\textsuperscript{485}

Where did Mary give birth? How long did she and Joseph stay in Bethlehem? A Lapide

\textsuperscript{481} A Lapide, 76, "Tropologice stella hominis fidelis: primo est fides; secundo prudentia; tertiio praecepta; quarto consilia Evangelica, ac praeertim obedientia ductusque superioris; quinto sanctae inspiciationes a Deo menti immisae, quibus eam vocat ad actum vel statum perfectiorem, v.g. ad virginitatem, ad martyrium."

\textsuperscript{482} A Lapide, 77, "Anagogice Doctores et quicumque ad justitia erudiant multos, fulgebunt quasi stellae in perpetuas aeternitates."

\textsuperscript{483} A Lapide, 77, "Denique stella nos invitat et vocat ad coelum, ut per vitam coelestem tendamus ad felicissimum Angelorum, et coelitum omnium consortium."

\textsuperscript{484} A Lapide, 78, "Denique appostie Magi vocantur per stellam, quia ipsi erant astrologi: unde scire poterant stellam hanc non esse communem, sed prodigiosam et divinum quid portendere; quocirca ipsi ex novo pulcherrimoque sidere, siderum conditorem et Dominum cui sidera omnia famulantur, jam natum agoverunt."

\textsuperscript{485} A Lapide, 78, "Unde Ecclesia tanta solemnitate celebrat festum Epiphaniae, quo Magi vocati Christum adorarunt, quia in ipasis et per ipsos coepit Gentium vocatio et salus."
discusses in detail these insights.

"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother. From this passage some are of the opinion that, after their enrollment, the wealthier people, who had come to Bethlehem for the purpose, were departed; so that there were now many houses in Bethlehem at liberty for the purpose of hospitality, and that Christ had been removed from the stable in which He was born, to some worthier abode of one of the citizens, and were there worshiped by the Magi." 486

A Lapide attempts to understand what happened to Mary immediately after the Birth of Christ.

"It is plain that Christ, and the Blessed Virgin, as a woman who had lately given birth to a child, remained in the stable until her Purification." 487

Here a Lapide denotes the birth place of the Messiah and the reason why he was born in a manger, and not the inn.

"Behold in this little hole of the earth, the Maker of the Heavens is born. Here He was wrapped in swathings, here adored by the Magi." 488

You may reconcile these two opinions with each other, if you suppose that in Bethlehem, being a small city, there was only one public hospice for strangers, to which was attached a stable for their horses and other beasts of burden." 489

In the following commentary, a Lapide imagines why Joseph is not mentioned in the passage and offers a reason why he may not have been present when the Magi paid homage to Jesus.

"And they found a Babe lying in the manger, plainly, the only manger

486 A Lapide, 57, "Et intrantes domum invenerunt puerum cum Maria matre ejus. Hinc putant aliqui Christum, cum affuens ob descriptionem et censum turba, eo peracto, recesisset, ut multae domus in Bethlehem hospitibus essent vacuae, Christum, inquam, e stabulo in quo natus erat, in honestam civis alijus domumuisse translatum, ibique adoratum a Magis."

487 A Lapide, 57, "Constat, inquit, in stabulo mansisse Christum et B. Virginem, utpote puerperam, usque ad purificationem."

488 A Lapide, 65, "Ecce, ait, in hoc parvo terrae foramine coelorum conditor natus est, hic involutus pannis, hic inventus a pastoribus, hic adoratus a Magis."

489 A Lapide, 65, "Utramque sententiam concilabis, si dicas in Bethlehem, utpote urbe parva, unum duntaxatuisse hospitium publicum pro advenis, cujus appendix fuerit stabulum pro illorum equis et jumentis."
belonging to the stable of this hospice.

No mention is made of Joseph upon this occasion, either because he had gone away into the city or the country, to procure food and other necessaries for the Blessed Virgin and Christ. 490

A Lapide explains the encounter between the Magi and Mary and Joseph at the birth of Christ.

“And S. Matthew signifies by his narrative that the Blessed Virgin and Joseph so conducted themselves in the presence of the Magi, that they understood by God’s inspiration that Christ was born of the Virgin alone by the power of the Holy Ghost, and that Joseph only took care of them.” 491

An analogy is made between precious gifts given by the Queen of Sheba to Solomon and symbolic gifts given the Christ by the Magi.

“Lastly, the Queen of Sheba gave precious gifts to Solomon, and received greater from him. Thus it was with the Magi and Christ, who is the true Solomon.” 492

Using the great mariologist, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, a Lapide explains the spiritual meaning of the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh offered to Jesus by the Magi.

“S. Bernard thinks that the Magi offered gold to the Blessed Virgin and Christ to succour their poverty, myrrh to strengthen Christ’s infant limbs, frankincense to prevent the unpleasant odours of the stable. This is a very literal and undignified sense. For the Fathers teach, passim, in a far higher way, that illuminated by the Holy Ghost they offered gold (Prov. VIII, 19); frankincense as to God, and according to His humanity, as the High Priest and Pontiff; Myrrh to Christ as man, about to die and be buried for the redemption of the human race, and the third day to rise again to immortality and eternal glory. For the bodies of the dead are buried with myrrh, that they may remain incorrupt. Myrrh has the property of drying up moisture, and

490 A Lapide, 65, “Et invenerunt infan tem positum prae sepio, uno scilicet, unius illius hospitii et stabuli. Josephi hic nulla fit mentio, vel quia aberat iver atque in urbem vel agrum, ut cibos aliaque necessaria B. Virgin et Christo procuraret.”

491 A Lapide, 66, “Sed hac phrasi significat Matthaeus ita se gessisse B. Virginem et Josephum coram Magis, ut illi ex Dei instinctu intelligerent Christum natum ex sola Virgine, per virtutem Spiritus Sancti, Josephum vero tantum esse corum adinunstrum.”

492 A Lapide, 67, “Denique regina Saba pretiosa dedit munera Salomoni, et majora ab eo recepti. Similiter factum est cum Magis et Christo, qui verus est Salomon.”

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preventing the generation of worms."

Not only in a spiritual sense but also in a moral one, a Lapide displays this explanation of the Magi’s threefold gifts.

"Allegorically, these three gifts signify Christ, who offered Himself to God the Father upon the cross as it were fold, since out of golden love, even love to man, He immolated Himself; as the myrrh of the very bitter passion of His griefs and torments and as the frankincense of the highest devotion, submission, veneration, and worship. Whence also on the same day of the week on which Christ offered Himself upon the cross the Magi offered their three gifts to Christ."

Other meanings for the significance of the three gifts is given here, especially using both the moral and anagogical senses of Scripture. It is interesting to note the trinitarian aspect of a Lapide’s commentaries in the following quote, as he compares the significance of Christ threefold gifts to the Holy Trinity with the three theological virtues or gifts given to Christians at baptism.

"Again, Christ offered three gifts to the Holy Trinity, namely, His flesh, soul, and divinity, just as Christian offer to the same Triune God acts of faith, hope and charity."

"Tropologically, in the first place, gold is charity, or love, and wisdom;

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493 A Lapide, 67, “S. Bernardus in Sententias censet Magos obtulisse B. Virgini et Christo aurum, ut eorum paupertati succurrerent; myrrham, ad consolidanda infantilia Christi membra; thus, ad stabuli et animalium foetorem abigendum. Hic sensus est humilior et ad litterae corticem. Nam passim subtilius et sublimius Patres docent Magos, illuminatos a Spiritu Sancto, obtulisse aurum Christo quasi Regi sapienissimo (sapientia enim conferetur et praefertur auro. Prov. VIII, 19: Melior, inquit, est fructus meus auro; thus, quasi Deo et quasi summo Sacerdoti ac Pontifici, qua homo erat, myrrham, quasi hominis pro generis humani redemptione morituro, sepeliendo et die tertia vi divinitatis suae ad immortalitem et gloriam aeternam resurrecturo: myrrha enim condiuntur mortuorum corpora, ut maneant incorrupta; nam myrrha, cum sicca sit, humiditatem exsiccat, nec sinit gigni vermes.”

494 A Lapide, 68, “Allegorice: haec tria munera notant Christum qui Deo Patri seipsum in cruce obtulit ut aurum, dum ex aurea charitate, scilicet ex amore hominum seipsum immolavit; ac ut myrrham amariissimae passionis dolorum et termentorum, atque ut thus summæ religionis, submissionis, venerationis et latriae. Unde eadem feria sexta qua Christus se obtulit in cruce, Magi quoque haec tria munera Christo obtulerunt.”

495 A Lapide, 68, “Rursus Christus S. Trinitati trina obtulit dona, puta suam carnem, animam et divinitatem, aeque ac Christiani eidem offerunt actus fidei, spei et charitatis.”
frankincense is prayer and devotion; myrrh is mortification.”

“Anagogically, S. Maximus thinks that by gold is signified man’s redemption, by frankincense the Christian religion, by myrrh is mortification.”

“Tropologically, Herod is the devil, the world, and the flesh, and the way to him is pleasure and greed. They, therefore, who pass from him to Christ, walk by the other way of the cross and mortification; and thus it behooves them to return to their own country – that is, the heavenly paradise.”

A Lapide now turns from the gifts of the Magi to the reasons why Christ fled into Egypt and not to Assyria or any other country. He offers an interesting interpretation about why they traveled to Egypt and not elsewhere.

“The reason why Christ fled into Egypt, rather than into Assyria, or any other country is: – I. Because it was near to Judæa, and on account of the streams of the Nile, by which it was surrounded, and the sea, by which it was washed, secure from the attacks of enemies.”

In his commentary, a Lapide makes a connection between Jesus’ flight into Egypt and the People of Israel who lived in Egypt during the time of Moses.

Because Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the children of Israel, from whom Christ was sprung, dwelt in Egypt for two hundred years, and were called forth from thence by God, by the hand of Moses. And this was a type of the calling back of Christ out of Egypt, as S. Matthew adds, *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the

496 A Lapide, 68, “Tropologice: Primo aurum est charitas, item sapientia; thus est oratio et devotio; myrrha mortificatio.”

497 A Lapide, 70, “Anagogice: S. Maximus censet auro designari redemptionem hominum; thure, Christianam religionem; myrrha, resurrectionem.”

498 A Lapide, 70-71, “Tropologice: Herodes est diabolus, mundus et caro; via ad eum est voluptas et cupiditas; qui ergo ab eo ad Christum transeunt, per aliam viam crucis et mortificatinis graduantur, et in patriam suam, puta in paradisum coelestem, revertantur oportet.”

499 A Lapide, 72, “Causa cur in Aegyptum potius quam in Assyriam aliamve regionem fugerit Christus? Prima est, quod Aegyptus Judæae sit vicina, eratque illo tempore ad Herode caeterisque Tetrarchis libera, ac ob Nili rivos quibus circundatur et ob mare quo alatur, ab hostium incursu secura.”
Lord by the prophet (Hosea xi.), saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son."\(^{500}\)

"Because, Egypt was full of idols and superstitions."\(^{501}\)

Why did the Holy Family flee to Egypt after their visit from the Magi? A Lapide uses the moral (tropological) sense to explain. Using St. John Chrysostom and the tropological (moral) sense, a Lapide concludes his exegesis in this manner:

"Tropologically, S. Chrysostom, on loc., says that God weaves, as it were, a fair and variegated crown out of the prosperous and adverse circumstances of the life of Christ and Christians. When Joseph saw his wife great with child, he was sorely troubled: but forthwith an angel came to him, and put an end to his suspicion, and drove away his fear."\(^{502}\)

Once again, a Lapide offers a liturgical context to his commentary.

"It cannot be doubtful that when the Egyptians saw the sanctity of the Blessed Virgin and Joseph, and had frequent opportunities of converse and intercourse with them, they came to know, worship, and love the true God. The Roman martyrology assigns the 7th of January to the return of Christ from Egypt. Some say that he was three years in Egypt, some seven, others eight. But nothing is certain."\(^{503}\)

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Mt 2:1-12 and Mary**

To contextualize the exegesis of Mt 2:1-12, Buby states in the following manner:

"In this study we are primarily interested in the texts referring to Mary. Without commenting them on the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and the visit of the Magi,

\(^{500}\) A Lapide, 72, "Secunda, quia Abraham, Jacob, et Joseph, adeoque omnes filii Israel, ex quibus prognatus est Christus, per ducentos annos habitant in Aegypto, indeque evocati sunt a Deo per Mosem, quae erat figura et typus revocationis Christi ex Egypto, juxta illud quod Matthaeus subdit: Ut adimpteretur quod dictum est a Domino per Prophetam dicentem: Ex Aegypto vocavi filium meum."

\(^{501}\) A Lapide, 72, "Quod Aegyptus plena erat idolis et superstitionibus."

\(^{502}\) A Lapide, 74, "Tropologicie: Chrysostomus, hie, homil. 8, docet Deum Christi et Christianorum vitam, quasi coronam ex adversis et prosperis pulchre contexere et variegare. Vidit quippe S. Joseph sponsam gravidam, inquit, incidit in conturbationem maximam; sed affuit repente Angelus suspicionem solvens et timorem expellens."

\(^{503}\) A Lapide, 75 "Porro, non dubium multis Aegyptiorum, visa sanctitate B. Virginis et Josephi, atque ex crebra cum eis conversatione et colloquio Deum verum cognovisse, coluisse et amasse. Martyrologium Romanum reditum Christi ex Aegypto consignat die 7 januarii; annum aliis tertium ab itu, aliis quintum, aliis septimum, aliis octavum, aliis alium assignant. De anno ergo hic nil statui potest."
we come to verse 11: 'And entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother
...The relationship between Jesus and Mary in all of chapter two will be that of a child
to his mother. We notice that Mary is in Joseph’s home in Bethlehem which is David’s
first town of his kingship. The scene also shows us a great difference in some of the
details about the child’s birth in Matthew and Luke.'

While a Lapide offers detailed explanations regarding the Magi’s three gifts given to Jesus
using Patristic and medieval sources, Buby contextualizes and connects the Magi with Christ and His
Mother.

“What is noteworthy is that the first Gentiles to see Jesus also see him with his
mother Mary. They offer their gifts and pay homage to him since he is the Messiah
King. Father Viviano makes this insightful remark: “The magi offer a model of sound
Mariology as worshipers of Christ in a Marian context” (NJBC, 42:12, p. 636)

In Mt 2:1-12, a Lapide understands the world of biblical geography and this becomes
evident in his commentary on the Visit of the Magi. Because of his preoccupation with geography,
a Lapide also gives great attention to the origin of the Magi, particularly whether they we actually
kings or astrologers. A Lapide offers information to the reader in the terms of the names which
tradition has bestowed upon these three from the east who visit Jesus. Using the senses of
scripture, a Lapide offers a theological explanation of the meaning of the Star.

In contrast to a Lapide, Buby understands the visit of the Magi, the gifts given to Jesus as
well as the star in a non-historical, symbolic manner.

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504 Buby, SM, 57, *Mary of Galilee, Vol. I.*

505 Buby, SM, 57
Comparison / Conclusion: Matthew

This present study analyzes three texts in the gospel of Matthew where Mary, the mother of Jesus, plays a role. The first passage studied is the genealogy of Jesus, Matthew 1: 1-17. A Lapide is very much in line with contemporary historical critical methodology when he analyzes this particular text; however, a Lapide does not use critical methodology in his commentaries. In this passage, he uses the *tropological* sense the *symbolic* and *anagogical* senses to support his work. He also quotes from Church Fathers such as Origen, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, St. Thomas Aquinas, and St. Bede the Venerable and Francis Suarez to assist the reader in seeing the Mariological significance found in these passages from Chapters one and two of Matthew's gospel. In this passage, a Lapide stresses the mystery of the Incarnation, a theme seen often in the writings of the great Baroque exegete.

Again Buby uses the historical critical method to understand this passage of Jesus’ genealogy. Buby stresses the Jewish nature of Matthew’s gospel and reminds the reader that Joseph’s role in the genealogy is a great importance to understanding this particular text. Buby stresses two different points in his analysis of the text, namely that Joseph is the husband of Mary and father of Jesus. It also mentions that Mary is the fifth and final woman mentioned in the genealogy after Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and the wife of Uriah.

The second passage studied in Matthew’s gospel is the birth of Jesus. A Lapide uses the *symbolic* and *tropological* senses to understand the meaning of the text and to accommodate the text to Mary and her virtues. A Lapide also stresses the humanity of St. Joseph. He also offers commentary in helping the reader understand the role of Joseph in the mystery of the Incarnation. A Lapide takes an apologetic approach in defending the perpetual virginity of Mary against Luther
and Calvin. A Lapide writes his commentary to support Church teachings and to defend the Catholic faith and its doctrinal truths.

Buby stresses the importance of St. Joseph’s role in the genealogy. Buby again uses the historical critical method in understanding the importance of Joseph’s role in the history of salvation. Buby explains why it is important to understand Joseph’s role in the context of Matthew’s gospel, which is heavily Jewish in nature.

The third passage in Matthew’s gospel is the visit of the Magi, Chapter 2:1-12. A Lapide concerns himself with biblical geography and a traditional understanding of the identity of the wise men. He offers a spiritual explanation for the meaning of the gifts that the wise men present to the child Jesus. He also offers a spiritual explanation for the star that appears in Chapter two of Matthew’s gospel. He uses allegory to explain the meaning of the star. He also uses Philology to understand Mary’s name as “Star of the Sea”, as he had done in previous commentary c.f. Proverbs 8:29. A Lapide also uses the anagogical and tropological senses. He also quotes from St. Bernard and St. John Chrysostom in his commentary.

Again, Buby uses the historical critical methodology. In Matthew’s gospel, “presents Jesus as the fulfillment of what the Evangelists understood to be the purpose of the Hebrew Scriptures. He uses fulfillment formulas and texts more than all the other Evangelists. His special emphasis on Jesus as messiah continues not only in the birth narrative, but also in the ministry of Jesus and in the Paschal mystery. Matthew has prepared us for the next stage of Christology and Mariology. He has spoken reverently of the mother of the Messiah. He sets the stage for Luke who will allow the virgin to speak for herself. Buby concludes with this image of Mary in Matthew’s gospel, that she is the mother of the Messiah who is also a virgin, married to Joseph. He links Matthew’s gospel
with Isaiah 7:14. Mary is identified as the virgin in Matthew Chapter 1; mother in Chapter 2. She is Jewish in the line of Jesus and David. She is likened to Abraham, who believed in God’s promise of salvation.\textsuperscript{506}
A Lapide’s commentary on Lk 1:26-38 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Ss. Lucam et Joannem

Luke 1:26-38 - The Annunciation

“26 And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth,
27 Too a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary.
28 And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed are thou among women.
29 Who have heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be.
30 And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God.
31 Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus.
32 He shall be great, and shall be call the Son of the most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever.
33 And of his kingdom there shall be no end.
34 And Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man?
35 And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.
36 And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren:
37 Because no word shall be impossible with God.
38 And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.”

In his exegesis of the Annunciation of the Lord, a Lapide begins the commentary by stating

507 A Lapide, Commentaria in Ss. Lucam et Joannem, 65, “In mense autem sexto missus est angelus Gabriel a Deo in civitatem Galilaeae cui nomen Nazareth ad virginem despontam viro cui nomen era Joseph de domo David et nomen virginis Maria et ingressus angelus ad eam dixit have gratia plena Dominus tecum benedicta tu in mulieribus quae cum vidisset turbata est in sermone eius et cogitabat qualis esset ista salutatio et ait angelus ei ne timeas Maria invenisti enim gratiam apud Deum ecce concipies in utero et peries filium et vocabis nomen eius lesum erit magnus et Filius Altissimi vocabitur et dabit illi Dominus Deus sedem David patris eius et regnabit in domo Iacob in aeternum et regni eius non erit finis dixit autem Maria ad angelum quomodo fiet istud quoniam virum non cognosco et respondens angelus dixit ei Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te et virtus Altissimi obumbrabit tibi ideoque et quod nascetur sanctum vocabitur Filius Dei et ecce Elisabeth cognata tua et ipsa concepit filium in senecta sua et hic mensis est sextus illi quae vocatur sterilis quia non erit impossibile apud Deum omne verbum dixit autem Maria ecce ancilla Domini fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum et discessit ab illa angelus.”
that John the Baptist is six months older than Jesus. A Lapide states that the annunciation by the Angel Gabriel took place on March 25th, "on which day likewise Christ, after completing the thirty-fourth year of His life, was crucified."  

In chapter one, verse 25, St. Luke presents the Angel Gabriel. A Lapide makes reference to all three Archangels: Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. In his presentation, a Lapide offers an etymology of their names along with the duties and responsibilities of each archangel.

Mary dwells in the town of Nazareth, a place where Joseph and the Virgin lived. The actual house or chamber where the Archangel Gabriel appears to Mary is a venerated place, according to a Lapide. He speaks of St. Helen building a church there. That same "temple" was transported by angels "from Nazareth to Dalmatia, and thence to Italy, to Loretto, where it now stands, and is visited by pilgrims from the whole world."  

In verse 27, a Lapide delineates the meaning of "espoused," that is a Virgin espoused to a man. The understanding of the word "espoused" is "not by betrothal only but by matrimony already contacted, although not actually consummated, see Matthew 1:18."  

A Lapide then explains the etymology of Mary's name, which is rendered "Miriam" in Hebrew, "That is, Mar Yam, myrrh, or bitterness of the sea; for the Hebrews have a tradition that the sister of Moses was called Miriam, because when she was born the bitter tyranny of Pharaoh in drowning the

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509 A Lapide, 17, "Annuntiatio igitur haec Gabrieli, et consequenter Incarnatio Verbi contigit die 25 martii, quo partier die Christus, post 34 vitae annos completos, pro salute hominum crucifixus et mortuus est."  

510 A Lapide, 18, "Eamdem post mille annos e Galilea et Nazareth ab angelis translate est in Dalmatiam, inde in Italianam, puta Laurentum, ubi etiamnum consistit, et totius orbis concursu pie visitor."  

511 A Lapide, 19, "Desponsata, non per solam desponsationem, sed est per verum matrimonium jam contractum, licet usu non consummatum. Vide dicata Matthaei, I, 18."
Hebrew children began.” Miriam is considered a type of Mary by St. Ambrose because Miriam was the leader of the women in the passage of the Red Sea just as Moses was the leader of men. Mary is the “Lady of the Sea” because she will lead men to heaven. Mary is called Lady by the Syrians “because she brought forth the Lord.” For this reason Mary was a “sea of graces, full of graces, as all rivers into the sea.” A Lapide uses etymology and typology, (i.e., Miriam, the sister of Moses, in comparison with the Blessed Virgin Mary) to introduce his interpretation of the Annunciation. The etymological work is a common thread in the exegetical style of a Lapide and his great interest in Semitic languages.

How did the angel encounter the Blessed Virgin? According to the Belgian exegete, “He (the angel glided into the chamber of the Virgin as she was praying in secret for the advent of the Messiah and the salvation of men, either through a window or through the door.” A Lapide’s description of the angelic visitation is very real and concrete.

“Eve was not the mother of life but of death, because by sin she delivered over all her children to death, but thou, O Mary, art truly called Eve because thou art the mother of life, grace and glory. Hence in Latin ‘ave’ is ‘Eva’ reversed, because Mary turned the malediction of Eve into blessings.”

512 A Lapide, 19, “Nota: Maria, vel ut Hebr. Dicitur, Miriam, idem est, moriam, id est myrrha, vel amaritudo maris. Hebraei enim tradunt sororem Mosis dictam esse Mariam, eo quod cum ipsa nascetur, coepit amara Pharaonis tyrannis mergendi infants Hebraerorum.”

513 A Lapide, 19, “Semone autem Syro Maria Domina nuncupatur: pulchre, quia Dominum genuit.”

514 A Lapide, 19, “Hac de causa Maria fuit plena gratia, idque mare gratiarum: quare sicut omnia flumina intrant in mare.”

515 A Lapide, 20, “Ingressus, id est illatus in clausam Virginis pro adventu Messiae et salute hominum secreto orantis cubiculum, per fenestram vel per ostium.”

A Lapide then interprets the greeting of Gabriel to Mary. "Hail" is Latin for "Ave." In Hebrew it is "Chava," meaning, "live." Again, derivations of names and words in different languages are often used by a Lapide to further the reader's understanding of the biblical text. A Lapide states that the word "ave" is an allusion to Eve. Mary is the "highly favored" one, also called "gratia plena" in Latin, "full of grace." The Greek translates the phrase full of grace. The Hebrew signifies "I make acceptable," "I render beloved or dear." A Lapide quotes the Fathers of the Church, such as Augustine and Jerome, as well as great scripture exegetes and theologians, such as Suarez and Maldonatus, to explain the meaning of "full of grace." Their explanations, while scriptural, are also doctrinal, because the quotations advance the argument that Mary was conceived with grace which is greater "than the highest angel possesses." In expressing Mary's fullness of grace and favor by God, a Lapide states that Mary has "doubled" and "quadrupled the grace she had received until her death in the seventy-second year of her age." Her grace and merit exceed all that men and angels taken together may possess; God loves Mary alone more than He loves the whole church. In typical Baroque style, a Lapide lavishes the Blessed Virgin Mary with adulation and praise. In his exegesis, a Lapide advances the argument that Mary was conceived without stain of original sin.

"Blessed art thou among women," a Lapide states that Mary far excels all women including Jael and Judith of the Old Testament, even though the same has been said of them. Once again, there is a Mary: Eve parallel in his writings. He quotes St. Augustine, "The mother of our race brought

517 A Lapide, 20, "Verum kecharitomene respondet Hebraeo nechena, vel muchana, quod proprie idem est quod gratificata, gratia replete, gratiosa facta."

518 A Lapide, 22, "...quam habuit supremus angelus."

519 A Lapide, 22, "Quarto instanti, pari quadruplicationis duplicatione et progressu, idem octuplicavit, et ita consequenter per singular amoris et operationis instantia gratiam acceptam continue duplicando usque ad annum aetatis 72, quo mortua est."

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punishment into the world; the Mother of our Lord brought salvation to the world. Eve was the originator of sin, Mary of merit.\footnote{A Lapide, 24, "Mater generis nostri poenam intulit mundo, genetrix Domini nostri salutem attulit mundo. Auctrix peccati Eva, auctrix meriti Maria."}

Verse 29 states “she was troubled” by the words of the angel. A Lapide refers to the Fathers of the Church to understand what “troubled” means. One interpretation is that Mary kept silent and meditated upon the angel’s greeting. Another interpretation is that she wondered why she was so blessed. (A Lapide could have used Luke 2:19, 52 to support this but did not.)

Verse 30 extols the virtues of Mary as the angel explains the purpose of his visit to her. Mary’s humility, her angelic virginity and her ardent charity are signs why God chose Mary to become the Mother of the Word Incarnate. This interpretation is a reminder of the virtues of Mary as they are extolled in Chapter Eight of \textit{Lumen Gentium}.

In verse 31, Gabriel announced that Mary shall conceive and bear a son. Within his commentary on this particular verse, a Lapide apologetically defends the faith regarding the fact that Jesus took on the real flesh of the virgin to become a man and live on earth. He refutes the great Christological heresies of Valentinus and Nestorius. In his writings a Lapide clearly uses scripture as “proof-texts” for Catholic doctrines, such as the Incarnation.

Verse 32 acknowledges Jesus as “great” both as God and as man. “He can and ought of right to be called the Son of God.”\footnote{A Lapide, 27, "Magnus tum qua Deus, tum qua homo, quia qui magnus Deus erat, magnus homo futurus est, qui Filius Altissimi meretur appellari."}

Verse 33 acknowledges the lineage of Jesus, that “He shall reign over the house of Jacob.”\footnote{A Lapide, 27, "Et regnabit in domo Jacob."}
A Lapide calls the “kingdom of David a temporal one, but in Christ a spiritual and eternal one, because He reigns over His saints here in grace, and in heaven he will reign over them in Glory.”

A Lapide’s exegesis of verse 34 concerns the virginity of Mary. He refutes the argument of Calvin which indicates that Mary “was anxious as to the manner of its fulfilment, lest the conception of a son should involve a loss of virginity and a breaking of the vow she had made concerning it.”

Did Mary profess, take a vow of virginity? A Lapide answers in the affirmative. He explains that Mary understood the prophecy of Isaiah as he foretold the birth of the Messiah: “Behold a virgin shall conceive and bring forth Emmanuel; and it may be the will of God that I should be that Virgin. If it is so, be it so.” She answers the angel “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word. And it was this word that God wished to hear, so that through the profession of her virginity he might merit to become the Son of God.”

Verse 35 states: “And the angel answered . . . the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee.” A Lapide explains the work of the Trinity in the Incarnation. He gives special attention to the theology of the Holy Spirit, who was “the framer of the humanity of Christ, because he fashioned and animated it; but He cannot be called its Father, because He did not contribute or communicate anything to it of

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523 A Lapide, 27, “Hoc regnum in Devide temporale fuit, sed in Christo spirituale et aeternum; name o Christus in fidelibus et sanctis regnat hic per gratiam, et in coelo regnabit per gloriem.”

524 A Lapide, 27, “Virgo ergo non dubitat de veritate prophetiae et promissi angelici, uti blasphemat Calvinus, qui eam incredulam fingit; sed de modo sollicita, ne hic filii conceptus et partus fieret cum aliqua virginitatis et voti sui de ea emissi jactura.”

525 A Lapide, 28, “Ecce virgo concipiet et pariet Emmanuelem; ac forte Deus vult me ese hanc virginem. Si ita est, fiat, fiat.”

526 A Lapide, 28, “Ecce ancilla Domini, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum. Et hoc audire volebat Deus, scilicet ut ipsa per professionem virginitatis meretur fieri mater Dei.”

527 A Lapide, 28, “Et respondens angelus dixit ei: Spiritus sanctus superveniet in te.”

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His own substance.”528

_Mystically, a Lapide says the Lord desired that the Messiah be born of a virgin. In his writings will often refer to a “mystical” sense, a spiritual sense, to interpret the meaning of a passage. Proclus explains: “Mary is both handmaid and mother, both virgin and heaven itself. She is the one bridge by which God comes down to man. She is the wonderful web of that economy, of whom and in whom, in a certain ineffable manner, the admirable fabric of that union was wrought.”529

Verse 38 is Mary’s great fiat: “Be it done unto me.”530 A Lapide states that Mary consented to the message of the angel and that she earnestly prayed for the Incarnation of Christ.

A Lapide will state in his commentaries some traditions which have been passed on which may or may not be true. At the end of his commentary of the Annunciation, he states that the Angel did not depart immediately, “but stayed with her for nine hours, being overcome with astonishment at the Incarnation of the Word in her, and that he adored the Word incarnate.”531

In all this, there is a piety of a Lapide which resonates throughout his commentaries. His writings reflect the baroque style which is devotional and imaginative.

In summarizing a Lapide’s commentary on the Annunciation the following points are noteworthy:

1. The etymology of Mary’s name;

528 A Lapide, 29, “Spiritus Sanctus fuit opifex humanitatis Christi, quia eam efformavit, organizavit, dispositit et animavit; at ejus pater dici nequit, quia ex sua substantia nihil ei contulit aut communicavit.”

529 A Lapide, 30, “Quocirca Proclus: Maria, inquit, est spiritalis Adami paradisus, Maria unitarum inter se naturarum officina, Maria salutaris reconcilitationis panegyris, Maria thalamus, in quo Verbum humanam carnem sibi despensavit, Maria animatus naturae rubus, quem divini partus ignis non combussit.”

530 A Lapide, 35, “Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.”

531 A Lapide, 35, “Porro, B. Virgo revelavit nonnullis angelum Gabrielem non statim discerisset, sed secum mansisse per novem horas, obstupefactum Verbi in Virgine incarnatione, ac Verbum incarnatum adorasse.”

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2. The meaning of the angel’s greeting;
3. The encounter of Mary and the Angel in the “house” or chamber of the Virgin;
4. The meaning of “highly favored” vs. “full of grace”;
5. Mary - Eve parallelism;
6. Mary’s virginity; and
7. Mary’s fiat.

Drawing upon the above summary of the Annunciation scene in the exegetical work of a Lapide, the reader is now presented with the exegesis of Fr. Bertrand Buby, SM with his interpretation to some of these same verses and given some different meaning to the inspired text as a whole.

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary of Lk 1:26-38 and Mary**

In *Mary of Galilee, Vol. I*. Buby states that Luke makes use of a literary form called “Annunciation.” There are other Annunciation scenes in the Bible such as those to Jeremiah, Isaiah, and John the Baptist. The pattern is the following:

1. It begins with the appearance of an angel.
2. There is fear or protestation of the visionary confronted by the supernatural process.
3. A divine message is given.
4. The visionary is addressed by name, a qualifying phrase is used.
5. The visionary is urged not to be afraid.
6. A woman is with child or about to be with [child].
7. She will give birth to a (male) child.
8. The name by which the child will be called will be Emmanuel.
9. An etymology interpreting the name is given.
10. Future accomplishment of the child is announced.
11. An objection by the visionary is give as to how this can be or there is a request for a sign.
12. The giving of a sign is offered to reassure the visionary. 532

Luke knits together the Annunciation and the Visitation. Both Zechariah and Elizabeth are involved in what precedes and follows the Annunciation of Mary.

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532 Bertrand Buby, SM, 68, *Mary of Galilee, Vol I.*
Luke centers exclusively on Mary rather than Joseph who is from the House of David. We are not told she is from the House of David. She is probably from the priestly line of Aaron, of levitical lineage like her cousins Zechariah and Elizabeth.

Even though this is not a “proof text” for the Immaculate Conception, it is a text traditionally used to understand Mary’s holiness. Exegesis does not have it as its task to demonstrate or prove dogma. We must keep in mind how dogma has developed over the centuries because of the tradition based on certain texts in the Scripture.\textsuperscript{533}

\textsuperscript{533}Buby, SM, 68-75
A Lapide’s commentary on Lk 1:39-45 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Ss. Lucam et Joannem

Luke 1:39-45 - The Visitation of Mary to her cousin, Elizabeth

“39 And Mary rising up in those days, went into the hill country with haste into a city of Judah.
40 And she entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elizabeth.
41 And it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:
42 And she cried out with a loud voice, and said: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.
43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?
44 For behold as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy.
45 And blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord.”

In his commentary on the Visitation, the first question a Lapide poses is, “Why did Mary visit her cousin Elizabeth?” There are four reasons given. The first indicates that Mary might make an announcement regarding the conception of Jesus. The second reason states that her visit would cleanse John the Baptist from original sin and fill his mother Elizabeth with the grace of the Holy Spirit. The third reason is a human one, which is Mary’s desire to offer congratulations to her cousin Elizabeth as she is expecting a child in her old age. The fourth reason is to demonstrate Mary’s humility and charity toward her cousin Elizabeth, “though she was now made Mother of God and Mistress of the world.”

A Lapide also points out that a congregation of religious women founded by St. Francis

534 A Lapide, Commentaria in Ss. Lucam et Joannem 65-66 “Exsurgens autem Maria in diebus illis abiit in montana cum festinatione in civitatem luda et intravit in domum Zacchariae et salutavit Elisabeth et factum est ut audivit salutationem Mariae Elisabeth exultavit infans in utero eius et repleta est Spiritu Sancto Elisabeth et exclamavit voce magna et dixit benedicta tu inter mulieres et benedictus fructus ventris tui et unde hoc mihi ut veniat mater Domini mei ad me ecce enim ut facta est vox salvationis tuae in auribus meis exultavit in gaudio infans in utero meo et beata quae credidit quoniam perficientur ea quae dicta sunt ei a Domino.”

535 A Lapide, 36
de Sales and recognized for their work with the sick are known as the Visitation Sisters.

“Visitation of the Blessed Virgin . . . S. Francis of Sales, Bishop of Geneva, has instituted a congregation of religious women, who are well known throughout France, for ministering to the sick.”

A Lapide mentions this type of information in his commentaries because he is teaching seminarians, future ministers, in his classes at the Roman College.

A Lapide continues to offer exegetical commentary as he interprets Mary’s visit “to the hill country.” He uses the *tropological* sense to state that, “the soul filled with God, as the soul of the Blessed Virgin was, ascends the mountain heights.”

Mary travels to the hill country to a city of Judah which is not named. Some Fathers of the Church (St. Albert the Great and St. Bonaventure) mention that she is going to Jerusalem. However, Jerusalem is not part of the tribe of Judah, but of Benjamin. So, others, like Toletus and Baronius, suppose it is the city of Hebron which is in Judah.

As Mary arrives in the house of Zachariah, she is greeted by her cousin. Zachariah does not greet Mary because he is deaf and unable to speak. Verse 41 states, “and it came to pass when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary . . .,” the baby (John) “was the first to perceive the spirit and effect of her salutation . . . Theophylact says, ‘The voice of the Virgin was the voice of God incarnate

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536 A Lapide, 36, “Quocirca exemplo et titulo Visitationis B. Virginis, multae Congregationes ad visitandos pauperes, hospites, infirmos, incarceratos, etc. institutae sunt, ac nuper hoc titulo Congregationem Religiosarum insignium per totam Galliam, quae aegris serviant, instituit D. Franciscus Salesius, episcopus Genevensis.”

537 A Lapide, 36, “Tropologice: anima Deo plena, uti erat anima B. Virginis, in montana conscendit, id est ad ardua virtutum enititur.”

538 A Lapide, 36, “Nota, cum S. Ambrosio, salutationem et vocem Mariae prior audivit Elisabeth, sed vim, spiritum et efficaciam salutationis prior senses Joannes, utpote matre sua dignior et nobilior; Et Theophylactus, ‘Vox Virginis, ait. vox erat incarnati in illa Dei.’”

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"And it came to pass when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, etc. Notice with S. Ambrose, that Elizabeth was the first to hear the salutation of Mary, but John was the first to perceive the spirit and effect of her salutation;"

"Theophylact says, "The voice of the Virgin was the voice of God incarnate in her."

"Thirdly, because in like manner the Blessed Virgin rejoiced when she sang the Magnificat, therefore also John rejoiced, who was the chief end and object of the visitation of the Blessed Virgin and of all these wonders."

"John at this time received the gift of prophecy, as the Fathers already quoted show. He likewise received the extraordinary gifts which befitted the future forerunner of Christ."

"The fountain of all the blessings and graces bestowed upon the Blessed Virgin by God was to be the Mother of God; for God adorned His Mother with every grace in order that she might be worthy to become the Mother of God, and whom would such a Son bless rather than His Mother."

The next question a Lapide poses in his exegesis is whether John’s leaping for joy was a natural or rational movement.

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539 A Lapide, 38, "Et factum est ut audivit salutationem Mariae Elisabeth, exultavit infans in utero ejus, et replete est Spiritu Sancto Elisabeth. Et Theophylactus: Vox Virginis, ait, vox erat incarnati in illa Dei."

540 A Lapide, 38, "Et factum est ut audivit.... Nota, cum S. Ambrosio, salutationem et vocem Mariae prior audivit Elisabeth, sed vim, spiritum et efficaciam salutationis prior sensit Joannes."

541 A Lapide, 38, "Et Theophylactus: vox virginis, ait, vox erat incarnati in illa Dei."

542 A Lapide, 38, "Tertio, quia simili modo, vers. 47, exultavit B. Virgo canens Magnificat, uitque pollens usu rationis et rationali gaudio; ergo et Joannes, qui primus erat finis et scopus visitationis B. Virginis et horum omnium mirabilium."

543 A Lapide, 38, "Joannes tum accepit donum prophetae de Christo, ut Patres jam citati docent. Accepit gratiam non qualem qualem, sed eximiam, quae praecursorem Christi mox futurum decebat, gratiam, inquam, cum omnibus virtutibus infusis."

544 A Lapide, 39-40, "Fons enim omnium benedictionum et gratiarum B. Virginis collatarum a Deo, est maternitas Dei, quod scilicet ipsa Deum conceperit et in se incarnarit; Deus enim matrem suam omni gratia adornavit ad hoc, ut dignum se fieret habitaculum, imo ut digna esset quae fieret mater Dei. Cui enim magis quam matri benedicat filius, effilius talis, qui simul sit Deus et homo?"
"The babe leaped. Symbolically, the leaping of John prefigured his own martyrdom; for by his dancing he represented the dancing of the daughter of Herodias, by which having pleased Herod, she asked and obtained of him the head of John."\(^{545}\)

"Elizabeth, therefore, knew by the Holy Spirit that the Blessed Virgin had believed the angel when he announced the conception and nativity of Christ."\(^{546}\)

A Lapide uses a quote from Cardinal Hugo to extol the virtues of Mary, stressing her sanctity, her humility, her modesty and her obedience to the Lord.

"Cardinal Hugo mentions twelve great things belonging to the Virgin:—1. Sanctification in the womb of her mother. 2. The salutation of the angel. 3. The fulness of grace. 4. The conception of her Son. 5. Fruitful virginity. 6. Virgin fruitfulness. 7. Her honoured humility. 8. Her ready obedience. 9. The devotion of her faith. 10. Her prudent modesty. 11. Her modest prudence. 12. The dominion over heaven."\(^{547}\)

"Lastly, God incarnate is called holy because He assumed flesh and blood for the purpose of offering it to God, both in life, and on the cross, and in His death for the salvation of men."\(^{548}\)

While Calvin would argue that the movement of John in Elizabeth's womb was a natural one, others would disagree, such as Origen, St. Cyril and St. Ambrose. "All these maintain that this leaping of John was not only supernatural, but showed an active use of reason, and proceeded from true

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\(^{545}\) A Lapide, 41, "Symbolice: Joannes exiliens in utero, fuit quasi praesultor sui martyrii; suo enim saltu adumbravit saltum filiae Herodiadis, quae cum idcirco placuisset Herodi, petit ab eo caput Joannis et impetravit."

\(^{546}\) A Lapide, 38, "Cognovit ergo Elisabeth per Spiritum Sanctum, B. Virginem credidisse angelo nuntianti Christi conceptionem et nativitatem."

\(^{547}\) A Lapide, 49-50, "Audi et Hugonem Cardinalem duodecim magnalia Virginis enarrantem: Primum, inquit, fuit in utero matris sanctificatio; secundum, angelii salutatio; tertium, gratiae plenitudo; quartum, filii conceptio; quintum, foecunda virginitas; sextum, virginalis foecunditas; septimum, honorata humilatas; octavum, obedientiae promptitudo; nonum, fidei devotio; decimum est prudens verecundia; undecimum, verecunda prudentia; duodecimum, dominum coeli."

\(^{548}\) A Lapide, 51, "Denique Deus incarnatus dicitur sanctus, quia assumpsit carmem et sanguinem immolandum Deo, tum in vita, tum in cruce et morte pro salute hominum."
joyfulness of mind.”

A second reason given for John’s leap for joy is this: “from the circumstance John communicated his joy to his mother.”

A third reason is that the Blessed Mother sang her Magnificat (Lk 1:46-55) as she greeted her cousin Elizabeth. This caused great joy in John “who was the chief end and object of the visitation of the Blessed Virgin and of all these wonders.”

A Lapide then addresses the question of whether John the Baptist was free from all sin, as Mary was. A Lapide’s answer to this query is: “this privilege seems to have been peculiar to the Blessed Virgin, to whom John was inferior. He had, therefore, sinful desire, and did commit venial sin, falling into it unawares, but perhaps, never deliberately... but John had original sin, therefore he must have committed venial sin.”

The commentary on verse 41 continues as a Lapide uses the “moral” sense to understand this verse. “Learn morally of what advantage the salutation and prayers of the Saints are, and especially of the Blessed Virgin, who by one word of Salutation filled both John and Elizabeth with the Holy Spirit... For the saints, and above all the Blessed Virgin, are full of the fiery spirit of love.”

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549 A Lapide, 38, “Hi omnes igitur asserunt hunc saltum Joannis non tantum fuisse supernaturalem, sed et usu rationis pollentem, ac ex vero animi gaudio procedentem.”

550 A Lapide, 38, “Secundo, idem patet ex eo quod Joannes hoc suum gaudium communicavit et affavit matri sua.”

551 A Lapide, 39, “Ergo et Joannes, qui primus erat finis et scopus visitationis B. Virginis et horum omnium mirabilium.”


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In verse 42, a Lapide comments on Elizabeth’s response to the news of Jesus’ conception.

“And she spoke out with a loud voice and said: ‘Blessed art thou among women.’ These are the words of Elizabeth spoken to her cousin Mary regarding the conception of Jesus. But how did Elizabeth know that Mary was expecting? A Lapide answers in this manner: ‘Elizabeth therefore, by the inspiration of the Spirit, knew that Mary had already conceived, and that the Son of God was incarnate in her.’”

In verse 43, a Lapide expounds on Christological principles maintained and supported in traditional Catholic doctrine, particularly the hypostatic union (two natures of Jesus) and Mary as Theotokos, or God-bearer.

“And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?” Elizabeth acknowledges the greatness of the one whom Mary bears in her womb. Elizabeth knows that this child is the promised one of Israel. In his commentary on this verse, a Lapide outlines three Christological points: “That the humanity of Christ was already in Christ endowed with life and united to the Word or Son of God. 2.) That the Blessed Virgin is rightly called Theotokos the Mother of God, and not only Christotokos, Mother of Christ, as Nestorius maintained. 3.) That in Christ there are two natures, the human, for this alone could He take of His Virgin Mother; and the Divine, which the Father alone communicated to Him; but one person, not human, but Divine.”

A Lapide uses the commentary on this verse to stress the teaching of the Church regarding the human and divine natures of Jesus. A Lapide is clear in presenting Christological materials from the New Testament.

In verse 44, a Lapide uses the spiritual sense to explain why John the Baptist leaped in his mother’s womb. A Lapide uses the spiritual sense to understand this verse. “Symbolically, the leaping


555 A Lapide, 40, “Et unde hoc mihi, ut veniat Mater Domini mei ad me? Primo, liquet jam Christi humanitatem in Christo fuisse animatam et unitam Verbo, sive Dei Filio. Secundo, B. Virginem recte vocari theotokos, id est Deiparam, non tantum Christokos, id est Christiparam, uti volebat Nestorius. Tertio, in Christo esse duas naturas, scilicet humanam; hanc enim solam ei dare potuit virgo mater; et divinam, quam ei solus communicavit Pater; sed unicam personam, scilicet non humanam, sed divinam.”
of John prefigured his own martyrdom; for by his dancing he represented the dancing of the daughter of Herodias, by which having pleased Herod, she asked and obtained of him the head of John."

Verse 45 acknowledges the faith of Elizabeth as she understands how God has blessed her with the precursor of the Messiah in bearing John the Baptist, but that she has now experienced the joy that the Messiah will bring and the hope that will pour forth from her cousin Mary's womb. "Elizabeth, therefore, knew by the Holy Spirit, that the Blessed Virgin had believed the angel when he announced the conception and nativity of Christ." The commentary on the Visitation concludes with a surprising remark by a Lapide, "Elizabeth silently censures the unbelief of her own husband." A Lapide understood Zachariah's doubt regarding the birth of his own son, John, which is why Zachariah is mute, because he did not believe God's word. However, a Lapide used Elizabeth's strong faith as a comparison to her husband's lack of belief, demonstrating Elizabeth's favor with the Lord.

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Lk 1:39-45 and Mary**

In the commentaries on the Visitation since Vatican II, there is a strong emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit especially in the lives of Mary and Elizabeth, which is a prevalent theme in Luke's gospel. Their respective pregnancies bring these two cousins together because their children are destined for greatness in the Lord. Buby states: "This pericope is commonly called the Visitation for it contains the meeting of two believing women who, by confiding in the Word of God, now share the grace of being pregnant with two children who will have special missions in God's saving plan. The

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556 A Lapide, 41, "Symbolice: Joannes exiliens in utero, fuit quasi praesultor sui martyrii; suo enim saltu adumbravit saltum filiae Herodiadis, quae cum idcirco placisset Herodi, petit ab eo caput Joannis et impetravit."

557 A Lapide, 38, "Cognovit ergo Elisabeth per Spiritum Sanctum, B. Virginem credidisse angelo nuntiante Christi conceptionem et nativitatem."

558 A Lapide, 41, "Tacite perstringit Elisabeth Zachariae mariti sui incredulitatem de nascituro Joanne."
eagerness or haste of Mary and the loud cry of Elizabeth praising Mary shows the exuberant joy of these expecting mothers. Luke fashions this narrative in the pattern of the surprise of Sarah in her giving birth to Isaac and in the stirring of Jacob and Esau within the womb of Rebekah (Gn 25:22ff).\textsuperscript{559}

A Lapide explains “the leap of John” as a supernatural moment, using the Fathers of the Church as support for his argument. Buby explains the “leap” as reflective of the dance of David before the Ark, using parallelism to interpret the true meaning of the text.

Bertrand Buby offers an explanation of the encounter between two pregnant women like Mary and Elizabeth and compares them to Old Testament women like Sarah and Rebekah.

“This pericope is commonly called the Visitation for it contains the meeting of two believing women who, by confiding in the word of God, now share the grace of being pregnant with two children who will have special missions in God’s saving plan. The eagerness or haste of Mary and the loud cry of Elizabeth praising Mary shows the exuberant joy of these expectant mothers. Luke fashions this narrative in the pattern of the surprise of Sarah in her giving birth to Isaac and in the stirring of Jacob and Esau within the womb of Rebekah (Gn 25:22ff.) And David’s dance before the Ark (2 S 6:16) but also of the messianic leap of joy among the poor (Is 35:6; Ps 114:6; Mi 3:20)” (\textit{JBC} 44:35, P. 123).\textsuperscript{560}

Buby cites a parallel between the trio of Jesus, Mary and Joseph and the family of John the Baptist, Elizabeth and Zechariah, and introduces the two Canticles – Mary’s \textit{Magnificat} and Zechariah’s \textit{Benedictus}.

“The passage also serves as a link to what has preceded both in the canticle of Zechariah and what follows in the Magnificat of Mary. It also unites the triad of Elizabeth, Zechariah, and John the Baptist with that of Mary, Joseph and Jesus. The fulfillment of the first covenant flows into the second covenant at the advent of the Messiah.”

\textsuperscript{559} Buby, 76, \textit{Mary of Galilee}, Vol. I

\textsuperscript{560} Buby, SM, 76
A Lapide’s Commentary on Luke 1:46 - 55 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Ss. Lucam et Joannem

Luke 1:46-55 - Magnificat

"46 And Mary said: My soul doth magnify the Lord.
47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
48 Because he hath regarded the humility of his handmaid; for behold from henceforth all
generations shall call me blessed.
49 Because he that is mighty, hath done great things to me; and holy is his name.
50 And his mercy is from generation unto generations, to them that fear him.
51 He hath shewed might in his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their
heart.
52 He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble.
53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.
45 He hath received Israel his servant, being mindful of his mercy:
55 He hath received Israel his servant, being mindful of his mercy:
55 As he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed for ever."

In his commentary on Mary’s Magnificat, a Lapide compares the Blessed Virgin with those
women in the Old Testament who have proclaimed God’s greatness in song. He then demonstrates
the fact that this sung praise continues in the Church’s liturgical life.

"With this, therefore, begins the song of the Blessed Virgin, which of all the
songs of Holy Scripture, of Moses, Deborah, etc., is the most excellent, as being the
most full of the Divine Spirit and exultation. The Church, accordingly, uses it daily in
the Office of Vespers, in order that she may by it, in the highest manner, celebrate the
glories and praises of God, and render the highest thanks to Him for the Incarnation of
the Word and His other gifts, and that she may drink in the same affections of devotion,
piety, love, and exultation that in uttering it the Blessed Virgin drank in from
heaven."

561 A Lapide, Commentaria in Ss. Lucam et Joannem, 65-66, “Eet ait Maria magnificat anima mea
Dominum et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo quia respetit humilitatem ancillae suae ecce enim ex hoc
beatam me dicent omnes generationes quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est et sanctum nomen eius et misericordia
eius in progenies et progenies iumentibus eum fecit potentiam in brachio suo dispersit superbos mente cordis sui
deposuit potentem die sedet et exaltavit humiles escentes implevit bonis et divites dimisit inanes suscepit Israhel
puerum suum memorari misericordiae sicut locutus est ad patres nostros Abraham et semini eius in saecula.”

562 A Lapide, 42, “Hic ergo incipit Canticum B. Virginis, omnium sacrae Scripturae canticorum, scilicet
Mosis, Deborae, Annae, Ezechiae, trium puerorum, etc. praestantissimum, utpote divino Spiritu et exultatione
plenissimum, ut a Verbo in utero Virginis jam concepto et exultante compositum dictatumque videatur, quod proinde
Ecclesia quotidie in officio Vespvararum usurpat, et solemni ritu decantat, ut eodem Deum summe celebret et

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A Lapide divides the Magnificat in three parts as he analyzes the text.

"There are three parts in this song. In the first (verse 46-50), the Blessed Virgin praises God for the peculiar blessings bestowed upon herself by God, especially for the conception of the Word. In the second (verse 50-54), she praised Him for the common blessings bestowed upon His whole people before the coming of Christ. In the third (verse 54 to the end), she returns to this greatest blessing of the Incarnation of the Word which had been promised to the fathers and made known to herself."

Using St. Augustine, Toletus, and the spiritual sense, a Lapide explains the meaning of the Magnificat as a parallel to the goodness and mercy that God has shown in the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary, extolling her many virtues.

"Symbolically, Toletus says, The Blessed Virgin rightly says my soul—I. Because she alone had her soul in her own power, and was mistress over it, because she possessed it in patience, having dominion over all it affections and passions. But we do not possess our souls, because we are ourselves possessed by anger, pride, concupiscence or some other like passion."

"The Blessed Virgin, admiring the divine power, holiness, justice benignity of the Spirit of God incarnate in her, exults and leaps and sings for joy."

A Lapide makes a comparison of Anna and Mary as both having conceived children through divine intervention.

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563 A Lapide, 43, “Porro, tres cantici hujus sunt partes: Prima, ab hoc vers. 46 usque ad vers. 50, virgo laudat Deum ex beneficiis propriis, sibique uni a Deo praestitis, praesertim conceptionis Verbi. Secunda, a vers. 50 usque ad 54, laudat Deum ob beneficia communia toti populo ante Christi adventum praestitia, maxime autem alludit ad victorias contra Pharaonem et Chananæos Israelis collatas. Tertia, a vers. 54 usque ad finem cantici, reedit ad beneficium hoc maximum incarnationis Verbi patribus promissum sibique exhibitum.”

564 A Lapide, 43, “Symbolice, Toletus: Recte, inquit, B. Virgo, ait: anima mea, primo, quia ipsa sola habebat animam suam in protestate sua, ejusque erat hera et domina, quia illum possidebat per patientiam, et affectum passionumque omnium dominium; at nost non possidemus animam nostram, quia possidemur ab ira, superiba, concupiscientia, similibus passione.”

565 A Lapide, 43-44, “B. Virgo ergo admirans spiritu, Dei in se incarnati divinam potestatem, sanctitatem, justitiam, benignitatem, beneficentiam, exultat, et praehudio gestit et jubilat.”
“for as Anna, who was barren, rejoiced in conceiving Samuel by the miraculous help of God, so the Blessed Virgin rejoiced in conceiving Emmanuel (of whom Samuel was a type) by the power of the Holy Spirit.” 566

In typical baroque style, a Lapide uses St. Augustine to extol Mary’s virtues.

“S. Augustine, writing on the Magnificat, shows that the Virgin here does two things: first, she praises the goodness and mercy of God, as in the preceding verse she had praised His power and majesty; secondly, she pours forth the expression of the sweetness and delight which she had received in the conception of her Son; and in this he says that the Mother of God imitated the angels, who in heaven perform these two things, vis., meditate on the incomprehensible majesty of God, and enjoy His ineffable goodness and sweetness; and they so admire them as to rejoice in and love them.” 567

In verse 48, a Lapide uses the writings of Bernard and Augustine to recognize Mary’s virtuous life.

“S. Bernard says, “God regards the earth and causes it to tremble; He regards Mary and infuses grace. He hath regarded, she says, the lowliness of His handmaiden, for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.” 568

“As, therefore, the Blessed Virgin here recognizes her election to be the Mother of God which was a far greater thing), so likewise she recognizes that she was fittingly adorned for so great a dignity by her humility, virginity, and other virtues which had been imparted to her by God.” 569

A Lapide uses a famous quotation by St. Augustine regarding the Blessed Mother.

“Listen to S. Augustine . . . The humility of Mary was made the heavenly ladder

566 A Lapide, 44, “Sicut enim exultavit Anna sterilis, Dei ope et miraculo concipiens Samulem; sic exultavit B. Virgo ex Spiritu Sancto concipiens emmanuelem: hujus enim typus fuit Samuel.”

567 A Lapide, 44, “Porro, S. Augustinus scribens super Magnificat, Virginem duo hic facere docet: primo, Dei bonitatem et misericordiam praedicare, sicut in praeced. Vers. ejus potentiam et majestatem; secundo, suavitatem et dulcedinem quam ipsa in conceptione sui filii hauerat, foras effundere; atque in hac re dicit Deiparam imitatae suavitatem, qui haec duo in coelis praestant, nimium Dei majestatem incomprehensibilem meditantur, et ejus ineffabili bonitate atque dulcedine perfruuntur; et sic admirantur, ut diligant et exultent.”

568 A Lapide, 46, “S. Bernardus, Deus inquit, respicit terram, et facit eam tremere; e regione respicit Mariam, et infundit gratiam. Respexit, ait, humilitatem ancilae suae: ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generations.”

569 A Lapide, 47, “Sicut ergo B. Virgo hic agnoscit se electam in Dei matrem, quod longe majus erat; ita pariter agnoscit se per humilitatem, virginitetem caeteraque virtutes sibi a Deo inditas, ad tantam dignitatem fuisse dispositam et congrue ornatam.”

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by which God came down to earth.”

In verse 48 of a Lapide’s commentary, he offers the Church’s traditional explanation of hyperdulia in veneration of Mary and dulia in honor of the canonized Saints of the Church.

“The truth of this prophecy of the Blessed Virgin is clear from the event; for we have seen her worshiped and honoured by all nations and generations with shrines, churches, festivals, congregations, societies of religious, vows, supplications, litanies in such numbers as the rest of the Saints joined together do not obtain; yea, to the Blessed Virgin alone is paid the worship of hyperdulia, as to God is paid the worship of latria, while to the rest of the Saints is paid the worship of dulia. Thy honour, thy praise and glory, O Blessed Virgin, will live as long as the angels shall live, as long as men shall live, as long as Christ shall live, as long as God shall be God, for ever and ever.”

Once again, a Lapide deals with questions of a historical nature as he discusses both sides of the question: did Mary remain with Elizabeth until John the Baptist’s birth? A Lapide offers answers in both the affirmative and the negative.

“There is a question here whether the Blessed Virgin remained until the nativity of John. Theophylact, Euthymius, Jansenius maintain that she did not.”

A Lapide quotes from Origen and Augustine and lists several reasons why Mary did remain

570 A Lapide, 47, “Audi S. Augustinum, Facta est Mariae humilitas scala coelestis, per quam Deus descendit ad terras!”

571 A Lapide, 49, “Prophetat hic virgo se ab omnibus saeculis beatam praedicandam, celebrandam et invocandam. Prophetiae hujus veritas ex eventu clara est. Videmus enim B. Virginem ab omnibus nationibus et saeculis tot sacellis, templis, festis, congregationibus, Religionibus, votis, supplicationibus, litanis, etc. coli et celebrari, quod caeteri Sancti simul juncti non obtinrent; imo soli B. Virgini tribui cultum hyperduliae, sicut Deo cultum latriae; caeteris vero Sanctis cultum duliae. Te ergo, O Deipara Virgo, beatam praedicabunt omnes generationes. Tuam sanctitatem, tuam virginitatem, tuam humilitatem, tuam maternitatem celebrabunt, celebrabunt omnes omnium temporum Christiani: vivat tuum decus, tua laus, tua gloria, quamdiu vivent angelii, quamdiu vivent homines, quamdiu vivet Christus, quamdiu Deus erit Deus, in omnia saeculorum saecula.”

572 A Lapide, 82, “In Bethlehem, - quae ultra Jerusalem sita erat, ab eaque distabat itinere duarum horarum: quare a Nazareth in Bethlehem iter erat tridui et amplius, quod B. Virgo praegnans et partui proxima, confecit pede, ut multi pie sentient. Ascendit, ait S. Bernardus, serm. in illud Apocal. Signum magnum apparuit in coelo, in Bethlehem imminente jam partu, portans pretiosissimum illud depositum, portans onus leve, portans a quo portabanunt. Et paulo post: Sola sine corruptione concepit, sine gravamine tulit, sine dolore filium parturivit.”

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with Elizabeth after the birth of John the Baptist. He offers three reasons that would take into consideration Elizabeth’s need for assistance with her new born child, John the Baptist.

“The contrary opinion is equally, and even more, probable; and is maintained by Origen, S. Ambrose, &c - I. because it would have been discourteous to remain up to the birth and leave immediately before it; 2. because at the time of the birth Elizabeth most needed the presence, help, and consolation of the Virgin; 3. because the Virgin remained three months for this very purpose, that she might behold, embrace, and bless John, the wonder of the world, and the forerunner of Christ, and on the other hand that John when born might behold and venerate the mother of the Lord, and Christ the Lord in her. Whence Bede says, “Mary remained until, Elizabeth’s full time having come, she saw the nativity of the forerunner of her Lord, on account of whom chiefly she had come.”

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Lk 1:46-55

In his commentary on the Magnificat, Buby points out the similarity of this poetic piece to the psalms, which indeed are also poetry.

“Using the genre of a hymn of praise we discover that the canticle of Mary is similar in structure to Psalms 33, 47, 48, 113, 117, 135, and 136. These psalms contain (1) an introductory invitation to praise God, (2) then a body giving the reason why God should be praised, and (3) a conclusion which repeats the elements of the body.”

Buby further explicates by giving detailed information on the literary methodology of the Magnificat, which is Semitic in style.

“The Magnificat together with the Benedictus is more Semitic in style than the rest of the narrative in Luke’s Infancy Narrative. It seems to spring from a primitive Jewish-Christian community that is overwhelmed by the salvation of God coming to Israel in a new way. The anawim or the lowly ones who believed and understood this salvation were probably those who used this hymn originally. They would identify

573 A Lapide, 58, “Contrarium tamne aeque est probabile, imo probabilius, idque plures sentiunt, scilicet Origenees, S. Ambrosius, Beda, Maldonatus, Toeltus, Francisus Lucas. Probatur primo, quia incivile fuis et usque ad partum manere, et immediate ante partum discedere; secundo, quia in partu maxime Virginis praesentia, ope et consolatione egeat Elisabetha; tertiio, quia Virgo ad hoc mansit per tres menses, ut Joannem orbis miraculum et Christi sui praercursorem cerneret, ampaecteretur et benediceret, ac vicissim ut Joannês jam natus matrem Domini, et in ea Christum Dominum cerneret, salutaret et veneraretur. Unde Beda: Tamdiu, ait, mansit Maria, donec Elisabeth partus tempore completo, praercursoris Domini sui, propter quem maxime venerat, nativitatem videret.”

574 B. Buby, SM,180, Mary of Galilee, Vol. I.
themselves as totally dependent of God; the "remnant of Israel" that now is experiencing the benefits of salvation from a merciful, loving God. R. E. Brown says, "it is not impossible that, in the last third of the century when he was composing Luke-Acts, Luke came upon these canticles in a Greek-speaking Jewish Christian community in an area influenced by Jerusalem Christianity" (Birth of the Messiah, 355).575

A Lapide and Buby both seem to favor an explanation that Mary’s song is derived from Old Testament sources, such as the Song of Hannah in 1 Samuel. In contemporary biblical commentaries, there is a link between the Blessed Virgin Mary and the other great Old Testament women such as Hannah, Judith, Deborah, Rebekah and Miriam.

575Buby, SM, 80
A Lapide’s commentary on Luke and Mary
presented in A Lapide Commentaria in Ss. Lucam et Joannem

Luke 2:1-7 - The Birth of Christ

“And it came to pass, that in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that the whole world should be enrolled.
2 This enrolling was first made by Cyrinus, the governor of Syria.
3 And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city.
4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: because he was of the house and family of David,
5 To be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child.
6 And it came to pass, that when they were there, her days were accomplished, that she should be delivered.
7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was not room for them in the inn.”

A Lapide situates the birth of Christ in the town of Bethlehem. He is concerned with biblical geography as well as the writings of St. Bernard, which will offer a historical and a spiritual explanation regarding Jesus’ birth in the small town of Judea.

“To Bethlehem, which was beyond Jerusalem, and two hours journey from it; so that from Nazareth to Bethlehem was a journey of three days or more, and the Blessed Virgin, though near her delivery, accomplished it, as many piously suppose, on foot. S. Bernard, in his sermon on the words “A great sign appeared in heaven” of the Apocalypse, says, “She went up to Bethlehem, her delivery being now at hand, bearing that most precious trust, bearing a light burden, bearing Him by whom she was borne … She alone conceived without defilement, carried without trouble, and brought forth her Son without pain.”

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576 A Lapide, Commentaria in SS Lucam et Joannem, 67, “factum est autem in diebus illis exiit edictum a Caesare Augusto ut describeretur universus orbis haec descriptio prima facta est praeside Syriae Cyrino et ibant omnes ut profiterentur singuli in suam civitatem ascendit autem et Ioseph a Galilaea de civitate Nazareth in Iudaeam civitatem David quae vocatur Bethlehem eo quod esset de domo et familia David ut profiteretur cum Maria despnsata sibi uxore praeagnate factum est autem cum essent ibi impleti sunt dies ut pareret et peperit filium suum primogenitum et pannis eum involvit et reclinavit eum in praesepio quia non erat eis locus in diversorio”

577 A Lapide, 82, “In Bethlehem, - quae ultra Jerusalem sita erat, ab eaque distintat itinere duarum horarum: quare a Nazareth in Bethlehem iter erat tridui et amplius, quod B. Virgo praegnans et partui proxima, confecit pede, ut multi pie sentiunt. Ascendit, ait S. Bernardus, serm. in illud Apocal. Signum magnum apparuit in coelo, in Bethlehem imminente jam partu, portans pretiosissimum illud depositum, portans onus leve, portans a quo portabantr. Et paulo post: Sola sine corruptione concepit, sine gravamine tulit, sine dolore filium parturivit.”

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A Lapide spiritualizes the mother and child relationship between Jesus and Mary.

"Moreover the Blessed Virgin was more the parent of Christ than other mothers are of their children; for from her Christ received all His substance, and other ones receive it not only from their mother and but also from their father. Hence the love between Christ His mother was far greater than that between other mothers and their offspring, for the love which is divided between mother and father was, in the case of the Virgin united and kept together, since she was to Him in place of both mother and father." 578

A Lapide, for instance, offers the Church’s traditional explanation of Mary’s giving birth, which states that she did not suffer birth pangs.

"... the Blessed Virgin, as she conceived without concupiscence, so also brought forth without pain, or any of the concomitants of ordinary childbirth." 579

"So the Blessed Virgin was all vigorous and in good health, absorbed in the love and contemplation of her Son, each moment expecting His birth, and longing to see and embrace him." 580

As always, a Lapide presents a historical note about the veneration of the crib in St. Mary Major in Rome.

"That there was in this cave a wooden manger, well known to all the shepherds of that part, is clear from the fact, that the shepherds soon found the spot when the angel indicated it to them by this sign. This manger was taken from thence to Rome, and there placed in the Basilica of S. Maria Maggiore, where it is religiously visited

578 A Lapide, 83, "Porro, B. Virgo magis fuit parens Christi, quam sint aliae matres suorum filiorum: nam ipsa in solidum fuit parens et mater Christi, quia ab ea Christus accepti omnem suam substantiam, quam alli non a sola mater, sed etiam a patre accipiunt; ac consequenter amor inter Christum et matrem longe major fuit, quam sit inter alias matres et filios, adeoque amor qui inter matrem et patrem dividitur, in Virgine unitus et collectus fuit, quia ipsa tam matris quam patris vicem subivit."

579 A Lapide, 83, "... B. Virgo uti concepit sine concupiscientia, ita peperit sine dolore, sine lassitudine, sine secundinarum fluxu et illuvie alisique sordibus partus, sine obstetricae."

580 A Lapide, 83, "Fuit ergo Virgo tota alacris et vegeta, atque in filii amor et contemplationem absorpta; utpote quae in singula momenta eum nascentem expectaret, videre et amplecti gestiret."
and venerated.”

So too, a Lapide quotes St. Augustine to extol Mary’s virtues.

“With reason, then, does S. Augustine exclaim, “O miracles! O prodigies! O mysteries! Brethren, the laws of nature are changed, God is born as a Man, a virgin is pregnant . . . God who is and was the Creator becomes a creature, He who is unmeasured is held, He who makes men rich is made poor, the Incorporeal is clothed with flesh, the Invisible is seen . . . What was it that so great a God did, lying in so small a covering of flesh in the crib? Let us hear Him as He teaches us from His Manger-Throne—teaching not by word, but by example.”

A Lapide uses the wisdom of the Catholic tradition to explain why Jesus rested in a manger and why an inn was not available to the Holy Family when it was time for the birth of Jesus to occur.

“Because there was no room for them in the inn—namely, for Mary and Joseph. The reading “for Him,” adopted by some, is, therefore incorrect. Barradius, who is among these, gives a reason why the Blessed Virgin brought forth in the cave, and why Christ was laid to rest in a manger and not in a bed, that all the places in the inn had already been taken by the crowd of richer people who were flocking thither for the census. It is very likely that in a small town like Bethlehem there was only one inn; as S. Luke here implies.”

Again, a Lapide quotes St. Augustine who uses lofty theological language to explain the

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581 A Lapide, 87-88, “Porro, in hac spelunca fuisse, prae sepe ligneum, commune et notum omnibus pastoribus, liquet ex hoc quod, ex eo sibi ab angelo indicato, pastores mox locum nativitatis Christi agnoverint, et ad illum se contulerint. Praesepe hoc Romam deinde translatum est, ac in basiclica S. Mariae Majoris conditum, ibidem religiose visitur et colitur.”

582 A Lapide, 89, “Merito ergo exclamat S. Augustinus, O miracula! O prodigia! O mysteria! Fratres, naturae jura mutantur, in homine Deus nascitur, virgo sine viro gravidatur, viri nesciam sermo Dei maritat, simul factura est mater et virgo; mater facta, sed incorrupta. O mira et inexquisita compago! O nova et inaudita commixtio! Deus qui est et qui erat creator, fit creatura; qui immensus est, capitur; divites constituens, pauper efficitur, incorporeus carne vestitur, videtur invisibilis, palpatur impalpabilis, comprehenditur incomprehensibilis, quem coelum et terra benedicit, in prae sepio angusto collo catur. Quid fecit tantus Deus, in tantilla carne, jacens in prae sepio? Audiamus ipsum met in prae sepi cathedra non verbo sed facto docentem et praedicantem.”

583 A Lapide, 91, “quia non erat eis locus in diversorio. Eis, scilicet Mariae et Joseph; Perperam ergo alii qui legentes ei, scilicet Christo, sic cum Barradio explicant, q.d. Christus reclinatus fuit in prae sepio, quia non erat ei locus commodior Latina, Syrus et Arabicus habent eis, non ei. Causam dat, cur B. Virgo peperit in spelunca, et Christum non in lecto, sed in prae sepio reclinarat, quia scilicet omnia loca in hospitio jam prae occupata erant, affluente turbare ditiorum ad communem census. Verisimile est enim in urbe parva Bethlehem, unum tantum fuisset diversorium (ut hic inntit Lucas).”

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marriage of two natures of Jesus, the human and the divine. In using Augustine’s writings, a Lapide is able to teach an essential truth of the Catholic faith.

“S. Augustine says: “Within the Virgin’s womb there were celebrated spiritual nuptials, God was joined to the flesh, and the flesh clave unto God, coming forth from hence like a bridegroom from his chamber, at whose wedding all creation was stirred up and seemed to exult. For the choir of angels proclaim, as the result of these nuptials, peace to men of good will; for He that was the Son of God became the Son of Man.” 584

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Luke 2:1-7 and Mary

Buby offers this interpretation of Luke’s birth scene, setting within the context of world history.

“Luke’s narrative of the birth of Jesus is the most descriptive one in the New Testament. Matthew gives us more of a scriptural reflection upon it based on Isaiah 7:14, but Luke who is writing to a Gentile audience places the nativity within the context of world history as he knows it. This is also another indication of Luke’s universalism which will continue in the Gospel and in Acts.” 585

In chapter 1, Luke places the reader in the atmosphere of Hebrew Scriptures. In Chapter 2, with the birth of Jesus, we are in the context of world history, for Luke turns to the Gentile world for setting the stage. Mary is the central theme throughout chapter 2. 586

Unlike Chapter One of Luke’s Gospel, Chapter Two shows Joseph side by side with the Blessed Virgin “as a mutual cooperating partner in the plan of salvation.” 587 Mary is engaged to Joseph and the family line of David is once again introduced. In the birth scene from Luke, there is

584 A Lapide, 99, “Audi S. Augustinum, In utero, inquit, virginali spirales nuptiae celebratae sunt, Deus conjunctus est carni, et caro adhaesit Deo, hinc procedens ut sponsus de thalamo ad cujus nuptias commota universa exultare visa est creatura. Namque angelorum chorus ex his nuptiis pacem desginat hominibus bonae voluntatis, quia qui erat Dei Filius, factus est hominibus filius.”

585 Buby, SM, 81 Mary of Galilee, Vol. I.

586 Buby, SM, 81

587 Buby, SM, 81

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no particular mention made of the virginal conception. Buby mentions that there are some "discrepancies" in Luke's infancy narrative regarding the census of Quirinius as well as the law of purification of the mother in Leviticus. According to Buby, Luke writes the birth story of Jesus in light of Old Testament themes and stories.588

588 Buby, SM, 82
A Lapide’s Commentary on Lk 2:19 and 2:51 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Ss. Lucam et Joannem

An Exegetical Comparison/Contrast of Luke 2:19 and 2:51

Luke 2:19

“But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.”

Luke 2:51

“But His mother kept all these sayings in her heart.”

A Lapide presents Mary as virtuous and the highest one among all creatures. In a Lapide’s commentary on Luke 2:19, he states, “Observe here in the Virgin the rare example of maidenly silence and modesty, of heavenly prudence, and of the firmest faith and hope, as she wonders at the present and waits for the future.”

Throughout his commentary on verse 19 of chapter two in Luke, a Lapide delineates Mary’s threefold task as Mother of the Savior (This verse concludes the passage in which the shepherds offer homage to the Child Jesus born in the stable at Bethlehem.) Mary’s threefold task, as she ponders the mystery, are the following: 1. Mary is “more confirmed in her faith that the only begotten Son of God was borne of her.”; 2. Mary “might (strengthen) her mind and look with sure hope” that her Son, Jesus Christ, has come to redeem all humanity; 3. the Blessed Virgin might “unfold all these things

589 A Lapide, Commentaria in SS Lucam et Joannem. 100-101, “Vide hic in Virgine rarum exemplum virgineae taciturnitatis ac modestiae, item coelestis prudentiae, ac firmissimae fidei et spei, admirantis praestentia et futura praestolantis.”

590 A Lapide, 100, “...magis firmaretur in fide, scilicet unigenitum Filium Dei ex se esse natum.”

591 A Lapide, 100, “...et certa spe reliqua exspectaret, Deum scilicet hoc opus ad finem perducturum, et per Christum homines redepturum.”

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and narrate them to the Apostles” who will proclaim the gospel to the world.” 592 It is in this third “task of Mary” as Mother of the Savior that a Lapide’s commentary is linked with verse 51 of the same chapter in Luke’s gospel. As the story concludes, regarding the twelve year old Jesus teaching the elders in the Temple, Mary ponders all of Jesus’ words and actions. According to a Lapide, she ponders all these things about her Son so that she might more fully understand Jesus and impart these thoughts “to St. Luke and other Apostles, to be written or handed down to posterity.” 593 A Lapide acknowledges the fact that Mary may hear things which she cannot comprehend; they are considered supernatural or are beyond her because she is human. “She heard Jesus, not as a child of twelve years, but received and heeded His words as those of a man perfect in every way.” 594

A Lapide’s statements in both Luke 2:19 and 2:51 regarding Mary’s role of remembering these events in the infancy and adolescent stages of Jesus’ life on earth, then passing these stories to the Apostles so that they can be written down, confirms the tradition of the early Church which handed on the notion that Mary offered Luke her own first-hand testimony regarding Jesus’ birth and early childhood. A Lapide’s commentary offers Mary a primary role in the task of transmitting the gospel in the oral tradition. This view that Mary assisted in the formation of Luke’s gospel may have been prevalent in post-Tridentine writings.

A Lapide uses the spiritual sense to convey the meaning of these two passages and links them through his commentary. One technique often used by a Lapide in his exegesis is his method of

592 A Lapide, 100, “...ut ea deinde suo tempore Apostolis, ac praeertim Lucae haec scripturo panderet, et ex ordine narraret.”

593 A Lapide, 100, “...ut ea deinde suo tempore Apostolis, ac praeertim Lucae haec scripturo panderet, et ex ordine narraret.”

594 A Lapide, 137, “...neque enim audiebat Jesum tanquam duodecimi annorum puerum; sed excipiebat et observabat verba illius, tanquam verba viri modis omnibus perfecti...”

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comparing and contrasting images in the Scripture. For example, in Luke 2:19, he stated, “She (Mary) was comparing the sign of deepest loneliness which she saw and she knew of His Supreme Majesty, the stable with heaven, the swaddling clothes with that which is spoken of in Ps. civ., ‘covered with light as with a garment,’ the crib with the throne of God, the beasts with the seraphim,” A Lapide’s use of contrasting imagery along with the lofty language he employs in his commentary is a common exegetical tool used by the Belgian exegete in his writings.

In summary, a Lapide’s commentary on these verses from Luke (2:19 and 2:51) are linked together because Mary is considered the primary source of the gospel in Luke, which is in agreement with the Magisterial teaching of John Paul II. A Lapide’s spiritual sense is in his interpretation that these two passages are in line with and faithful to the tradition of the Church, which considers Mary as a primary source of the “infancy narratives.”

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Lk 2:19 and 2:51 and Mary**

By contrast to a Lapide’s Lucan Commentary, a post-Vatican II exegetical work done on these two passages from Luke, is the analysis of Father Dwight Campbell (in an unpublished Licentiate thesis at IMRI, 2004). Father Campbell links the two passages which are explicit references to the Heart of Mary. While a Lapide concentrates on the evangelical aspect of the Lucan verses (that Mary pondered all these things so that she would narrate them to the apostles to write them down) Campbell focuses on the “heart” and its explicit meaning in Luke’s gospel. Campbell introduces the exegesis

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595 A Lapide, 101, “Conferebat enim ea quae cernebat summae humiliatis, cum iis quae noverat summae majestatis, stabulum cum coelo, pannos cum illis Prophetae verbis, Psalm. CIII: Amictus lumine sicut vestimento; praesepe cum throno Dei, animalia cum Seraphinis.”

with the meaning of heart in Greek which is rendered “kārdia” and “corde” in Latin. He also translates “kept” as “conservabat” in Latin and in the Greek there are two different words: syneterei and diaterei. Both Greek words means “to keep” as their root. These same words appear in the Old Testament in the Wisdom Books as in Psalm 119. He also looks to Daniel 7:28, which says “but I kept the word in my heart,” referring to the prophet Daniel after the angel interpreted for him a vision of the four kingdoms of the messianic reign.

In Mary of Galilee, Vol. I, Buby comments on these two verses, 2:19 and 2:51. Buby states that these two reflections further emphasizes Mary’s progressive understanding of her life as a disciple of the Lord. “The motherhood of Mary is closely related to her call as a believing disciple; both aspects involved not only the joy and grace of God, but also the necessity of suffering, reflecting and living out this call to motherhood and discipleship.”

A Lapide's commentary on Lk 2:21-40 and Mary

Luke 2:21-40 - The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple

"21 And after eight days were accomplished, that the child should be circumcised, his name was called Jesus, which was called by the angel, before he was conceived in the womb.

22 And after the days of her purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they carried him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord:

23 As it is written in the law of the Lord: Every male opening the womb shall be called holy to the Lord:

24 And to offer a sacrifice, according as it is written in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons:

25 And behold there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Ghost was in him.

26 And he had received an answer from the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Christ of the Lord.

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when his parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law,

28 He also took him into his arms, and blessed God and said:

29 Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word in peace;

30 Because my eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples:

32 A light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

33 And his father and mother were wondering at those things which were spoken concerning him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary his mother: a Behold this child is set for the fall, and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted;

35 And thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that, out of many hearts, thoughts may be revealed.

36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser; she was far advanced in years, and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity.

37 And she was a widow until fourscore and four years; who departed not from the temple, by fastings and prayers serving night and day.

38 Now she, at the same hour, coming in, confessed to the Lord; and spoke of him to all that looked for the redemption of Israel.

39 And after they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their city Nazareth.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong, full of wisdom; and the grace of God was in
In a Lapide’s exegesis on the Lucan Presentation of Jesus in the Temple forty days after his birth, there is an interpretation from verse 21 that Jesus was brought to the Temple to be circumcised of his own free will. Since Jesus was God, he was not under obligation, therefore, to follow the law.

“Ver. 21.—And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcision of the child, His name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel before He was conceived in the womb—when eight days were fulfilled—when the eighth day from His nativity was come. That the child should be circumcised—this indicates that He was circumcised, implying that He underwent the rite, not of obligation, but freely and of His own will. For, in the first place, He was God—the Author of the law, and, therefore, not bound by the law; and, in the second place, He was not of the common generation of men, who are procreated of the propagation of sin and conceived in iniquity, says Bede, but conceived and born of the Holy Spirit, and, therefore, without original sin, for wiping out of which circumcision was instituted.”

598 A Lapide, Commentaria in SS Lucam et Joannem, 101, “Et postquam consummati sunt dies octo ut circumcideretur vocatum est nomen eius Jesus quod vocatum est ab angelo priusquam in utero conciperetur et postquam impleti sunt dies purgationis eius secundum legem Mosi tulerunt illum in Hierusalem ut sisterent eum Domino sicut scriptum est in lege Domini quia omne masculinum adaperiens vulvam sanctum Domino vocabitur et ut darent hostiam secundum quod dictum est in lege Domini par turturum aut duos pullos columbarum et ecce homo erat in Hierusalem cui nomen Symeon et homo iste iustus et timoratus expectans consolationem Israhel et Spiritus Sanctus erat in eo et responsum accoperat ab Spiritu Sancto non visurum se mortem nisi prieret Christum Domini et venit in Spiritu in templum et cum inducerent puerum Iesum parentes eum ut facerent secundum consuetudinem legis pro eo et ipse acceptum eum in ulnas suas et benedixit Deum et dixit nunc dimittis servum tuum Domine secundum verbum tuum in pace quia visurum oculi mei salutare tuum quod parasti ante faciem omni

599 A Lapide, Commentaria in SS Lucam et Joannem, 101, “Et postquam consummati sunt dies octo ut circumcideretur puer, vocatum est nomen ejus Jesus, quod vocatum est ab angelo priusquam in utero conciperetur. Consummati sunt dies octo. Id est eum advenisset dies octavus a nativitate Christi, quo ipse iuxta legem circumcidendus erat. Est hebraismus; Hebraeorum enim verba saepè significat actum inchoatum, non perfectum. Consummati ergo hic diem est, quo coepit consummari, ut expletis septem dies ageretur dies octava, destinata circumcisioni, etsi illa needum esset expleta et consummata. Ut circumcideretur puer.Tacite significavit oleum circumcisum, non expresse, ut innuat eum liberum et sponte, non ex obligationeuisse circumcisum, tum quia non communi hominum generatione, qui de peccati traduce propagati in iniquitatibus consciptuunt, ait Beda; sed ex Spiritu Sancto erat conceptus et natus, ideoque carens peccato originali, ob quod abolendum instituia erat
Why was it necessary for Jesus to be circumcised? In typical style of hisexegetical writings, he uses the saints to illustrate the reasons. He states that there are seven reasons why Christ would, of his own accord, be circumcised.

"For circumcision was the sign and stigma of sin, the cauterity with which it was burnt out, and in Christ there was no sin, no lust. So in His circumcision Christ humbled Himself to a still greater degree than in His nativity— in the later He took upon His the form of man, in the former character of a sinner." 600

"First, to show the reality of His human flesh, as against Manichaeus, who said that He had a phantom body, Apollinaris, who said that the body of Christ is consubstantial with the Godhead, and Valentinus, who said that He brought His body from heaven." 601

"Secondly, to sanction the rite which God had instituted." 602

"Thirdly, to show that He was of the seed of Abraham, who had received the ordinance of circumcision as a sign of the faith which He had in reference to Christ." 603

"Fourthly, to take away all excuse from the Jews, lest they should not accept Him if He were uncircumcised." 604

"Fifthly, to commend to us by His own example the virtue of obedience. Hence

600 A Lapide, 101, "Circumcisio enim erat signum peccati, ejusque quasi stigma et cauterium: nullum autem peccatum, nulla libido erat in Christo. Quare Christus in circumcisione magis et profundius se humilavit, quam in navitate; in hac enim accepit formam hominis, in illa vero formam peccatoris."

601 A Lapide, 101-102, "Primo, inquit, ut ostenderet veritatem carnis humanae contra Manichaeum, qui dixit eum habuisse corpus phantasticum; et contra Apollinarium, qui dixit corpus Christi esse divinat consubstantiale; et contra Valentinum, qui dixit Christum de coelo corpus attulisse."

602 A Lapide, 102, "Secundo, ut approbaret circumcissionem quam olim Deus instituerat."

603 A Lapide, 102, "Tertio, ut comprobaret se esse de genere Abrahae, qui circumcisionis mandatum acceperat in signum fidei, quam de ipso habuerat."

604 A Lapide, 102, "Quarto, ut Judaeis excusationem tolleret, ne eum recipient, si esset incircumcisus."
it was that He was circumcised on the eighth day, as the law prescribed.\textsuperscript{605}

\textquotedblleft Sixthly, that, having come in the likeness of the flesh of sin, He might not seem to reject the remedy by which the flesh had been wont to be cleansed of sin.\textsuperscript{606}

\textquotedblleft Seventhly, that, bearing the burden of the law Himself, He might free others from that burden, \textquoteleft God sent forth His Son made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law,\textquoteright\textsuperscript{607}

Then, a Lapide also states a final reason why Jesus Christ was circumcised.

\textquotedblleft Lastly, by this act He began that suffering by which He became the Redeemer and Savior of the world.\textsuperscript{608}

Using the symbolic and tropological senses a Lapide further delineates his understanding of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

\textquotedblleft Symbolically, these five shekels stood for the five wounds of Christ, with which, as with a price, He redeems the human race.\textsuperscript{609}

\textquotedblleft Tropologically, the purification of the soul is penance, and this the Blessed Virgin underwent, not for her own sins, seeing that she had none, but for those of others as Christ did. Still she did not undergo the \textit{Sacrament} of Penance, because she

\textsuperscript{605} A Lapide, 102, \textquoteleft Quinto, ut obediendi virtutem nobis suo commendaret exemplo. Unde et octava die circumcisus est, sicut in lege erat praeceptum.	extquoteright

\textsuperscript{606} A Lapide, 102, \textquoteleft Sexto, ut qui in similitudinem carnis peccati ad veneraret, remedium quo caro peccati consueverat mundari, non respueret.	extquoteright

\textsuperscript{607} A Lapide, 102, \textquoteleft Septimo, ut legis onus in se sustinens, alias a legis onere liberaret secundum illud Galat. IV: Misit Deus Filium suum factum sub lege, ut eos qui sub lege erant redimeret.	extquoteright

\textsuperscript{608} A Lapide, 103, \textquoteleft Denique Christus sua circumcisione inchoavit passionem suam per quam factus est orbis redemptor et salvator.	extquoteright

\textsuperscript{609} A Lapide, 104-105, \textquoteleft Symbolisce hi quinque sicli repraesentabant quinque vulnera Christi, quorum pretio Christus redemit genus humanum.	extquoteright
had no sins of her own to confess.”

“The purification of the Blessed Virgin is commemorated by the Church on the second day of February, in order, Baronius says, to abolish the Lupercalia, which used to be celebrated at Rome on that day. The order of the rite of purification was as follows:—First, the woman came into the “court of the unclean”—she being unclean until her purification. Next, she offered a sin-offering of a turtle-dove or a young pigeon.”

In his commentaries, a Lapide illustrates the importance of a particular scripture passage by connecting it with the Church’s liturgical calendar. In this passage, a Lapide writes what the Jewish rite of purification entailed. The woman who enters the Temple unclean because of child-birth, offers a sin-offering of turtle doves or pigeon. He interprets the passage using the tropological sense.

In verse 29, a Lapide makes a connection between the Liturgy of the Hours and this particular text. He also uses the symbolic and tropological senses to demonstrate his points.

“Tropologically, the Church sings this hymn of Simeon every evening in the Office of Compline, for two reasons:—First, to admonish the faithful, and especially ecclesiastics, to think upon death, and so live as though they were to die in the evening; and, again, that they may acquire that yearning which Simeon felt to pass away from the vanities and troubles of this life to the true and blessed life in heaven, begging of God to be permitted to depart, and saying with Paul, “I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ.”

“Symbolically, Theophylact says that Christ was set “for the ruin and the resurrection of Israel,” that is, of the penitent soul that sanctifies itself by the grace of Christ, because this

610 A Lapide, 106, “Tropologice: purificatio animae est poenitentia, quam B. Virgo subivit non pro peccatis suis, utpote quae nulla habebat, sed proalienis, acque ac Christus, Sacramentum tamen poenitentiae on susceptit, quia propria peccata quae confitenda sunt, non habuit.”

611 A Lapide, 107, “Nota: Purificationis B. Virginis (cuju m membrum quotannis celebrat Ecclesia die 2 februarii, idque ad abolenda Lupercalia, quae eodem die Romae turpiter celebrabantur, ait Baronius) hic fuit ordo et ritus: Primo, puerpera veniebat in atrium immundorum, ibique consistebat: nec enim atrium mundorum ingredi poterat, utpote immunda ante purificationem. Secundo, offerebat tutarem, vel pullum columbae pro peccato.”

612 A Lapide, 114, “Tropologice: Ecclesia quotidie in Completorio sub vesperam, hunc Simeonis hymnum decantat settim sacerdotes ecclesiasticos, mones cogitare de morte, itaque vivere ac si vespere essent morituri. Posterior, ut moneat eodem induere desiderium Simeonis, scilicet transeundi ex hac vanitate et vitae hujus aeernnis ad veram beatamque vitam in coelis, ut quotidie hunc hymnum recitantes postulemus a Deo dimit, dicamusque cum Paulo: Cupio dissolvi et esse cum Christo.”
grace brings it to pass that pride, gluttony, and lust fall in the soul, while humility, abstinence and chastity rise up in it.”\textsuperscript{613}

“Behold a virgin shall conceive” Tertullian also (\textit{De Carne Christi}) makes the allusion to Isa. Vii., “Therefore, the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold a virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son. We recognize, then, the contradictory sign, the conception and childbearing of the Virgin Mary, of which these academicians say she bore a child and bore no child, she was a virgin and no virgin.” And these cavillers he answers, “She bore a child in that she did so of her own flesh; and she did not bear, in that she bore not of the seed of man. And she was a virgin for man, not a virgin for childbirth.”\textsuperscript{614}

In verse 35, the meaning of the word “sword” is explained. A Lapide offers five reasons for the great torture Mary would suffer by “the sword” which would pierce her heart. The first is that Mary would prefer to have suffered than to see her own Son suffer so much. Second, Mary suffered with Jesus, as she considered the “severity of Christ’s torments and the wideness of their extent.”

“... from the severity of Christ’s torments and the wideness of their extent; for He suffered the most fearful agonies in all His senses and all His members, and all this the Blessed Virgin endured also by her sympathy with Him. Thirdly, the dignity of the Personage who suffered; for the Blessed Virgin pondered deeply the fact that this was the True God, the Messiah, and Savior of the World. Fourthly, the long duration of His sufferings; for Christ suffered all His life long, until He breathed forth His Soul on the Cross. Fifthly, His loneliness; for He suffered alone, deserted by His Apostles and all His friends, by the angels, and by God Himself, so that He cried aloud, “My God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me?” For, though the Blessed Virgin stood by Him and suffered with Him, yet did the Mother’s anguish but add a new pang to the Son’s

\textsuperscript{613} A Lapide, 118, “Tropologice, vel potius symbolice Theophylactus: Christus, ait, positus est in ruinam et resurrectionem Israelis, id est animae poenitentis, seseque per Christi gratiam sanctificantis, quia facti ut in ea moriatur superbia, crapula, libido, ac resurgat in ea humilitas, abstinentia, castitas.”

\textsuperscript{614} A Lapide, 19, “Tertullianus, lib. De Carne Christi, qui censet hic alludi ad illud Isai. VII: Propterea dabit Dominus vobis signum: Ecce virgo concipeit et pariet filium. Agnosceusim ergo signum contradicibile, inquit, conceptum et partum Virginis Mariae, de quo academici isti: Peperit, et non pereit; virgo et non virgo; quibus contradictoribus ipse responded: Peperit, quae ex sua carne; et non peperit, quae non ex viri semine. Et virgo quantum a viro, non virgo quantum a partu.”

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A Lapide often quotes St. Bernard of Clairvaux to demonstrate the meaning of Mary’s pierced heart, using the symbolic sense.

"Symbolically, S. Bernard (Serm. xxix.) interprets this sword or dart as love: for where there is sorrow there too is love; in love there is no living without sorrow, nor in sorrow without love. "The chosen arrow," he says "is the love of Christ, which not only pierced, but pierced through and through, the soul of Mary, so that it left in her virginal breast not the smallest part void of love, but with all her heart, and all her soul, and all her strength, she loved."

Once again, a Lapide refers to Mary as a martyr. While the Jews never wanted to torture Mary, in torturing Christ, they tortured her.

"What is this sword? Some understand doubt in her faith; that the Blessed Virgin when she saw Christ suffering so fearfully from the violence of the Jews, and dying on the Cross, doubted as to whether He would rise again, as He had foretold."

"Allegorically, Christ, when born, appeared to three groups of persons in three ways—(1) to the shepherds, . . . (2) to the magi, . . . (3) to Simeon and Anna, guided by..."
Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Lk 2:21-40 and Mary


"Both Testaments show us the importance of a name which not only identifies a person but especially shows the character and mission as well for that person."

Buby parallels the naming of Jesus with the Samuel narrative in 1 Samuel 1:22-24. 619 Buby then states that this particular passage highlights many of Luke’s prominent themes found throughout his gospel. These same themes in Luke are echoed throughout the Acts of the Apostles. Buby names the Lucan themes found in Luke 2:21-40:

"Promise, fulfillment, universalism, the poor of God, Jerusalem, temple, Spirit, Israel, the Gentiles, Jesus as Messiah and Lord, another canticle, a blessing prayer, deliverance, God’s favor, peace, glory and Mary." 620

Buby is using the historical-critical method in analyzing this passage. He states that Luke presents this story to underline his theological themes found in the Gospel, and not necessarily to recall what Mary reported to him as an evangelist. In this passage, Luke does not concern himself with the virginity of Mary as did the early church, yet, Luke’s “direct use of the language from the Hebrew Scriptures is quite descriptive and beckons all Christian reflection on the virginity of Mary to remain close to the Gospel texts and away from any form of Docetism or the fantasizing so prevalent in the Apocryphal Gospels." 621 In this scene, we meet Simeon and Anna who behold the sight of the newborn Jesus, the long awaited messiah of Israel. Simeon’s canticle, the Nunc Dimittis, is preserved by the


619 Buby, SM, 87, *Mary of Galilee, Vol I*

620 Buby, SM, 88

621 Buby, SM, 88 - 89
Church and recited each night during the recitation of Compline. Buby mentions Simeon’s “mixed blessing” which he brings “upon Mary because of the mission and destiny of her child.”

Buby contemplates the meaning of Simeon’s words that a sword shall pierce Mary’s heart. Buby cites the Father’s of the Church who see the sword symbolizing “contradictory thoughts or decisions.”

Earlier traditions associate Mary in this scene with the Mater Dolorosa but contemporary scholars see this as a symbol of “Mary’s growth in faith as a disciple.” Buby states that both interpretations are valid and should be respected.

Buby also expands on the character of Anna, one of the women prophetesses from a long line of Old Testament women like Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Abigail and Esther.

“In the tradition and devotion of the Church to Mary, we will see that many of these women were seen as symbols of the person of Mary, Mother of Jesus.”

It is also interesting to connect the prophetess Anna with Mary because the name of Mary’s mother is Anna, according to the Protoevangelium of Jesus.

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622 Buby, SM, 90
623 Buby, SM, 90
624 Buby, SM, 91
625 Buby, SM, 91
626 Buby, SM, 91
A Lapide’s commentary on Luke 2:41-52 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Ss. Lucan et Joannem


“41 And his parents went every year to Jerusalem, at the solemn day of the pasch,
42 And when he was twelve years old, they going up into Jerusalem, according to the custom of the feast,
43 And having fulfilled the days, when they returned, the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not.
44 And thinking that he was in the company, they came a day’s journey, and sought him among their kinsfolks and acquaintance.
45 And not finding him, they returned into Jerusalem, seeking him.
46 And it came to pass, that, after three days, they found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions.
47 And all that heard him were astonished at his wisdom and his answers.
48 And seeing him, they wondered. And his mother said to him: Son, why hast thou done so to us? Behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.
49 And he said to them: How is it that you sought me? Did you not know, that I must be about my father’s business?
50 And they understood not the word that he spoke unto Lapide.
51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them. And his mother kept all these words in her heart.
52 And Jesus Advanced in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and men.”

In this passage from the second chapter of Luke, a Lapide uses the tropological sense of Scripture as a spiritual and oral instruction.

“Tropologically, let the soul that has separated itself from Jesus by mortal sin, or from its wonted communion with Him by venial negligence, seek Him again (1)
with the sorrow and tears of a penitent heart, ... (2) with earnestness and solicitude, as
the Blessed Virgin did, and that in the Temple, by passing some time in prayer and in
spiritual reading and meditation; (3) among the doctors, among learned and good men,
who shall instruct the soul as well in knowledge as in piety.”

A Lapide uses lofty language to say that Jesus is above the law regarding obedience to His
mother because he must obey a higher parent, God the Father.

“Subject. In the Greek transliterate obedient that is, as regards His human
nature, not as regards His Divine nature, as S. Augustine shows, in opposition to the
Arians (Contra Maximinum, lib. iii cap. xviii.)”

Using the Christological doctrine that Jesus is both human and divine, a Lapide teaches that
while Jesus was God, he was still subject to the authority of his earthly parents, Mary and Joseph.

“Observe that the human nature in Christ, though considered in itself, it was
under the rule of His mother, yet, being elevated by God to the Person [Hypostasis] of
the Word, and being, therefore, one with God—one Divine Person—was, for this reason,
exempt from the obligation of obedience to His mother as much as from that of
obedience to the laws of Augustus and all other worldly authorities. Just as a member
of a religious order, if he be made Pope is exempted from the obedience of his order,
and, indeed, ... Yet Christ, to give us an example of profound humility and perfect
obedience, made Himself subject to His mother, and to Joseph too.”

In a Lapide’s commentary, the humility of Mary demonstrates her willingness to follow God’s

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628 A Lapide, 133, “Tropoliage: anima quae perdit Jesu gratiam per peccatum mortale, vel solitam
familiaritatem per negligentiam venialem, requirat eum, primo, cum dolore et lacrymis cordis compuncti ... secundo, requirat eum magna sollicitudine et studio, ut fecti B. Virgo, idque in templo, nimirum vacando orationi, lectioni et
meditationi rerum spiritualium; tertio, requirat eum inter doctores, id est inter viros doctos et pios, qui eam in
scientia ac pietate instruant.”

629 A Lapide, 135, “Subditus. ‘Graece, υποχειμενος id est subjectus, obediens, scilicet quoad humanum
naturam, quam a mater hauserat, non quoad divinam, quam a solo Patre aeterno, acceperat ita plene et perfecte, ut
per omnia ei esset aequalis, et in nullo subditus, ut contra Arianos docet S. Augustinus, lib. III Contra Maximinum,
cap. XVIII.”

630 A Lapide, 135, “Nota: Humana natura in Christo, licet in se praecise sumpta, subdita esset matri; tamen
quia ipsa elevata erat a Deo ad hypostasim Verbi, ideoque unum erat cum Deo, puta unam persona divina, hinc
exempta fuit b obedientia matris, aequa ac a legisbus Augusti, Herodis, pontificum caeterorumque principium: erat
enim jam mater et illis omnibus longe dignior, melior, sapientior, imo Dominus et Deus omnium. Sicut religiosus vel
monachus, si ccreetur Pontifex, eximitur ab obedientia sui Ordinis, imo totius Ordinis fit Superior. Christus tamen,
ut nobis darem sumae humilitatis et obedientiae exemplum, ulle et sponte sua se subdidit matri, imo et Josepho,
iisque per omnia quae domi agenda, verrenda, fabricanda, etc. erant, obedivit.”

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will. Even though Mary did not fully understand the Will of God, she willingly accepted it, knowing that this was part of God's divine and mystical plan.

"But His mother kept all these sayings in her heart—that, in course of time, she might the more fully understand all that Christ should say and do, and also that she might impart them to S. Luke and the other Apostles, to be written or handed down to posterity. "For although," says Titus, "She did not perfectly follow all that was said by Him, yet she understood them to be Divine things, and above human understanding. She heard Jesus, not as a child of twelve years, but received and heeded His words as those of a man perfect in every way." Or as Euthymius says, "as the words not merely of a child, but also of the Son of God."631

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Lk 2:41-52 and Mary

In *Mary of Galilee, Vol. I* Buby states that this story of the Boy Jesus in the Temple is independent of the Birth narrative in Luke's gospel. However, the story "serves as a transition form the infancy of Jesus to a reflection on his hidden years at Nazareth before his baptism as a mature adult."632 Luke uses this story to further illustrate his Christology. The story stresses Jesus' relationship to his Heavenly Father, on a most intimate level, yet the story takes place with interaction between Jesus and the elders in the Temple as well as his earthly parents, Joseph and Mary.

Buby also cites the fact that this narrative is similar to the Cana account in John's Gospel which also takes place before the active ministry of Jesus. Our Lady is involved in "stimulating a revelation on the part of Jesus; here it is more through a sign than through a statement."633

631 A Lapide, 137,"Et mater ejus conservat omnia verba haec in corde suo, quasi ruminanda et diligentius scrutanda, ait Beda, ut successu temporis per omina quae acturus et dicturus erat Christus, plenius intelligeret, simul ut eadem deinde S. Lucæ et alii Apostolis scribenda, vel posteris tradenda revelaret. Unde Titus: Nam etsi, inquit, quae ab illo depromebantur, plene non assequebatur, intelligebat nihilominus divina, humanoque sensu esse sublimiora: neque enim audiebat Jesum tanquam duodecim annorum puerum, sed excipiebat et observabat verba illius, tanquam verba viri modis omnibus perfecti; sive, ut Euthymius ait: tanquam verba, non simpliciter pueri, sed etiam Filii Del."

632 Buby, SM,92,*Mary of Galilee, Vol. I*

633 Buby, SM 93

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One concern from the story to which Buby points is the fact Mary does not seem to understand the identity of Jesus and this causes her anguish and suffering, much like Simeon predicted in Lk 2:19. Buby states "the story is important, as it is the only one that deals with the teenage period of Jesus. Thus offering both parents and teenagers an important biblical revelation about this troubled one period of events and growth patterns."\(^{634}\)

\(^{634}\)Buby, SM, 94-95

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Comparison / Conclusion: Gospel of Luke

A Lapide’s commentary on the Annunciation uses the mystical sense to understand Mary’s role in this important moment in Salvation History. Once again, a Lapide stresses the Incarnation as well as the soteriological theme prevalent in his writings. Once again in this passage, a Lapide refers to St. Ambrose in describing Mary as a type of Miriam and also explains the meaning of the name Mary rendered, “Star of the Sea,” something that a Lapide has commented on in other passages. A Lapide describes a pattern used in the Annunciation scene that helps one to understand the meaning of the passage. This is similar to contemporary Catholic scholars who have used a schema or pattern for Annunciation scenes throughout the Bible. In Raymond Brown’s Birth of the Messiah, he offers an Annunciation pattern for the births of John the Baptist, Jeremiah, as well as Jesus.635

Noll cites the fact that a Lapide uses trinitarian images to describe Mary. In this scene, a Lapide depicts the bridal relationship of Mary to her spouse, the Holy Spirit.

“The conception of the Word by Mary is the work of the Holy Spirit. Cornelius interprets the shadow of the Holy Spirit as as the marriage of the Spirit with the Blessed Virgin as it says in Luke 1, 35, she was overshadowed as though she were a bride.”636

A Lapide’s exegesis of Mary’s Visitation to her cousin, Elizabeth, stresses the virtues of Mary. He quotes from various Church Fathers, like Origen, St. Cyril, and St. Ambrose in supporting his interpretation of this text through the use of the four senses of Scripture, including the symbolic sense as he describes John the Baptist leaping in his womb much like the dancing of Herod’s daughter when


636 Noll, 175, “Die Empängnis des Wortes aus Maria ist das Werk des Heiligen Geistes. Den Schatten deutet Cornelius als Vermählung des Geistes mit der seligen Jungfrau, wie es Lk 1,35 sagt, während sie durch die Überschattung gleichsam dessen Braut wird.”
she asks for the head of John the Baptist. This particular passage stresses the christological aspect of a Lapide’s writing, as seen throughout these commentaries. A Lapide also uses his commentaries to support and expound on the truths of the Catholic faith as they are expressed in the doctrine of the Church, namely the Incarnation, Theotokos, and the hypostatic union.

In a Lapide’s commentary on the Magnificat, Luke 1:39-45, a Lapide uses the symbolic sense to assist his commentary in understanding Mary’s soul and the power she has because she is the mother of the Lord. Once again, a Lapide extols the many virtues of Mary and uses Church Fathers like St. Augustine and St. Bernard of Clairvaux to support his commentary. He also describes Church teaching in this passage by describing the Church’s understanding of venerating Mary and the saints.

In a Lapide’s commentary regarding the birth of Christ, Luke 2:1-7, a Lapide is once again concerned with biblical geography and offers a spiritual and historical explanation for the birth of Jesus in the town of Bethlehem. A Lapide supports the traditional teaching of the Church that Mary gave birth without suffering birth pangs. A Lapide, in his commentaries, not only extols the virtues of Mary, as he does here in the birth account, but he also uses the commentaries to teach the faithful about the relationship between the Scripture and the treasures of Rome. As mentioned in Chapter one of the present study, a Lapide was fascinated and enamored with the city of Rome and its significance for the Catholic faith.

In an exegetical comparison and contrast of Luke 2:19 and 2:51, a Lapide helps the reader understand how Mary pondered the mystery of the Incarnation. She pondered the mystery of the faith in her heart, and this symbolizes Mary’s role as a primary person in transmitting the gospel in the oral tradition. A Lapide mirrors the commentaries of his time that indicated that Mary assisted in forming the gospel of Luke. A Lapide connects these two passages regarding the heart of Mary and interprets
them in a spiritual sense. He sees these two passages supporting Church teaching, especially regarding the Incarnation.

In Luke 2: 21-40, a Lapide analyzes the Presentation of Jesus in the temple and uses the **symbolic** and **tropological** senses to understand this particular passage. In his commentary, a Lapide reminds the faithful that this passage is celebrated liturgically on February 2\textsuperscript{nd}, the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A Lapide's commentary's are always linked with the liturgical calendar as well as, in this case, the praying of the Liturgy of the Hours. A Lapide points out that Simeon's Nunc Dimitis is prayed each night in the office of Compline. He also quotes from St. Bernard of Clairvaux and uses the **symbolic** sense to interpret the piercing of Mary's heart as a way of saying that Mary is a martyr, even though she did not suffer and die as Jesus did.

In the Finding of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52), a Lapide uses the **tropological** sense to instruct the faithful in drawing close to Jesus and straying away from mortal sin. This particular passage stresses the christological aspect of a Lapide's writings. He reminds the reader that although Jesus, in his human nature, was subject to the authority of his earthly parents, he was still divine in nature. In this passage he quotes from St. Augustine.

In Buby's commentary on the Annunciation scene, Buby uses the historical critical method. He offers an Annunciation pattern found in the Bible for the birth of other prophets, like Jeremiah, Isaiah and John the Baptist. This is similar to the pattern that is described in a Lapide's commentary. Buby stresses the primary role of Mary in the first two chapters of Luke's gospel. Buby stresses that the Annunciation is not a proof text for the Immaculate Conception and does not write in the apologetic style of a Lapide. Buby does not feel that exegesis must prove dogma. However, he also
points out that dogma develops because of tradition based on texts in the Scriptures.\textsuperscript{637}

In Buby’s analysis of the Visitation, Luke 1:39-45, he also offers an explanation for the leap of John in the womb of his mother, similar to David’s dance before the ark in 2 Sam 6:16. Buby uses literary analysis to examine the Visitation pericope.

In Buby’s commentary on the Magnificat, he analyzes it from a historical point of view, and details a literary methodology of the Magnificat citing various contemporary Catholic exegetes such as Raymond Brown in \textit{Birth of the Messiah}, to explain the Semitic style of Mary’s hymn of praise to Yahweh. Like a Lapide, Buby understands that Mary’s song is derived from Old Testament sources, primarily the Song of Hannah in 1 Samuel.

In Buby’s commentary on the Birth narrative, he also uses the historical critical method. He links the passage with Isaiah 7:14 and reminds the reader that Mary is the central theme throughout Chapter two of Luke’s gospel.

In the comparison and contrast of Luke 2:19 and Luke 2:51, Buby links these two passages as does Raymond Brown in \textit{Mary in the New Testament} by stressing that these verses are revelatory about the child Jesus. Buby further states that these two verses help the reader understand Mary’s growth as a believing disciple. The two verses stress Mary’s roles as mother and disciple and the necessity of living out God’s call in life.

In this passage about the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, Buby uses a historical critical point of view to say “Luke is not recalling what Mary said to him, but is directing the narrative according to his own theological intentions.”\textsuperscript{638} Buby also stresses that the Church uses all of Luke’s

\textsuperscript{637}Buby, SM, 68-75, \textit{Mary of Galilee, Vol. I}

\textsuperscript{638}Buby, SM, 90
canticles in the Liturgy of the Hours and in the Eucharistic Liturgy. The Benedictus, which is the prayer of Zechariah, found in lauds is the canticle recited each evening in the Church's Liturgy of the Hours. Like a Lapide, Buby connects Mary with the women of the Old Testament, especially Miriam, Sarah, Deborah, Hannah, Abigail. We see in these women symbols for the person of Mary, mother of Jesus. In this pericope, Anna is seen as a woman of faith, a devout widow, who points out the Messiah when he enters the temple. Buby also offers this insight, “We might also take note that from the apocryphal gospel of James that Mary’s own mother is called Anna.”

In describing Simeon’s prophecy that a sword will pierce Mary’s heart, Buby refers to the Fathers of the Church in saying that the “sword symbolizes more anguish than the pain of contradictory thoughts and decisions.” Much like a Lapide, Buby depends on Patristic writings, but in a different way, he often quotes the contemporary Catholic scholars who analyze.

Buby uses the historical critical method to analyze this passage. Buby analyzes the Finding of Jesus in the Temple at age twelve (Luke 2:41-55) and calls this Luke’s final redaction. Luke casts the story in his own style and theology. Buby finds this passage similar to the literary “and imitative historiography based on the story of the young Samuel (1 S 1:3, 21; 2:19; 3:3). The christological focus of Luke is what is most important in this narrative.” Buby also points out that it is important for the mariologist to study the fact that Mary is not always going to understand whom Jesus is and misunderstands his actions as a young child. Buby also remarks that this story is important because it reveals the adolescence of Jesus and is an “important biblical revelation for parents and teenagers

639 Buby, SM, 91
640 Buby, SM, 90
641 Buby, SM, 93

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who are dealing with this troublesome period of events and growth patterns.\textsuperscript{642}
A Lapide's commentary on Acts 1:14 and Mary presented in Commentaria in Acta Apostolorum

Acts 1:14 - Mary at Prayer with the Apostles

“All these were persevering with one mind in prayer with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.”

A Lapide analyzes this passage from Acts where Mary is present in the Upper Room when the disciples are gathered, awaiting the coming of the Spirit. In this passage, a Lapide uses a Trinitarian theme in his commentary to demonstrate Mary’s relationship with God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He also indicates that Mary has great intercessory power before the Lord.

“All these were of one mind persevering in prayer... Add a fourth, a familiarity and devotion toward the Blessed Virgin about whom there follows: ‘With the women and Mary the mother of Jesus.’ For this woman, since she is the daughter of God the Father, mother of God the Son, spouse of the Holy Spirit, obtains whatever she wants.”

Here a Lapide states that Jesus offers Mary to the Apostles as their mother. In the Litany of Loreto, Mary is referred to as Queen of Apostles, which may explain why a Lapide extends this new title to Mary, “Mother of the Apostles.”

“And Mary the mother of Jesus. As though the house mistress of this holy gathering and family of Christ. For Christ is the housemaster going away into heaven, and so he left on earth his most loving mother, so that in his place she might be as though the mother of the Apostles and of all the faithful.”


645 A Lapide, 63 “Et Maria matre Jesu. Quasi materfamilias hujus sacri coetus et familieae Christi. Christus enim paterfamilias abiens in coelum, idcirco in terris reliquit amantissimam matrem, ut loco sui esset quasi mater Apostolorum omniumque fidelium.”
A Lapide offers an explanation of Mary’s prayerful presence in the Cenacle.

“Therefore in a similar way Luke here places and depicts the Blessed Virgin, such, the sort she herself was in herself, and as she used to show herself: the least, because she conducted herself as the least; the latest, because she used to show herself as the latest.”

Here, a Lapide clarifies the meaning of the word “Brothers” in reference to Jesus.

“And with his brothers. That is the relatives both of Jesus as well as Mary,”

A Lapide depicts Mary as the one who will be a mother to the Church and her disciples.

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Act 1:14 and Mary

Buby would favor the Church/Holy Spirit parallel between Luke’s gospel and Acts and show Mary’s connection to both the activity of the Church and Mary’s presence in it. He states:

“In studying the image and concept of Mary and Church in the Acts of the Apostles, the theology of Luke the evangelist and historian - writer forms part of the background and context for understanding the meaning of the one text in which Mary the Mother of Jesus is mentioned in the Acts 1:14. The fact that Luke-Acts is the work of one writer gives us a fabric of texts which can be compared from the first volume (the Gospel) and the second (the Acts). The image of Mary and the image of Church in the Acts cannot be separated from what we know about her and the community of disciples in the Gospels.”

Tradition has held that Mary was a source of information for Luke as he wrote his gospel. While Buby does not necessarily hold this view, he does indicate that Luke “interprets” Mary as the woman of faith.

646 A Lapide, 63 “Simili ergo modo Lucas hic ponit pingitque b. Virginem, talem, qualis ipas in se erat, qualemque se sexhibebat: minimam, quia novissimam se exhibebat.”

647 A Lapide, 63 “Et fratribus ejus, - puta cognatis tam Jesu, quam Mariae;”

“Luke-Acts contains sermons, prayers, liturgical expressions and historical facts and opinions of one of the earliest writer-theologians. The composition of such materials within his two volumes indicates that he is the first ecclesiologist of early Christianity. He also is the evangelist who interprets the woman of faith, Mary the Mother of Jesus.” 649

Buby then offers this prayerful image of Mary in Acts, as the ecclesia orans. His description of Mary in prayer with the Apostles depicts a mature woman of faith who has experienced pain and suffering in her life.

“From the contexts of Acts 1:14, Mary is an image of ecclesia orans (the praying community or Church). In the Gospel she was depicted as the youthful energetic virgin who was attentive to the Lord and who continued to praise God from the depth of her being. She continues to do this, pondering over the events of Jesus in her heart. Now in the upper room she is that fully matured woman who has experienced the sword of discrimination promised so long ago by Simeon (Lk 235); she continues to pray steadfastly with the women, the eleven, and the brothers of Jesus.” 650

Mary’s role in the early Church cannot be diminished. As Buby states:

“The text in giving us the name of Mary posits her as the only woman in the New Testament who is specifically mentioned in Luke-Acts’ description of the “ecclesia-orans” in the upper-room. Though later on an upper room is named as the possession of another woman named Mary, the mother of John Mark, the latter woman is not mentioned in connection with Acts 1:14. This is important; for the room could be the same one who is even remotely possible as an image of the Church is Mary the Mother of Jesus. We must also remember that Luke-Acts, as a two-volume work of the same author, has a definite pattern of paralleling events form the first book with those of the second.” 651

Buby describes Mary’s relationship to Jesus which parallels her witness to the birth of the Church at Pentecost.

“Just as Mary was physically the mother of her son, so also she actively assists


at the birth of the Church. Through her prayer — a prayer of waiting and expectation of the fulfillment of the promises of the Risen Lord — Mary becomes again an active instrument or better, a consenting human person who disposes herself once again as at the Annunciation to receive the gift of the Spirit. The overshadowing of the Spirit brought about the birth of Jesus, the son of Mary. Now the descent of the Spirit impregnates all present in the upper room to preach and witness to their new birth experience as the community of Jesus, or as it will come to be known, the ‘Church.’”  

Buby reminds the reader that Mary is depicted as a woman of faith and prayer in Luke’s gospel. This final appearance of Mary in Luke/Acts captures her vital role in the life of the nascent Church.

“Mary’s place is important both symbolically and historically, for without her the woman would have been named in the emerging Church. Luke’s universalism and his concern for salvation history did not allow him to avoid mentioning Mary. She consistently is presented as a woman of faith and prayer, whether that be at Galilee for the Annunciation event, or in the Temple for the rites of purification or for the Passover, or, finally, in the upper room in Jerusalem awaiting the descent of the Spirit promised by her son Jesus.”

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652 Buby, SM, 87

653 Buby, SM, 87
Comparison / Conclusion: Acts 1:14

In Acts of the Apostles, a Lapide uses the Trinitarian theme in demonstrating Mary’s relationship with God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In his interpretation, he refers to Mary as "Mother of the Apostles," and describes Mary’s prayerful presence in the upper room when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles. A Lapide describes Mary as the "Mother to the Church" as well as a "Mother of the Disciples."

“The exegesis of Acts of the Apostles 1,14 presents this clearly: ‘All remained as one in prayer as well as the women and Mary the Mother of Jesus,’ and Cornelius wants to make it understood that she was the representative of Christ: And Mary the Mother of Jesus were as it were the mother of a family and mother of this holy meeting of the family of Christ, for when Christ who was the father of the family ascended, he left his beloved mother to serve as a connection, thus she served as the mother of the Apostles and all believers." 654

Buby offers a similar reflection on Mary’s role because she is the woman of faith who witnessed the birth of the Church. Buby describes Mary in a similar way to a Lapide as the prayerful presence in the upper room by calling her the "ecclesia orans." Buby stresses that Mary is a woman of faith and prayer, stressing the important Lucan theme of prayer in his gospel.

In summary, Buby agrees with the importance a Lapide gives to Mary’s presence at the Cenacle when the Holy Spirit imparted his sevenfold gifts upon the Apostles at Pentecost. Mary is the ecclesia orans, a woman who witnessed the birth of the Church along with the twelve.

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654 Noll, 222, "Ebenso deutlich bringt die Exegese zu Apg 1, 14: 'Alle verharrten einmütig im Gebet zusammen mit den Frauen und Maria, der Mutter Jesu,' zum Vorschein, dass Cornelius Maria als Statthalterin Christi verstanden wissen will: 'Und Maria, die Mutter Jesu, war gleichsam Familienmutter dieser heiligen Versammlung und Familie Christi. Denn als Christus, der Familienvater, in den Himmel ging, liess er seine geliebte Mutter auf Erden zurück, damit sie an seiner Statt gleichsam Mutter der Apostel und aller Gläubigen sei.'"
A Lapide's commentary on Jn 1:13 and Mary presented in Commentaria in SS. Lucam et Joannem

John 1:13 - Born of God

"Who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." 655

This particular passage from Jn 1:13 contains a textual critical question for the exegetes. A Lapide offers the following interpretation in light of this Johannine passage from chapter one, verse 13.

"The divine generation of the son of God is not from blood, nor from the will and concupiscence of the flesh and of men, or the sons of men, but it is from God; it is from the will, predestination, choice and love of God." 656

Contemporary Catholic Commentaries on Jn 1:13 and Mary

In Mary of Galilee, Vol I, Buby offers the following interpretation of this important text in John’s gospel regarding the virgin birth.

"John 1:13 is in the heart of the Prologue of John which introduces the Word of God who pre-exists with God before becoming flesh, that is, taking on our human nature. Though the verse we are considering is translated from the Greek manuscripts as “who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God,” there are other ancient manuscripts which are written in Latin and attest to the possibility of an early reading which would suggest the virginal birth of Jesus from Mary.” 657

In Buby’s commentary on John 1:13, he uses textual criticism and describes this passage at the "heart of the prologue of John, which introduces the Word of God, who preexists with God before

655 A Lapide, Commentaria in SS Lucam et Joannem, 306, “Qui non ex sanguinibus neque ex voluntate carnis neque ex voluntate viri sed ex Deo nati sunt.”

656 A Lapide, 306, “Ex adverso divina generatio filiorum Dei non ex sanguinibus, nec ex voluntate et concupiscientia carnis et viri, uti et filiorum hominum, sed est ex Deo, id est ex Dei voluntate, praedestinatione, electione, charitate.”

657 Buby, SM, 115, Mary of Galilee, Vol I
becoming flesh, that is, taking on our human nature." Buby cites a number of Church Fathers whom he calls "ancient witnesses," such as Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Ambrose and Augustine. Buby also states that he cites the use of Greek manuscripts that assisted him in understanding this particular passage in John's gospel.

While this text is important for mariologists, this thirteenth verse from chapter one of John's Gospel is significant in the fact that the Gospel of John gives testimony to the Virgin birth in the Prologue, the same way that Matthew and Luke do in their opening chapters.

Buby also cites an explanation regarding the pronoun in John 1:13, whether it is singular or plural in the Greek texts.

"'[He] who was born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God' This may have been the original reading or the singular number may have arisen either from a desire to make the Fourth gospel allude explicitly to the virgin birth or from the influence of the singular number of the immediate preceding pronoun 'his' in verse 12."

Other than de la Potterie and Buby, there is silence among Catholic exegetes regarding this passage from John. Contemporary Catholic exegesis does not place great importance on Mary's role in Jn 1:13, with the exception of Buby; a Lapide does not offer much new insight into Mary's role in this Johannine text.

658 Buby, SM, 115
659 Buby, SM, 115
660 Buby, SM, Mary: Woman of Courage, Woman of Faith, 2
661 De la Potterie, 133-132, "In the Johannine vision of the Incarnation, the conception and the virginal birth of the man Jesus are then the key which gives access to the mystery of faith: Jesus was engendered by God! He is "the only (unique) Son, coming from the Father" It is evident that verse 14 closely parallels what we read in verse 13; "He was born... of God himself." Verses 13 and 14 of the Prologue of the Gospel of John, read in this manner, agree perfectly with what we read earlier on the subject of the text of Luke 1:35. Each of the two evangelists, in his own manner and in his own language, tell us that the virginal birth is the almost necessary "sign" in order that those who believe in Jesus may be able to discover in him the mystery of his divine filiation."
And the third day, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee: and the mother of Jesus was there.

2 And Jesus also was invited, and his disciples, to the marriage.

3 And the wine failing, the mother of Jesus saith to him: They have no wine.

4 And Jesus saith to her: Woman, what is that to me and to thee? My hour is not yet come.

5 His mother saith to the waiters: Whatsoever he shall say to you, do ye.

6 Now there were set there six water-pots of stone, according to the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three measures apiece.

7 Jesus saith to them: Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

8 And Jesus saith to them: Draw out now, and carry to the chief steward of the feast. And they carried it.

9 And when the chief steward had tasted the water made wine, and knew not whence it was, but the waiters know who had drawn the water; the chief steward calleth the bridegroom.

10 And saith to him: Every man at first setteth forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse. But thou hast kept the good wine until now.

11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee; and manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

12 After this he went down to Capharnaum, he and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they remained there not many days.

In his analysis of the Cana story in John, a Lapide states that Mary “was invited as a friend to a wedding.” A Lapide states that Simon the Canaanite – bridegroom, was son of Cleophas, brother of Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

However, Epiphanius states that there is no mention of Joseph – “for he was now dead.”

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662 A Lapide, Commentaria in Ss. Lucam et Joannem, 104, “Et die tertio nuptiae factae sunt in Cana Galilaeae et erat mater Iesu ibi vocatus est autem ibi et Iesus et discipuli eius ad nuptias et deficient vino dicit mater Iesu ad eum vinum non habent et dicit ei Iesus quid mihi et tibi est mulier nondum venit hora mea dicit mater eius ministri quodcumque dixerit vobis facite erant autem ibi lapideae hydriae sex positae secundum purificationem Iudaorum capientes singulae metretas binas vel ternas dicit eis Iesus implete hydrias aqua et impleverunt eas usque ad summmum et dicit eis Jesus hauriete nunc et ferte arachitriclino et tulerunt ut autem gustavit arachitriclinus aquam vinum factam et non sciebat unde esset ministri autem sciebant qui haurient aquam vocat sponsum arachitriclinus et dicit ei omnis homo primum bonum vinum ponit et cum inebriati fuerint tunc id quod deterior est tu servasti bonum vinum usque adhuc hoc fecit initium signorum Iesu in Cana Galilaeae et manifestavit gloriam suam et crediderunt in eum discipuli eius post hoc descendit Capharnaum ipse et mater eius et fratres eius et discipuli eius et ibi manserunt non multis diebus.”

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according to S. Epiphanius.

Why was Jesus present for the nuptials? A Lapide states four reasons:

- To pay respect to his kinfolk;
- To give an example of humility, in being present at the marriage of poor people;
- That he might make himself known to His disciples – show himself as the Messiah.
- That he might give sanction to the marriage.

In verse 4, a Lapide states that Mary did not ask for a miracle in an untimely fashion. She asks out of necessary charity and piety, as Cyril, Bernard and others say. Mary seems to modestly hold her peace and rightly yields to her son, who is the Messiah, the Son of God.

Using the four senses of Scripture, a Lapide offers the following interpretation of the Cana passage; analogously linking the soul to the virtues, as a bride is married to her husband.

"Tropologically, a holy soul by faith, hope, chastity, and charity is like a bride married to Christ. She becomes the bride of Christ, who leaves all the allurements of the world, transfers her whole love to Christ, and for Him covers and veils her head, that is, he mind, and all her senses, so as to converse with Him continually above the clouds in heaven, and dedicates and consecrates her whole self to Him." 663

In verse 6, a Lapide interprets the six stone jars as virtues of the soul.

"Tropologically, [S. Bernard expounds thus]: The six waterpots are the six purifying virtues of the soul. "The first waterpot, and the first cleansing, is in compunction; ... The second is confession; for all things are washed by confession. The third is the giving of alms; ... The fourth, forgiveness of injuries; ... The fifth is affliction of the body; ... The sixth is obedience to the commandments." 664

663 A Lapide, 81, "Tropologice: quomodo anima sancta per fidem, speram, castitatem, charitatem, religionem, quasi sponsa nubat Christo, fuse ostendi, ad illa: Despondi vos uni viro virginem castam exhibere Christo. Ipsa ergo est nympha Christi, quae relictis omnibus mundi illecebris, amorem omnem in Christum transfert, illique caput, id est mentem sensusque omnes obnubit et velat, ut supra nubes in coelo cum eo jugiter versetur, illique se totam dedicat et consecrat."

In verse 8, a Lapide further explains the miracle of water into wine with eucharistic overtones. His interpretation comes from patristic sources.

"From this conversion of water into wine, the Fathers prove the conversion of bread and wine in the Eucharist into the Body and Blood of Christ. And they add that it seems to be a greater miracle for Christ to turn water into wine than wine into blood. For wine is nearer akin to blood than water is to wine."665

In verse 11, a Lapide cites the symbolic understanding of wine in this important Johannine pericope.

"The symbolical reason is, because wine is the most fitting symbol of the grace, charity, devotion, fervour, strength, with which Christ indues His own."666

Also in verse 11, a Lapide evaluates the Wedding Feast, using the senses of Scripture (allegorical and tropological).

"Allegorically, the reason was because this marriage represented the marriage union of Christ with human nature, which took place in His Incarnation."667

"Tropologically, the reason was that by these nuptials and by wine He signified the union, and as it were the marriage of our soul, through grace and charity with God. The Mother of Jesus was there, that is, virginal chastity, and the simple faith of the disciples of Jesus, such faith as when humbly acknowledging the wine of our devotion and fervour is failing, we entreat Him to bestow it upon us."668

In verse 12 a Lapide uses the anagogical sense to interpret the symbolism of the celestial

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665 A Lapide, 87, "Ex hac conversione aquae in vinum, Patres probant conversionem panis et vini in corpus probant conversionem panis et vini in corpus et sanguinem Christi in Eucharistia, adduntque majus videri miraculum, quod Chrstitus aquam in vinum, quam quod vimum in sanguinem converterit; vinum enim pripiquius est sanguini, quam sit aqua vino."

666 A Lapide, 90, "Symbolica causa est, quod vimum aptissimum sit symbolum gratiae, charitatis, devotionis, fervoris, fortitudinis, quas suis suggerit Christus."

667 A Lapide, 90, "Allelorica causa fuit, quod hae nuptiae repraesentabant connubium Christi cum humana natura, factum in incarnatione Christi."

668 A Lapide, 90, "Tropologica causa fuit, ut per hasce nuptias et vinum significaret conjunctionem et quasi connubium animae nostrae, per gratiam et charitatem, cum Christo et Deo. Adest mater Jesu, id est virginalis castitas, et discipulorum Christi simplicitas et fides in Jesum, qui, cum humiliter agnoverimus vinum devotionis, et fervoris nobis deficere, illudque ab eo flagitaverimus."
marriage feast.

"Anagogically, the marriage of the Lamb will be perfected in heaven."\(^{669}\)
"After the marriage Jesus returned with His Mother and friends to their house at Nazareth."\(^{670}\)

Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Jn 2:1-12 and Mary

In *Mary of Galilee, Vol. I*, Buby states that the miracle at Cana is the first of the seven signs of Jesus in John’s Gospel. Buby point out that the significance of this first sign is Christological, and not Mariological. He also links the Cana and Calvary stories through the common use of words and symbols which are typically classified as “Johannine.” While the passage is Christological in nature, Buby presents the Marian dimension of this passage which has been supported and maintained in the writings of the Church Fathers.

Buby states that, in the patristic writings, both “Cana and Calvary were within a Messianic perspective because of the common symbolism”\(^{671}\) found in both stories. He also speaks of the terms “woman” and “hour,” which are significant terms in John’s gospel. “Symbolism flowing from the water to the wine of Cana and the blood and water flowing from Jesus’ side immediately after the giving of the Mother of Jesus to the beloved disciple and the disciple to the Mother lead us to such a messianic interpretation.”

“In the canonical Gospel of John, that is, as it is now presented in its final form in the New Testament, the emphasis of Cana is a Christological one, not a Marian one. Jesus is at the center of this story as is seen by verses 11 and 12. There are also possibilities of ecclesial interests such as the Eucharist and Baptism in the scene. Mary

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\(^{669}\) A Lapide, 90-91, “Anagogice, nuptiae agni perficientur in coelo.”

\(^{670}\) A Lapide, 91, “Peractis nuptiis in Cana, Jesus cum matre et suis reidiit domum, puta in Nazereth.”

\(^{671}\) Buby, SM, 124,*Mary of Galilee. Vol I.*
is present in the account as a necessary catalyst for the first of the signs of Jesus. In the final great sign, that of the Death and Exaltation of Jesus on the Cross, Mary is again present. There are some parallels in Cana and Calvary in the themes of water, blood, wine, woman, hour, disciple, and mother of Jesus. Yet, Cana can also be studied in itself separate from John 19:25-27 and still present a positive image of Mary.\(^{672}\)
A Lapide's commentary on John 19:25-28a and Mary
presented in *Commentaria in Ss. Lucam et Joannem*

John 19:25-28a - Mary at the Foot of the Cross

“25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen.
26 When Jesus therefore had seen his mother and the disciple standing whom he loved, he saith to his mother: Woman, behold thy son.
27 After that, he saith to the disciple: Behold thy mother. And from that hour, the disciple took her to his own.
28 Afterwards, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, said: I thirst.”

A Lapide commences his exegesis of Mary at the Foot of the Cross in chapter 19 of John’s gospel by stating that “Christ might suffer so that He and His mother (who suffers for her dying son) might give humanity a perfect example of patience and charity.” A Lapide recalls the saints who were inspired by Mary’s witness at the foot of the Cross. St. Ambrose “looked with loving eyes on the wounds of Jesus.” St. Anselm says that “Mary stood patiently and fervently in faith watching her Son on the Cross.” A Lapide further states that although she escaped the pangs of childbirth she suffered beneath the Cross of her Son.

A Lapide offers commentary on the Beloved disciple with assistance from the hagiographical

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673 A Lapide, *Commentaria in Ss. Lucam et Joannem* 129, “Stabant autem iuxta crucem Iesu mater eius et soror matris eius Maria Cleopae et Maria Magdalene cum vidisset ergo Iesus materem et discipulum stantem quem diligebat dicit matri suae mulier ecce filius tuus deinde dicit discipulo ecce mater tua et ex illa hora acceptit eam discipulam in sua postea scien Iesus quia iam omnia consummata sunt ut consummareetur scriptura dicit sitio.”

674 A Lapide, 614, “Voluit hoc Christus, tum ut magis pateretur matris dolentis aspectu, tum ut ipsa sibi compatiendo perfectum patientiae et charitatis nobis dare exemplar.”

675 A Lapide, 616, “Spectabat piis oculis filii vulnera, per quem sciebat omnibus futuram redemptionem.”

676 A Lapide, 616, “Stabat Maria in fide Jesu constantissima et patientissima: nam discipulis fugientibus cunctisque viris recedentibus, in gloriam totius feminei sexus, inter tot pressures filii sui constanter ipsa sola stabat in fide Jesu firma, et pulchra stabat.”

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writings of St. Ambrose and St. John Chrysostom. Epiphanius alludes to the fact that "Mary had no
to children, property or home." Therefore, Mary was poor and was devoted to poverty.

In this particular passage, a Lapide does not make use of the four senses of Scripture. This is
unusual in the writings of a Lapide.

**Contemporary Catholic Commentary on Jn 19:25-28a and Mary**

In *Mary of Galilee, Vol. I*, Buby states that there are a number of intriguing questions regarding
the persons involved in this Johannine scene at the foot of the Cross. The two dominant characters,
next to Jesus on the Cross, are Mary and the Beloved Disciple. Buby poses a question regarding the
identity of the disciple: Is it the apostle John, son of Zebedee, or is it a symbolic figure of all
believers? Buby mentions that John's Crucifixion scene differs from that of the synoptics, wherein
the women and the Beloved Disciple are looking on from a distance.678

Buby explains the relationship and connection between the Mother of Jesus and the "Woman"
of John's gospel, both in the Cana and the Calvary pericopes.

"In John 19:25-27 three traits characterize the Mother of Jesus which are not
found in the other Gospels ...(1) The insistence with which the Mother of Jesus is
Called 'Woman.' The coincidence in this regard between the two scenes of Cana and
Calvary betrays an intention which ought to be of doctrinal import. In particular ...
it is that she is Woman in some manner par excellence that Mary is given as mother to
St. John; (2) she has, then, other children besides Jesus, for the Savior himself gives
his beloved disciple to Mary as her son; (3) this spiritual maternity is united to
Golgotha ...

These traits characterized likewise the Mother of the Messiah in the
Apocalypse. She also is called Woman ... She also has other children besides the
Messiah; finally, to her is also attributed a metaphorical childbirth which is united to
the Cross ... It becomes certain that we are in the presence, once more, of an authentic

677 A Lapide, 618, "Si vero habuisset virum, si habuisset domum, si habuisset filios, in sua secessisset, et non
ad alienum. Hinc vide quam pauper et paupertatis studiosa fuerit B. Virgo."

678 Buby, SM, 130-131

Another question Buby analyzes in his exegesis is how many women were at the foot of the Cross. Buby states: “It ranges from four to two depending on the commentator. Recently, exegetes have two pairs of women, one unnamed, the other named. The first mentions are the relatives of Jesus, then follow the two named Mary who are distinguished by additional information.”680

There is a messianic and ecclesiological understanding of the Calvary text from John which links both the Cana and Calvary scene to the seamless garment in John 19:23-25. These scenes are connected because of common themes and vocabulary used in these Johannine pericopes.

Buby concludes by saying that “Mary and the Beloved Disciple represent all Christians as they look upon Jesus and believe. Then, as they receive his Spirit in the flowing of the blood and water, the community begins.”681 From the side of Christ crucified flow blood and water, analagous to the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist flowing from the fountain of grace in Christ’s visible body, the Church. Buby states, “Mary in the Gospel, is always at the center of the community either that of Israel at Cana or that of the Church, which is begun on Calvary. Intimacy, love, and mutual sharing are presented at the event at the foot of the Cross.”682

679 Buby, SM, 157
680 Buby, SM, 132
681 Buby, SM, 138
682 Buby, SM, 138
Comparison and Conclusion: Gospel of John

In a Lapide’s interpretation of the Wedding Feast of Cana (Jn 2:1-12) he uses the tropological, anagogical and allegorical senses to describe the wedding feast. A Lapide uses Patristic sources to instruct the faithful that there are Eucharistic overtones in the wedding feast of Cana. He quotes from St. Cyril, Bernard and Epiphanius. Once again, a Lapide stresses the virtues of a life lived in the Lord. In this case, he describes the virtues of the soul, likening them to a bride married to her husband.

In the scene from Calvary, a Lapide quotes from Ss. Ambrose, Anselm, John Chrysostom and Epiphanius, describing Mary’s perfect example of patience and charity while she stood at the foot of the cross.

In John 19:25-28, Buby analyzes the two dominant characters at the foot of the cross: Mary and the beloved disciple. Buby poses questions about their identity. Buby analyzes this from a historical critical perspective. In this gospel, Mary is always in the center of the community. Buby states, "Intimacy, love and mutual sharing are presented at the event at the foot of the cross. Disciple ship and believe in Jesus as the messiah and the revealer of God began at Cana through the sign of water made into wine, while at Calvary, sign becomes event, in the continuing of the love Jesus had for the disciple and his mother, now being theirs to share with each other." 683

Noll demonstrates a Lapide’s ability to connect Old and New Testament passages which complement each other. In this instance, a Lapide parallels Proverbs 31:18 with the Johannine scene of Mary at Calvary.

"Thus the co-operation of Mary under the Cross is derived from John 19,26 and is supported by the allegory of the strong woman found in Proverbs 31,18. Also

683 Buby, SM, 138
the ecclesiological dimension of Mary is found and explained in this context.\footnote{Noll, 125, "So wird z. B. die Mitwirkung Mariens unter dem Kreuz aus Joh 19,26 abgeleitet und durch eine Allegorese der starken Frau in Prov 31,18 gestützt. Auch die ekklesiologische Dimension Mariens wird in diesem Kontext erklärt."}

In a Lapide’s interpretation of the Wedding Feast of Cana (Jn 2:1-12) he uses the tropological, anagogical and \textit{allegorical} senses to describe the wedding feast. A Lapide uses Patristic sources to instruct the faithful that there are Eucharistic overtones in the wedding feast of Cana. He quotes from St. Cyril, Bernard and Epiphanius. Once again, a Lapide stresses the virtues of a life lived in the Lord. In this case, he describes the virtues of the soul, likening them to a bride married to her husband.

In the scene from Calvary, a Lapide quotes from Ss. Ambrose, Anselm, John Chrysostom and Epiphanius, describing Mary’s perfect example of patience and charity while she stood at the foot of the cross.

Noll presents a Lapide’s imaginative commentary regarding the words of Jesus and the emotions experienced by the Beloved Disciple and the Mother of Jesus.

"In the beginning of his exegesis of \textit{John 19,26} Cornelius tries to discover the thoughts of Jesus with his words ‘Woman, behold thy Son,’ trying to deduce a prophecy of the transmission to Mary as the Church interprets: ‘Women, as if he wanted to say; mother be a strong and high-minded person who I may place as a rock and a column of my church be strong in order to repel with steadfastness the attacks against her and destroy the enemy with advice and prayer not only now but until the end of the world.’"\footnote{Noll, 217-218, "Am Beginn seiner Exegese zu Joh 19,26 versetzt sich Cornelius in die Gesinnung Jesu und versucht, die Gedanken, die ihn bei diesem Wort: ‘Frau, siehe da deinen Sohn,’ bewegt haben, in Worte zu fassen indem er sie als Prophezeiung der Sendung Marias für die Kirche deuten: ‘Frau, als ob er sagen wollte: Mutter, sei immer wieder die starke und hochherzige Frau, die an meiner Stelle Basis, Fels und Säule meiner Kirche sein möge, um sie mit dieser Kraft zu stützen und alle Anstürme gegen sie mit deiner Standhaftigkeit, diesem Rat und Gebet abzuwehren und zu vernichten, nicht nur jetzt, sondern zu allen Zeiten bis zum Ende der Welt.’"}

In Buby’s commentary on John 1:13, he uses textual criticism and describes this passage at the "heart of the prologue of John, which introduces the Word of God, who preexists with God before
becoming flesh, that is, taking on our human nature. Buby cites a number of Church Fathers whom he calls "ancient witnesses" such as Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Ambrose and Augustine. Buby also states that he cites the use of Greek manuscripts that assisted him in understanding this particular passage in John's gospel.

In Buby's analysis of the Wedding Feast at Cana, he describes it as the first of Jesus' seven signs in John's gospel. Buby is using the principle of Philology to analyze the text. He stresses the christological titles used in this pericope and alerts the reader to such words as "woman", "mother of Jesus", "hour" and glory as important. Buby states, "the emphasis of Cana is a christological one not a Marian one. Jesus is at the center of this story as seen in verses 11 and 12. There are also possibilities of ecclesial interests such as the Eucharist or Baptism in the scene. Mary is present in the account as a necessary catalyst as the first of the signs of Jesus." Much like a Lapide, Buby sees sacramental overtones in this Johannine account. Buby also mentions that the Patristic reading of Cana has a messianic perspective, and has common symbolism found in the Cana, as well as the Calvary, pericopes.

In John 19:25-28, Buby analyzes the two dominant characters at the foot of the cross: Mary and the beloved disciple. Buby poses questions about their identity. Buby analyzes this from a historical critical perspective. In this gospel, Mary is always in the center of the community. Buby states, "Intimacy, love and mutual sharing are presented at the event at the foot of the cross. Disciple ship and believe in Jesus as the messiah and the revealer of God began at Cana through the sign of water made into wine, while at Calvary, sign becomes event, in the continuing of the love Jesus had for the disciple

\[686^\text{Buby, SM, 115}\]

\[687^\text{Buby, SM, 115}\]
and his mother, now being theirs to share with each other."
Introduction to Rev 12:1-17 and Mary
presented in Commentaria in Apocalypsis Sancti Joannis

Rev 12:1-17 - Woman Clothed with the Sun

"And a great sign appeared in the heaven: A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars:

And being with child, she cried travailing in birth, and was in pain to be delivered.
And there was seen another sign in heaven: and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads, and ten horns: and on his heads seven diadems:
And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to be delivered; that, when she should be delivered, he might devour her son.
And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with an iron rod: and her son was taken up to God and to his throne.
And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared by God, that there they should feed her a thousand two hundred sixty days.
And there was a great battle in heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels.
And they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven.
And that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who seduceth the whole world; and he was cast unto the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.
And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying: Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ: because the accuser of our brethren is cast forth, who accused them before our God day and night.
And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of the testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death.
Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you that dwell therein. Woe to the earth, and to the sea, because the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time.
And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman, who brought forth the man child:
And there were given to the woman two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the desert unto her place where she is nourished for a time and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.
And the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman, water as it were a river; that he might cause her to be carried away by the river.
And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the river, which the dragon cast out of his mouth.
And the dragon was angry against the woman: and went to make war with the rest of her
seed, who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. 

Because the Book of Revelation contains a great deal of allegory and symbolism, one must carefully consider the genre and the cultural milieu of first century Christianity to properly interpret the complexities of the signs, symbols, characters and events which take place within the Book of the Apocalypse. The apocalyptic symbolism, with its layered meanings, must be studied and analyzed within the whole context of biblical literature.

Who is the “woman clothed with the sun” in chapter 12 of Revelation? This last section of the dissertation will attempt to offer a biblical survey of the literature that has been published since the Second Vatican Council on the image of the apocalyptic woman in chapter 12. In this section, an attempt will also be made to study the scripture scholars who have written about the Book of Revelation since Vatican II, and study how their writings developed chronologically and began to give a name and a face along with reasons regarding to the Woman of chapter 12 regarding her identity.

This survey of the literature will be a follow-up to Bernard Le Frois, SVD’s dissertation The

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689 A Lapide, Commentaria in Apocalypsis Sancti Joannis Ed. A. Crampon. Paris, 1863.224 “Et signum magnum paruit in caelo mulier amicta sole et luna sub pedibus eius et in utero habens et clamat parturiens et cruciatur ut pariat et visum est aliud signum in caelo et ecce draco magnus rufus habens capita septem et cornua decem et in capitis suis septem diademata et cauda eius trahebat tertiam partem stellarum caeli et misit eas in terram et draco stetit ante mulierem quae erat paritura ut cum peperisset filium eius devoraret et peperit filium masculum qui recturus erit omnes gentes in virga ferrea et raptus est filius eius ad Deum et ad thronum eius et mulier fugit in solitudinem ubi habet locum paratum a Deo ut ibi pascant illam diebus mille ducentis sexaginta et factum est proelium in caelo Michael et angeli eius proeliabantur cum draconis et draco pignabat et angeli eius et non valuerunt neque locus inventus est eorum amplius in caelo et proiectus est draco ille magnus serpens antiquus qui vocatur Diabolus et Satanas qui seduit universum orbem proiectus est in terram et angeli eius cum illo missi sunt et audivi vocem magnam in caelo dicentem nunc facta est salus et virtus et regnum Dei nostri et potestas Christi eius quia proiectus est accusator fratrum nostrorum qui accusabat illos ante conspectum Dei nostri die ac nocte et ipsi vicerunt illum propter sanguinem agni et propter verbum testimoni sui et non dilexerunt animam suam usque ad mortem propter sanguinem caeli et qui habitatis in eis vae et mari quia descendit diabolus ad vos habens iram magnam scies quod modicum tempus habet et postquam vidit draco quod proiectus est in terram persecutus est mulierem quae peperit masculum et datae sunt mulieri duae alae aquilae magnae ut volaret in desertum in locum suum ubi altur per tempus et tempora et dimidium temporis a facie serpentis et misit serpens ex ore suo post mulierem aquam tamquam flumen ut eam faceret trahit a flumine et adiuvit terra mulierem et apuerit terra os suum et absorbit flumen quod misit draco de ore suo et iratus est draco in mulierem et abiit facere proelium cum reliquis de semine eius qui custodiunt mandata Dei et habent testimonium Iesu.”
Woman Clothed with the Sun: Individual or Collective? published in the Marian year, 1954. In seven chapters, Le Frois surveys the first fifty years of this century in terms of the scholarly literature which is available on the identity of the woman in chapter 12. He commences the study with both Catholic and non-Catholic authors and interpretations of the texts. He then continues with a survey of the patristic testimonies which have been handed down through the centuries. Le Frois follows the survey of patristic literature with a survey of the apocalyptic genre and so presents an understanding the symbolism within chapter 12. He also attempts to envision whether the woman may be identified as an individual, whether it be a goddess or the Mother of the Incarnate Word, or whether the woman is identified in a collective sense, representing a group of people. He eventually concludes by stating that the woman may be a concrete person who embodies in herself a collective group.

Another prominent scripture scholar on the Book of Revelation is Pierre Prigent, author of L'Acolypse de Saint Jean. His work is noted because of his outstanding exegesis regarding the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse. Prigent, as well as Le Frois, diachronically explain the origins of various interpretations on the Woman clothed with the sun. A masterful commentary by David Aune written in three volumes called World Biblical Commentary: Revelation 6-16 is also included in this survey of apocalyptic literature because of his diachronic approach to Scripture.

By studying the works of Le Frois, Prigent and Aune, a detailed and scholarly analysis of the works written during the last fifty years can be attained especially in regards to the symbolic

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interpretation of who the woman is. One must keep in mind that the woman is not a historical one. Interpretations usually fall within a number of categories. Some say that the Woman is identified as the Church which was persecuted in the first century. Other scholars have seen the image as the New Israel or even Jerusalem. However, throughout the history of the History, a secondary interpretation has been that the Woman who gives birth to a son in Chapter 12 is the mother of the Messiah, who historically has been given the name Mary, the mother of Jesus.

The section of this thesis will conclude with Marian implications regarding the text, especially in light of a Lapide’s work and that of Vatican II biblical scholarship. A special attempt will be made to contextualize this passage within the church’s liturgical life, always seeing parallels and impact on other Marian Scriptural texts such as: Genesis 3:15 and John 19:25-28 along with Revelation 12. Marian theology has been influential on the Ecclesiology of Vatican II, especially in calling Mary the “Mother of the Church.” This title places the Woman of Revelation 12 within a Marian context, and gives the person of faith, better insight into her identity and meaning for the 21st century Christian, always respectful of both modern biblical, scriptural and Roman Catholic interpretation of the text.

A Lapide’s commentary on Rev 12:1-17 and Mary

A Lapide’s commentary on the Book of Revelation offers meaning to the title, “Woman clothed with the Sun,” as understood by the early Church and down through the ages. He offers an ecclesiological interpretation of the Woman when he says,

“Symbolically, Viegas says: The Church is ‘a sign, that is a miracle, because it was a marvelous institution of the Church, that propagates and increases through the Apostles in spite of so many enemies.’

He then explains that the “woman” may also be understood in a Mariological context as it is understood by St. Ambrose, who states that Mary is the mother, even the grandmother, of the Church who gave birth to Jesus, who founded the Church.

“By right, therefore Mary is clothed with the sun, who is clothed with the most profound of divine wisdom farther than what is believed, she has penetrated the abyss.”

“The moon is to be seen as a pearl. What pearl is more pure and beautiful than the virginity of the Blessed Virgin.”

“Thus in the Blessed Virgin, the highest virginity, maternity, and fecundity are joined. As it can be rightly said of Christ:

“Fourth, like the moon, thus the Blessed Virgin, is called the Queen of Heaven.”

“Fifth, this moon supports the woman, so with the Blessed Virgin who supports the Church with her merits and prayers, like she is the base and the columns, supporting and sustaining.”

Furthermore, in St. Bernard’s sermon On the Blessed Virgin, he uses the words from the book of the Apocalypse: “A great sign appeared,” through these 12 stars it receives 12 prerogatives of grace, by which the Blessed Virgin was crowned before the

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of Victory Church in Chicago translated Cornelius’ entire commentary on Revelation 12 for the purpose of this dissertation.)

694 A Lapide, 235, “Jure ergo Maria sole perhibetur amicta, quae profundissimam divinae sapientiae, ultra quam credi valeat, penetrativit abyssum.”

695 A Lapide, 237, “...lunam margaritarum ideam videri. Quae margarita purior et pulchrrior virginitate ac B. Virgine?”

696 A Lapide, 237, “...lunam margaritarum ideam videri. Quae margarita purior et pulchrrior virginitate ac B. Virgine?”

697 A Lapide, 237, “Quarto, sicut luna, ita et B. Virgo, est et dicitur Regina coeli.”

698 A Lapide, 237, “Quinto, sicut luna hic muliere fulcit, ita B. Virgo Ecclesiam suis precibus et meritis, quasi basis et columna, fulcit et sustendat.”

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In verse 2, A Lapide offers a spiritual interpretation of Mary’s torment or pain which she experienced on earth.

In his exegesis, a Lapide parallels the woman’s flight into the desert in chapter 12 with the Holy Family’s flight into Egypt, as described in the second chapter of Matthew’s gospel.

“Note: it alludes to the flight of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Christ into Egypt. Conversely, it refers to the flight of Christians into the deserts and caves at the time of Decius (just as St. Paul, the first hermit, fled from him – by witness of St. Jerome) and the other persecutors.”

A Lapide also states that, among the Church Fathers, there is debate whether Mary died or was carried into heaven like the prophets Eli and Enoch in the Old Testament.

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699 A Lapide, 238, “Porro S. Bernardus serm. De B. Virgine, in haec Apocolypse verba: Signum magnum apparuit, per has duodecim stellas accipit duodecim praerogativas gratitarum, quibus prae caeteris coronatur B. Virgo.”

700 A Lapide, 244, “Nota: Alludit ad fugam B. Virginis et Christi in Aegyptum. Rursum ad fugam Christianorum in solitudines et speluncas tempore Decii (uti sub eo fugit S. Paulus primus Eremita, teste S. Hieronymo) et aliorum persecutorum.”
Buby would agree with a Lapide’s analysis that the Woman clothed with the Sun in chapter 12 must be seen in both the Mariological and ecclesiological contexts. He would further demonstrate that New Testament passages, such as Mary at the Foot of the Cross (Jn 19:25-28), assist the exegete in understanding the term “woman,” and may offer part of the whole meaning in that Mary, the mother of Jesus is the “woman” of Revelation 12.

“Contemporary exegesis places the scene of the Woman in an ecclesiological context both historically and symbolically. Is there a possibility of synthesizing the ecclesial interpretation with those exegetes who see a Marian dimension in Revelation 12? If we only had the verses of the Apocalypse, it would be difficult to see a Marian interpretation because there is no evidence of a virginal birth for the Woman nor is she named. The symbol is more a collective one of the Church and God and the Messiah.”

Buby connects the Old Testament Marian image of the Daughter of Zion with the Johannine image of Mary of Cana and Calvary.

“Within the Bible the title Daughter of Zion occurs in the prophetic texts and in the Psalms. This image for Jerusalem is also an image of the Church in its emergence and in its tradition. Mary too, is personification of the Daughter of Zion despite the paradoxical nature of this biblical title. Mary is also the Woman in the Fourth Gospel who is present at the foot of the Cross and to whom the Beloved Disciple is given. Many exegetes have seen an ecclesial image in this Woman at the foot of the Cross. It is here, within a Johannine tradition that we can see the possibility of merging both the collective and the personal through the texts Gerhoh of Reichersberg (1093-1169 C.E.) States that ‘From the Church which is holy, Mary was the first beginning.’ Thus the theme of the Woman in Revelation seen primarily as Church can also be seen in the light of the other episodes of the New Testament in which Mary is called Woman. A Feuillet affirms.”

In conclusion, Buby outlines three possible interpretations for the Woman of Revelation 12:

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702 Buby, SM, 156-157
1.) She is Israel, the Daughter of Zion, 2.) She is the Church, 3.) She is Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

"Medieval expositors and pastors and some contemporary exegetes and Mariologists see Mary as the Woman and model of the Church in this scene. Mary is the daughter of Zion . . . She is the quintessential expression of the old Israel as the community of faith and obedience, awaiting the coming of the Messiah, the community in which the Messiah is born. She is also the quintessential expression of the new Israel, of those who ‘believe’ and are justified on the grounds of their faith, of those who obey his word and who suffer for the testimony of Jesus."  

In his commentary, a Lapide emphasizes the identity of the woman clothed with the sun as the emerging church. However, a Lapide also acknowledges that there is a Mariological dimension to the woman. He uses the symbolic sense to understand the woman as the Church. He also quotes from St. Ambrose who states that Mary is the grandmother of the Church, giving birth to Jesus who founded the Church. In his typical pattern, a Lapide states the virtues of Mary as the woman clothed with the sun.

In similar fashion, Buby also recognizes the woman of Revelation 12 as the Church but also acknowledges the Patristic tradition (especially Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and St. Jerome) as well as the Liturgy of the Church that the woman is Mary, the mother of Jesus. Buby points out that the Liturgy of the Church supports this. Buby employs the historical critical method and provides a balanced approach in offering the plethora of theological opinions regarding the identity of the woman of the Apocalypse. He also uses the principle of the world behind the text to further support his exegesis.

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703 Buby, SM, 161-162

704 Buby, SM, 150

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Conclusion / Comparison: Revelation 12

In his commentary, a Lapide emphasizes the identity of the woman clothed with the sun as the emerging church. However, a Lapide also acknowledges that there is a Mariological dimension to the woman. He uses the **symbolic** sense to understand the woman as the Church. He also quotes from St. Ambrose who states that Mary is the grandmother of the Church, giving birth to Jesus who founded the Church. In his typical pattern, a Lapide states the virtues of Mary as the woman clothed with the sun.

In similar fashion, Buby also recognizes the Woman of Revelation 12 as the Church but also acknowledges the Patristic tradition (especially Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and St. Jerome) as well as the Liturgy of the Church that the woman is Mary, the mother of Jesus. Buby points out that the Liturgy of the Church supports this. Buby employs the historical critical method and provides a balanced approach in offering the plethora of theological opinions regarding the identity of the woman of the Apocalypse. He also uses the principle of the world behind the text to further support his exegesis.\(^{705}\)

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\(^{705}\)Buby, SM, 150
CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER FOUR

In chapter four of this study, there are the nineteen Marian passages from the New Testament analyzed in similar style to those Old Testament texts accommodated to Mary in chapter three of the present study. The passages are presented in chronological order.

The first two passages are Pauline in nature and are taken from Paul’s Letter to the Galatians 1:19 and 4:4. Both of these passages do not explicitly refer to Mary but are significant in understanding her role in the plan of salvation, particularly in the mystery of the Incarnation as Buby cites in Mary of Galilee, Vol. I, there is a foreshadowing of a woman in Galatians 4:4 who is Mary; however, the Christological, and not the Mariological nature of text here is emphasized and maintained. Both a Lapide and Buby comment on the virginity of Mary (Gal 4:4) and the meaning of the term “brother” in Gal 1:19 and have arrived at similar conclusions regarding these two texts implicitly referring to the Virgin Mary.

There are two Marcan passages with reference to Mary presented in Chapter 4. Both of these passages, Mk 3:31-35 and 6:1-6, are more Christological than Mariological in nature. It is worth noting that a Lapide does not even analyze Mk 3:31-35 in his commentaries; however, Buby includes this particular Marian text as well as Mk 6:1-6 in his work Mary of Galilee, Vol. I. Buby states that there is a silhouette of a woman who is the Virgin Mary in Mark’s Gospel but neither a Lapide nor Buby place great Mariological import to either of these Marcan texts. Yet, they have great value for the Mariologist because Mary is present and active in the life and ministry of Her Son Jesus in these two passages from Mark’s gospel.

There are three passages from Matthew’s gospel presented in this study: Mt 1:17, 1:18-25 and 2:1-7. All three passages form a significant part of Matthew’s Infancy Narratives (Chapter 1 & 2).
A Lapide analyzes these using the four senses of scripture as well as quoting the Church Fathers and medieval saints to show the link between the Mary of Matthew’s gospel and the prophecies of the Old Testament (linking these two verses: Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23) regarding the birth of the Messiah. Both a Lapide and Buby would agree that the Virgin Mary is foreshadowed in Isaiah, yet both have different methodologies in approaching these texts.

In chapter four, there are eight Marian passages analyzed from both the gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. These Lucan passages offer a portrait of Mary. The five Lucan texts which makeup the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary are analyzed: 1:26-38 (Annunciation), 1:39-45 (Visitation), 2:1-7 (Birth of Christ), 2:21-40 (Presentation of Jesus in the Temple and 2:41-52 (The Finding of Jesus in the Temple). Other Lucan texts presented are the Magnificat 1:46-55, as well as a comparison/contrast of the two key Marian verses Lk 2:19 and 2:51 regarding the heart of Mary. The final Lucan text analyzed is from the Acts of the Apostles 1:14, where Mary is found in prayer in the Upper room with the Apostles at Pentecost. Again, both a Lapide and Buby offer a detailed analysis of all eight of these Lucan texts where Mary play a role in the passage.

There are three Johannine passages of Marian import presented in Chapter 4: John 1:13, 2:1-12 and 19:25 - 28 a. Both a Lapide and Buby offer commentary on these three passages. Both exegetes refer to quote from the Fathers of the Church in understanding this texts, particularly the Cana and Calvary periscopes.

The final biblical text presented in Chapter Four is from the Book of Revelation 12:1-7, the Woman Clothed with the Sun. It is most interesting to see the similarities in interpretation of the woman. Both view the Woman from an ecclesial as well as a Mariological perspective. Both exegetes are respectful of the history of exegesis regarding the Woman. Both offer “both/and” answers to the
questions posed regarding Woman the identity of the Woman.

The final chapter of our study, the "Conclusions" will offer a portrait of Mary as it is painted by Cornelius a Lapide, SJ, using his biblical commentaries.
CONCLUSION

I. Summary of the four chapters in this present study.

A general conclusion to this extensive and exhaustive study of the works of Cornelius a Lapide, SJ, should weave together the main elements that were seen together into a tapestry which in, and of itself, reflects the Marian theology of the post-Tridentine era, specifically of a Lapide.

The purpose of this study is to compare and contrast the post-Tridentine and post-Vatican II biblical methodologies of Cornelius a Lapide and Bertrand Buby, and to offer a scriptural portrait of Mary, through the writings of these two exegetes. Emphasis is given to the portrait painted by Cornelius a Lapide and his rich imagery to describe Mary, using both Old and New Testament sources, to bring Mary alive in the canvas of the heart.

This conclusion will be divided into four parts. First, it will provide a summary of the four chapters in this dissertation. Second, six prominent themes found in a Lapide’s scriptural commentaries will be given and analyzed. Third, a comparison of the biblical methodologies of post-Tridentine Cornelius a Lapide, SJ and post-Vatican II Bertrand Buby, SM will be appraised and critiqued. Fourth, I will offer my own personal observations of a Lapide’s work. Lastly, I will offer a biblical portrait of the Blessed Virgin Mary, painted by Cornelius a Lapide, with his colorful and imaginative biblical commentaries, which were faithful to the Magisterium and apologetic in nature.

Chapter one of the present study offers biographical information about Cornelis Cornelissen van den Steen. A Lapide grew up in the post-Tridentine era in Catholic Belgium, surrounded by his family and his Catholic Church, who were staunch defenders of the faith, and who taught him the beauty and love of practicing the Catholic faith. Growing up in this deeply religious environment, and being exposed to the liturgical and devotional life of the local parish, and particularly of the piety of
his parish priest, Franz Coster, SJ, a Lapide would be moved and inspired to follow his calling to the Jesuit order. He would spend twenty years of his life in Leuven, as a Jesuit teacher of Sacred Scripture. He would also spend another twenty years teaching Scripture at the Roman College. His students enjoyed his lively and imaginative lectures on the Scriptures. It is obvious that a Lapide enjoyed teaching and bringing alive the doctrines of the Catholic faith to students who were primarily seminarians.

The Marian spirituality found in the Jesuit order, and in particular, of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola had a profound effect on Cornelius. As he matured in years, he would eventually bring his own Marian piety and devotion to the classroom and to his biblical commentaries so that all might benefit from his wisdom and spirituality.

While his contemporaries, as in Francis Suarez, the first to coin the term “Mariology” (seventeenth century), as well as Peter Canisius in his Marian writings, would have a great influence on young a Lapide. His teachers, Leonard Lessius and Michael Baius, would also influence him and his works. He also drew inspiration from the writings of Robert Bellarmine, who was a great apologist, and had a tremendous love for the Church Fathers, the Scriptures and Church History.

Much of the writings of Cornelius were written in an apologetical style. This becomes evident in reading through the biblical commentaries of a Lapide. Often he will quote Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli in a way to combat the Protestant Reformation and the idea sprung forth from it. A Lapide wanted to instruct the faithful about the beauty of Catholic doctrine and desired to point out the errors of the Reformation.

Chapter two of the present study offers a historical overview of the use of the Church Fathers in Catholic biblical interpretation. It also offers an historical perspective for the historical development
of the four senses of Scripture. The chapter begins with an outline of those exegetes and theologians
of the first five centuries of the Church’s existence, who developed an understanding for developing
a deeper meaning and understanding of the Sacred Scriptures.

From the work of Raymond Noll, as well as the biblical commentary of Bertrand Buby, it is
obvious that the Church Father, Origen, is the founder of this biblical methodology of understanding
the Scriptures by using the senses. Origen understood three senses: the literal, moral and spiritual.
However, it was John Cassian who would develop the four senses of Scripture: the literal, moral,
anagogical and allegorical.

The chapter continues with seeing a continuity of using the four senses of Scripture from
Patristic times to the present by citing the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the work of Henri de
Lubac in his masterful opus, *Medieval Exegesis*. In it the Church continues to find relevance and
meaning in using the senses of Scripture for biblical interpretation and for seeing the connection of the
four senses in order to find a deeper meaning or a genuine sense of the text.

*What is the relationship among these various senses of Scripture?* This important question
must be answered before an attempt to interpret the Sacred Page can be made. The first rule of proper
exegesis is adherence to the normative function of the *literal sense*. The *literal sense* must be “the
indispensable foundation” of the Spiritual sense. The meaning intended by the human author, which
is discerned through the valuable historical-critical method, must not be violated in searching for
meanings beyond it.”

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706 Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*.88
Part three of this chapter centers on the Church’s defense of the Council of Trent and its battle with the reformers in their one unifying principle of "sola scriptura." We see that a Lapide is helpful in understanding an ecclesiological dimension to the study of Scripture which was present in the post-Tridentine Church. A Lapide, as many of his contemporaries, writes his commentaries to defend the Church against the enemy, the Protestant reformers, like Luther and Calvin.

Part four of this chapter studies three important biblical documents of the Vatican II and post-Vatican Council II period: *Lumen Gentium*, *Dei Verbum* and *The Interpretation the Bible in the Church*. These three documents offer a biblical foundation for a contemporary use of the four senses and Patristics in the study of the Sacred Scriptures. These three documents remind the reader that the contemporary Vatican II church and its biblical exegetes uphold the venerable tradition of studying the Scriptures in this classical, Catholic manner.

Part five of this chapter concludes with the biblical methodology of Cornelius a Lapide, whose four dimensions of interpreting Scripture, "solidities, methodice, brevis and clare" correspond with the four senses of Scripture: literal, allegorical, anagogical and moral. Understanding a Lapide’s biblical methodology prepares the reader for Chapters three and four which will study the actual biblical exegesis of Cornelius a Lapide, particularly his interpretation of the Marian texts in the Old and New Testaments.

Chapter three outlines twenty-five Old Testament texts accommodated to the Blessed Virgin Mary used by a Lapide in his voluminous biblical commentaries. The work of Raymond Noll assisted in determining which texts should be used in this study. Noll cites the Wisdom literature, particularly Proverbs, the Song of Songs and Sirach as especially rich in Marian commentary by Cornelius a Lapide. The texts from the Pentateuch, particularly Genesis 3:15 and Exodus 15:20, are highlighted.
in this chapter; from the major prophets, Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2-3 are also given special attention. The writings of Esther, Judith, 1 Kings and Judges also offer a panoramic view and portrait of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the writings of Cornelius a Lapide. While a Lapide was greatly influenced by the Church Fathers and medieval saints in foreshadowing Mary in the various texts of the Old Testament, he is also influenced by the fervor in Marian devotion of the post-Tridentine Church, as well as, the Liturgy of the Church and the Liturgy of the Hours.

Chapter four covers nineteen texts which directly, or indirectly, relate to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The texts are taken from the four gospels, Paul’s letter to the Galatians, the Acts of the Apostles and the book of Revelation. In particular, emphasis is given to two important Marian texts in the New Testament: Luke’s Annunciation scene and the Woman clothed with the sun in Revelation 12. Through the use of Patristic writings, medieval saints and the four senses of Scripture, a Lapide offers ample meditation and inspiration on the person and privileges of Mary. His writings offer a Marian catechesis for the faithful and also offer ample material for priests to preach on the doctrines and dogmas of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

II. Six theological themes found in the Writings of Cornelius a Lapide.

In the writings of Cornelius a Lapide the methodology used in his biblical commentaries is interpreting the sacred text using the four senses of scripture along with citing the writings of the Church Fathers and other Medieval saints. There are also six prominent themes found throughout the voluminous biblical commentaries of this seventeenth century Belgian exegete.

The first theme is Trinitarian in nature. A Lapide’s commentaries are filled with images of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In his commentaries, a Lapide uses many images of Mary as she is in relationship with the three persons of the Blessed Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Throughout the
dissertation, an attempt was made to point out this aspect in his writings.

The second theme is Incarnational: that God became flesh, pitched his tent and dwelled among us is a central theme in the writings of a Lapide. A Lapide offers Mary as the Theotokos, God-Bearer, and as Noll points out, shows that Mary played a significant role in the history of salvation. Therefore, Mary’s participation in the mystery of the Incarnation is significant in the writings of a Lapide, and can be seen in his commentaries. This theme has been noted throughout chapters three and four of the dissertation.

The third theme is Christological. A Lapide gives great attention given to the person of Jesus Christ, with an emphasis on his divine nature. A Lapide always exhibits a high Christology in his writings. It may also be said that a Lapide offers a high Mariology throughout his biblical commentaries, which portray Mary as Queen Mother, or the Gebirah, reminiscent of the queen mother in the Old Testament literature.

The fourth theme is the Ecclesiological dimension of his writings. A Lapide is a faithful son of the Church. He lived during the time after the Council of Trent and the reforms that the Council brought forth. As a zealous son of Ignatius Loyola, a Lapide’s loyalty and allegiance were aligned with the Pope and the Magisterium of the Church. A Lapide cites and shows the Fathers of the Church, he emphasizes a high ecclesiology in their writings on the Scripture. So too, a Lapide does this in his persistent effort to remain faithful to the teachings of Trent as well as the Spirit of the Church the Fathers.

A Lapide interprets from tradition which is important in the light of the Counter-Reformation. He can also be called baroque. He is the great apologist, the great educator, especially of seminarians.

The fifth theme is Soteriological. In his writings, a Lapide emphasized the redemptive aspect
of life in the Church. The study of Sacred Scripture assists the Christian in understanding how to live his own life here on earth and how to attain life eternal.

The sixth theme is a Marian development throughout the writings of a Lapide. A Lapide utilizes an integrated approach to Sacred Scripture. In his writings, a Lapide uses extensive citations from the Fathers of the Church. He also uses prayer, liturgy, devotion, hymns, and even myths and legends to further enhance his biblical commentaries.

III. Comparison/contrast of Post-Tridentine and Post Vatican Biblical Methodologies: Cornelius a Lapide, SJ and Bertrand Buby, SM.

There are a number of comparisons in the methodologies of Cornelius a Lapide and Bertrand Buby. The first is their great respect and love for the teachings of the Church. Both a Lapide and Buby provide a rich background for understanding the Sacred Scriptures by delving into the riches of the writings of the Church Fathers using their wisdom and inspiration to deepen a sense of appreciation for Sacred Scripture. The second comparison is that both of these men have a keen appreciation for the Liturgy of the Church and its use of Scripture within the liturgical life of the Church. Both men respect Catholic devotional life, that uses Marian devotion to deepen one’s prayer life and spirituality. A Lapide and Buby support the continued use of Old Testament texts accommodated to the Blessed Mother within the Liturgy. A third comparison is that both of these Catholic exegetes offer a synthetic analysis of biblical interpretation, as opposed to an analytical interpretation of Scripture. Both men are knowledgeable of their contemporaries in the biblical field and acknowledge their expertise and wisdom. The fourth comparison is that each respect the teachings of the Church Councils and write in the spirit of their respective Councils, e.g., a Lapide was cognizant of the principles of exegesis promulgated by the Council of Trent and while he used the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint, he
considered the Vulgate the normative text for analyzing Scripture in obedience to the teachings of the Council Fathers of Trent. In similar spirit, Buby demonstrates in his trilogy of books, *Mary in Galilee, Vol I-III*, his tremendous confidence and respect for the biblical scholarship of the post-Vatican II era, and the profound scriptural teachings of the Church since the Second Vatican Council. In his trilogy, Buby often cites contemporary Vatican and post-Vatican documents on Scripture to illustrate how he incorporates contemporary biblical methodology and principles in his biblical analysis. The fifth comparison is their love for biblical languages and using philological arguments to understand the biblical text. A Lapide used the Complutensis, which was a resource filled with ancient and modern languages of the Bible, that the baroque exegete had at his fingertips to be able to compare and contrast the meaning of words found in the Bible, and offer unique and imaginative interpretations of these texts. Buby also uses Hebrew, Latin, Greek and even Aramaic to assist his biblical exegesis. Lastly, it is obvious that both men have a deep love for Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and wish to share their devotion and spirituality regarding the Mother of God with their readers.

In terms of contrast, a Lapide is precedes the historical-critical methodology; however, Buby uses all the historical, literary methods and is respectful of all the modern biblical interpretations. While Buby will incorporate Church teaching in his exegesis, it is not the primary focus. A Lapide uses the exegesis to support doctrine and dogma, in this case, the teaching of Mary in the life of the Church.

**IV. Personal observations on the works of a Lapide.**

The purpose of this thesis is the analysis of the biblical catenae, the thread, of Marian texts found throughout the commentaries of the Belgian Jesuit and scriptural exegete of the post-Tridentine period, Father Cornelius a Lapide. The exegetical methodology employed by a Lapide is vastly different from the Biblical analysis used by contemporary Catholic exegetes today, such as Bertrand
Buby, SM. This comparison in the methodology of the post-Vatican period (Buby) and that of a Lapide
in the post-Tridentine era have yielded significant fruit for the contemporary mariologist as well as the
scripture scholar.

A Lapide’s work serves as a gentle reminder to both contemporary Catholic theologians and
scriptural exegetes, that the writings of the Church Fathers continue to offer rich insights. The Patristic
writings as well as the medieval writings of saints offer a distinctive and delectable flavor to a Lapide’s
commentaries. In his writings a Lapide attempted to make his commentaries available for pastoral
preaching and for the devotional use of the faithful.

A Lapide is a linguist well-versed in the biblical languages. He uses Greek, Syriac, Hebrew,
Arabic, Latin, Persian and Egyptian in his biblical commentaries. With his command of ancient
languages, he is able to understand the biblical texts in its original languages. He even makes many
comparisons between Roman and Greek mythology and culture - he himself the quintessential man
of culture.

A Lapide’s style of exegetical writing may be described as simple, strong, honest and candid.
Of the post-Tridentine Catholic exegetes, a Lapide is one of the outstanding biblical scholars. One
way to measure this is that the commentaries were published so many times.

The present dissertation is written in an analytical style. The recent dissertation on a Lapide
by Raymund Noll is written as a synthesis of Marian teachings in a Lapide commentaries.

A Lapide stressed the beauty of Mary as the “via pulchritudinis.” Part of this came from his
inspiration of praying the Litany of Loreto which was popular during his time and focused on the
poetic and beauty imagery of the Virgin.

However, a Lapide had another thing in mind, that of piety stemming from the litany, even in
his youth. In addition, this piety would lead to his hope that his student seminarians would draw inspiration for their lives and development of their future pastoral skills. As rector of college seminarians, I draw much from a Lapide in the same hope of leading young men to a greater appreciation and application of Marian spirituality.

A Lapide is impressive in his ability to cite the patristics in his commentaries. He often quotes the Church Fathers to demonstrate that their writings support Catholic dogma and doctrine. [In particular this dissertation has explored two of the four Marian doctrines: Mary’s perpetual virginity and her divine motherhood.] In contrast, what Noll does is show that a Lapide actually gives assistance to the future scriptural development of the two dogmas concerning Mary, those of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption. For Noll’s and my dissertations, a Lapide restores dignity to the writings of the Church Fathers regarding the Mariological teachings of the Church.

V. Comparison/Contrast of Post-Tridentine and Post-Vatican II Biblical Portraits of Mary:

Cornelius a Lapide and Bertrand Buby

Cornelius a Lapide’s portrait of Mary is in harmony with the Council of Trent and offers the readers a Tridentine Scriptural image of Mary seen in the cultural, philological, devotional and patristic influences that enabled Cornelius a Lapide to be on the threshold of what would be the historical-critical method.

In Cornelius a Lapide the Scriptural Mary is never separated from the above influences. He gives us an integrated Catholic portrait of the Mother of Jesus who is surrounded with the jewels of devotion, tradition, prayer, and the authority of the past seen in the Saints and Fathers of the Church who dedicated their homilies and commentaries to her role in the history of salvation.

Through his use of the four senses of Scripture, Mary becomes an integral person in the various
domains of life – one’s moral life (**tropological sense**), one’s mystical (**spiritual and analogical sense**) and one’s goal – union with God through her example.

From the allegories that Cornelius a Lapide uses, Mary is seen in almost every dimension of her privileges, virtues, titles and devotional traditions. Undoubtedly, the portrait of Mary is done in a baroque style just as the commentaries of Cornelius. She is given to us as seen by Cornelius who was dedicated to her from his earliest years. His portrait of her is also an image of his own personality.

**A. A Lapide’s portrait of Mary**

The richness of the Scriptural portrait of Mary in the writings of Cornelius a Lapide, SJ is manifested most prominently in the Old Testament prophecies and prefigurings of Mary and the New Testament passages that portray her as the link between the Old and the New Covenants. In his dissertation, Noll states that Lapide discovers a rich theology of the Blessed Virgin foreshadowed in the Wisdom books of the Old Testament. Mary serves as a link between the Old and the New Covenants, not just through parallel or prophetic verses but by embodying common themes. She is a bridge between the Old and the New Testaments because Scripture shows her representing both the people of Israel and the Church begun by her Son. The Lapidean Scriptural images of Mary in the context of Old and New Testaments are astounding in their variety. We see Mary as:

- the New Eve, the Virgin Mother prophesied in the Old Testament (Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2-3);
- the embodiment of all the qualities prefigured in the heroines of the Old Testament particularly, Miriam, Judith, Esther, Deborah, Abigail, Jahel;
- the Queen-Mother of the Davidic Kings;
- the people of Israel, the Daughter of Zion;
• the Mother of Jesus in the Johannine accounts;
• Spouse, Mother and Daughter in the Gospel of Luke and John,

Our present study of Mary in the writings of Cornelius a Lapide reveals a five dimensional portrait of Mary: ecclesiological, soteriological, prophetic, trinitarian and Christological / incarnational. The same Mary is shown to us from five perspectives, each one of which complements the others. I will categorize the many titles that a Lapide gives Mary in the Old and New Testaments and show how a Lapide desires to offer a portrait of Mary that has five different dimensions to it.

The first dimension is ecclesiological. Mary is Mother of God and Mother of all Apostles. She is present when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and experiences the birth of the Church. She is seen as a base and a pillar for the members of the Church. She is a preeminent member of the Church and a faithful, loyal disciple of Her Son.

Using Proverbs,
• Regina, patrona et mater Ecclesiae (Proverbs 8:17) – *Mary is the Queen patron and Mother of the Church*;
• Basis, petra et columna Ecclesiae (John 19:26) – *Mary is the base, the rock and pillar of the Church*;
• Fundamentum et basis Ecclesiae (John 19:25) – *She is the fundamental base of the Church*;
• Mediatrix totius Ecclesiae et omnium fidelius (Proverbs 31:29) – *Mediatrix of the Church and all the faithful*;
• Mediatrix angelorium (Proverbs 31:29) – *She is the mediatrix of the angels*.

The second dimension is prophetic. We have seen how Mary was foreshadowed not only in Genesis, Isaiah and Micah, but also in the Wisdom Books of the Old Testament, primarily the Book
of Proverbs, the Song of Songs and Book of Sirach. Using the allegorical and tropological senses of scripture, the following titles of Mary given to us by a Lapide reveal the prophetic dimension to Mary's biblical portrait:

_Eve_ in Gen. 3:20; Mary as the true and faithful Eve, that is Mother of the living see also (John 19:27)

_Esther_ as seen in Cornelius Esther 2:7; and 2:16 Mary as Queen.

_Miriam_ seen in Exodus 15:20 and compared to Mary

_Judith_ 13:10; 15:2 person type of Mary

_Deborah_: (Judges 4:21) Also a Marian type.

_Jael_ (Judges 4:21) also a Marian type.

The Spouse or Bride of Canticle of Canticle seen in Proverbs 24:18

_Salome_ seen in Sirach 25:2

_Abigal_ and Mary comparison in 1 Kings 26:39

_Mary_ as our Pandora seen in Sirach 24:25

The third dimension of the Lapidean Marian portrait is trinitarian. This is manifested in Mary when a Lapide calls her the daughter, spouse and parent: daughter of God the Father, as the Spouse of the Holy Spirit and as the parent or the Virgin Mother of the Word Incarnate. The following titles assist us in understanding the trinitarian dimension of a Lapide's Marian portrait:

- Mundus divinus (Proverbs 8:23) – *Divine World*;
- Imago Divinitatis (Proverbs 8:25) – *Image of the Divinity*;
- Domina nostra (Exodus 15:20) – *Our Lady*;
- Filia unigenita Dei Patris (Proverbs 31:19) – *Daughter of God the Father*;
• Consanguinia Ss. Trinitas (Proverbs 8:23) – Blood relationship to the Most Holy Trinity;
• Deo Patri consanguinia (Proverbs 8:23) – Blood relationship to God the Father;
• Conjux Die (Luke 1:38) – Spouse of God;
• Magnificentia Dei (Proverbs8:22) – Magnificence of God;
• Peculiaris et propia filia Dei (Proverbs8:30) – First and proper Spouse of the Word of God.

The fourth dimension of the Lapidean biblical portrait of Mary is soteriological. A Lapide views Mary as a foreshadowing of the Woman in the Protoevangelium, particularly her role as the New Eve prophesied in Genesis 3:15 as well as Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2-3. This dimension of Mary was celebrated by the earliest Church Fathers and became the starting point of all Marian doctrine and devotion. Citing the writings of a Lapide, the following Marian titles support this dimension of the Lapide's portrait of Mary:

• Negotium omnium saeculorum (Proverbs 31:18) – Negotiator of all people;
• Advocata (Sirach 24:12) – Advocate;
• Patrona Redemptrix (Sirach 24:12) - Patroness of Redemption;
• Illuminatrix maris Quasi repartrix totius mundi (Proverbs 8:22) - Illuminator/(She who throws light on)the seas just as she makes all of the world new;
• Finis mundi (Sirach 24:2) - Boundary of the world;
• Medium nostrae redemptionis ac totius ordinis gratiarum a Christo instituti (Sirach 24:2) - The Medium of our redemption and total ordering of thanks to the Instituted Christ;
• Primitias naturae humanae (Sirach 24:14)- First Fruits of Human Nature;
• Est in plenitudine sanctorum (Sirach 24:16)- She is in the fullness of the holy ones’
• Magistra et ductrix maris (Matthew 2:2)- Teacher and Leader of the sea;
• Electorum est dux, mater, magistra et custos ((Sirach 24:13) - She is the leader, mother, teacher and guardian of the elect/chosen;

• Mediatrix et Janua sapientiae ((Sirach 24:24) - Mediator and door of wisdom;

• Civitas refugii (Sirach 24:24) - City of Refugees;

• Victrix Diaboli (Genesis 3:15) – Victorious over the devil;

• Sola fuit pater et mater Christi (S. Matthew 1:16) – She alone was father and mother of Christ.

The fifth dimension is christological/incarnational. In a Lapide's biblical commentaries, we are given many rich and beautiful titles of the Blessed Virgin Mary regarding Mary's role in the mystery of the Incarnation and her role as Mother of the Redeemer:

• Vitis, quat uvam pretiosissimam protulit (Sirach 24:23) - The vine which produces the most precious bunch of grapes;

• Tabernaculum, in quo Deus recondidit summam sapientiam creatam (Sirach 24:12) - The tabernacle, in which God stored the highest created wisdom;

• Thalamus et thronus veri Salomonis nostri (Sirach 8:25) - Bedroom and throne of our true and genuine Solomon.

This five dimensional portrait of Mary depicts the Blessed Virgin Mary that the Fathers of the Church as well as the great medieval saints and theologians who were devoted to the Mother of God knew and loved. This is the portrait of Mary revealed to us in the great biblical commentaries of Fr. Cornelius a Lapide, SJ. The beautiful tapestry of Mary's mission woven in the Word of God gave rise to the great Marian titles and devotions, especially of the Counter Reformation era. It also inspired the great biblical exegete Cornelius a Lapide, SJ to write biblical commentaries filled with spiritual, devotional and theological insights regarding the Blessed Virgin Mary that ran through all his
scriptural writings, mirroring the great Marian piety and devotion of the post-Tridentine period.

B. Buby’s evolving portrait of Mary

We now present a New Testament portrait of Mary, Mother of Jesus as painted by the post-Vatican II mariologist and exegete, Fr. Bertrand Buby, SM.

He begins his portrayal of Mary with Mary’s shadow from the sparse Pauline hints about a woman who gave birth to a Son in the fullness of time. St. Paul reflects the background for Mary through his references to Jesus as being from the line of David, etc. Galatians 1:19; 4:4-5; 4:28-29; Romans 1:3-4; Philippians 2:6-7.

Buby continues with a portrait of Mary in Mark’s Gospel. Mark’s two mentions of Mary give us but a silhouette of who she is as a Jewish woman concerned about the reputation of the family as well as the safety of her Son. St. Mark has two passages dealing with Mary: Mark 3:31-35; 6:1-6a, and the less probable passages: Mark 15:40, 47; and 16:1.

Then, we view Mary in Matthew’s Gospel. Matthew’s detailed Infancy Narrative presents a careful pencil sketch of this woman who has conceived as Virgin. He also has developed his sketch from Mark’s silhouette and retains most of the Marcan imagery of Mary. His sketch is from Mt. 1:1-17 - Genealogy; Mt. 1-18-25 - Annunciation to Joseph (Isaiah 7:14); Mt. 2:11, 13-14, 20-21; Mt. 12:46-50; and Mt. 13:53-58.

A rich portrait of Mary in Luke’s Gospel is displayed. In Luke, Mary is truly a person who speaks for herself. Hence an oil painting which best captures the personality of someone is the image suggested by the sensitive Luke. In this Gospel Mary is the disciple who responds at every initiative of God and the Spirit. She is truly a happy and blessed woman who is courageous, hospitable, free and faithful. This shows in Luke 1:26-38, Annunciation to Mary; 1:39-56, Visitation / Magnificat; 2:

We see Mary in John’s Gospel. John’s gospel gives us a dimensional perspective of Mary. I have used the Pietà as a sign of her in this gospel. The youthful Mary is present at Cana and is standing at Calvary next to her dying Son. Only the plasticity of a statue could capture the depth of meaning that the fourth evangelist gives to Mary in the Gospel. John 1:13, a doubtful verse on the Virgin Birth; 2:1-12 - Wedding feast of Cana; 6:42, 7:1-10; 7:41-43; 8:41, origins of Jesus questioned; and 19:25-28a, Calvary: Mary present standing at foot of Cross.

We see Mary in Revelation. Finally, every artist has a vision or dream about his/her subject. Mary is that woman seen in a vision in the Apocalypse wherein the world of symbols comes fully alive.

Revelations (Apocalypse) chapter 12 is highly symbolic: the woman is the Church rather than Mary, but possible relationship was intended by author.

From the foreshadowing of a woman of Galilee in Paul (Gal 4:4) to a more distinct silhouette in Mark (Mk 3:31-35; 6:1-6a), Matthew (Mt 1-2) continued the developing depiction of her as a virgin mother in his pencil-sketch of Mary of Nazareth. Luke, the artist of New Testament writing, gave us a portrait of her as the blessed and happy virgin who is also the image of the Church at prayer (Lk 1-2; Ac1:14). John then gave us a dimensional statuesque presentation of the "woman" who is known as the "mother of Jesus" (Jn 2:1-11; 19:25-28a). Finally, there is an ecclesial appearance of a woman in revelation (12:1-6, 13-17). This ecclesial vision has also been seen as a representation of Mary in the
Catholic tradition.

C. A comparison of the Marian portraits of a Lapide and Buby

In comparing the portraits of Mary in the writings of Cornelius a Lapide, SJ and Bertrand Buby, SM we find a contrast in the evolving portraits which emanate from exegetical writings. In a Lapide, we see a rich, Renaissance portrait of Mary filled with flowery images. A Lapide’s portrait of Mary is reflective of his piety and spirituality. It is also a mirror of the spirituality of the post-Tridentine Church.

In Buby’s portrait of Mary, he does not use flowery imagery as a Lapide to describe the Mother of Jesus. Buby describes Mary as a first century, Palestinian woman. He also depicts her as a young Jewish maiden with a name common for a woman of the first century Palestine. Buby also places her in overarching scope of the Israelite tradition. It is interesting to note that Buby’s portrait of Mary comes from his New Testament writing whereas a Lapide’s image of Mary is primarily formed by the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament.

Both portraits of Mary in the writings of a Lapide and Buby come from a faith perspective, yet their images of Mary are reflective of the culture, church and society of their respective periods in Church history.

D. The Mariology of Cornelius a Lapide, SJ

In conclusion, Father Cornelius a Lapide is not concerned with setting forth an exhaustive, organic and complete treatise of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He also does not offer the last word on Marian teachings. In his writings, a Lapide acknowledges the work of his contemporaries like Francis Suarez and Peter Canisius who have devoted time and scholarship to the study of Mary. Cornelius a Lapide is a Jesuit priest, a teacher of Sacred Scriptures and a scholar in his own right. He lived in the
Post-Tridentine period and offered nearly forty years of the service to the Church in the field of Sacred Scripture. In his biblical commentaries, Cornelius offers an interpretation of the Word of God which is faithful to the Church's tradition.

This present study offered one aspect of Cornelius' biblical commentaries by presenting the Mariology of Cornelius a Lapide, SJ found in his works. A five dimensional portrait of Mary which is prophetic, soteriological, christological, ecclesiological and trinitarian, and by using the titles that a Lapide gives Mary throughout his Old and New Testament commentaries, offers color and texture to the rich Marian image which the Belgian exegete paints for his audience. His portrait of the Blessed Virgin Mary as holy virgin, mother, queen, protectress, leader and teacher reflects the quintessential piety, theology and practice of the post-Tridentine period. A Lapide's Marian portrait was shaped by the times in which he lived. The Marian image he offers also reflects the piety and spirituality of Fr. Cornelius a Lapide, SJ.

A last quotation of this exhaustive study of the Marian texts of Cornelius a Lapide concludes with the Belgian exegete's own words describing Cornelius' portrait of Mary, taken from his commentary on Proverbs 31:29: "She herself is the first of Virgins, the mirror of Confessors, the rose of Martyrs, the bookmark of the Apostles, the oracle of Prophets, the daughter of Patriarchs, the queen of Angels."
APPENDIX I

Since the research centers on the writings of a Lapide, principally those texts with a Mariological context, the following Latin commentaries are indeed vital and necessary.

On the Old Testament:

*Commentaria Genesis*\(^707\) - *Protoevangelium and the New Eve.*


*Commentaria Exodus*\(^708\)* -


Prophets Isaiah\(^709\) (7:14)


Prophets Micah (5:2-3)\(^710\)


In Wisdom literature –

Proverbs 8\(^711\) and 31\(^712\)


Sirach 24\(^713\)


Song of Songs 4:4\(^714\)


Marian type –

*Judith*\(^715\)


Judges


1 Kings


**Commentaries On New Testament**

Matthew and Mark


Luke


John


Acts and Rev


Galatians


The present study used the English translations of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John by Cobb and Mossman.


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*SS. Matthew and Mark’s Gospels.* Three Vols.

*St. John’s Gospel and Three Epistles.* Two Vols.

APPENDIX II

In the time of Cornelius a Lapide, the Litany of Loreto was published and became a prominent Marian devotion in the lives of the faithful in the Counter-Reformation period. Throughout his writings Cornelius uses the titles in the Litany of Loretto because of their scriptural basis and devotional value. This litany of Biblical Titles of Mary in the New Testament is an interesting parallel to the Traditional litany of Our Lady, using all the New Testament Marian texts as titles.

BIBLICAL TITLES*

Lk 1:28 Greeted by the angel Gabriel
Lk 1:28 Full of grace
Lk 1:31 Mother of Jesus
Lk 1:32 Mother of the Son of the Most High
Lk 1:32 Mother of the Son of David
Lk 1:33 Mother of the King of Israel
Lk 1:35 Mother by act of the Holy Spirit (and Mt 1:20)
Lk 1:38 Handmaiden of the Lord
Mt 1:23 Virgin, Mother of Emmanuel (from Is 7:14)
Jn 1:14 You in whom the Word became flesh
Jn 1:14 You in whom the Word dwelled amongst us
Lk 1:41 Blessed amongst all women
Lk 1:43 Mother of the Lord
Lk 1:43 Happy are you who have believed in the word uttered by the Lord
Lk 1:48 Lowly handmaid of the Lord
Lk 1:48 Called blessed by all generations
Lk 1:48 You in whom the Almighty worked wonders
Lk 1:55 Heiress of the promises made to Abraham
Lk 1:37 Mother of the new Isaac
Lk 2:7 You who gave birth to your firstborn at Bethlehem
Lk 2:7 You who wrapped your child in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger [page 207]
Gal 4:4 Woman from whom Jesus was born
Lk. 2:11 Mother of the Saviour (and Mt 1:21)
Lk 2:11 Mother of the Messiah (and Mt. 1:16)
Lk 2:16 You who were found by the shepherds with Joseph and the newborn child

Lk 2:19, 51 You who kept and meditated all things in your heart

*List taken from John P. Kenny, The Meaning of Mary for Modern Man (Melbourne, Spectrum 1980), pp. 141-142, who took this table from A.M. Roquet, La Vie Spirituelle. I have made some slight adaptations of the text for my own purposes. Note that this list is a maximal attempt to find references to Mary in the New Testament, and that not all readers, including myself, would be so inclusive.

Lk 2:22 You who offered Jesus in the Temple
Lk 2:28 You who put Jesus into the arms of Simeon
Lk 2:33 You who marvelled at that was said of Jesus
Lk 2:35 You whose soul a sword should pierce
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<td>Mother found together with the child by the Wise Men</td>
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<td>Mt 2:14</td>
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<td>*Mk 6:3</td>
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<td>Jn 2:1-12</td>
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<td>*Lk 10:42</td>
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<td>Acts 1:14</td>
<td>Queen of the Apostles, persevering in prayer with them</td>
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<td>*Apoc 12:1</td>
<td>Woman clothed with the sun</td>
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<td>*Apoc 12:1</td>
<td>Woman crowned with twelve stars</td>
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<td>*Apoc 12:2</td>
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<td>*Apoc 21:2</td>
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| *Apoc 22:1      | River of living water, flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb 📌

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Appendix III

Index of References to the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Great Commentaries of Cornelius a Lapide, SJ, according to Raymund Noll's doctoral dissertation, 

Die mariologischen Grundlinien im exegetischen Werk des Cornelius A. Lapide, SJ

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Marian Titles from the works of Cornelius a Lapide as presented in Noll's dissertation

Die mariologischen Grundlinien im exegetischen Werk des Cornelius A. Lapide, SJ
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Weisheit und Maria / Mary and Wisdom Literature.

Sapientia, imo Sapientiae aeternae mater (Sir 1,9) Sirach; Sapientia creata perfectissima (Sir 24,1) Sirach; Mater aeternae Sapientiae in se incarnatae (Sir 24,1) Sirach; Sapientia Christum gignens et incarnans (Sir 24,1) Sirach; Opus sapientissimum Dei (Sir 24,1) Sirach; Mater Sapientiae incarnatae (Sir 1,6) Sirach; Sapientia Christi (Sir 4,13) Sirach; Principium, prima, princeps et domina operum Dei (Spr 8,23) Proverbs; Exemplar decoris et gratiae tam angelorum quam hominum (Spr 8,25) Proverbs; Idea et exemplar sapientiae et sanctitatis hominum et Angelorum (Sir 24,1) Sirach; Radix Sapientiae (Sir 1,6) Sirach; Olea sapientiae (Sir 24,19) Sirach; Mater et causa omnis sapientiae (Sir 24,1) Sirach; Mater pulchrae dilectionis (Sir 24,41) Sirach; Christi illustrissimum membrum (Sir 24,1) Sirach; Mater fidei, spei et caritatis (Sir 15,2) Sirach; Mater Sanctorum (Spr 8,25) Proverbs; Electorum dux, mater, magistra et custos (Sir 24,13) Sirach; Omnium mater (Spr 8) Proverbs; Est aether, id est aer et aura coelestis aeque ac fons et aquaeductus gratiarum (Spr 8,28) Proverbs; Flumen immensus omnium fluminum vorax (Sir 24,41) Sirach; Fons et pateau aquarum viventium (Hld 4,15) Song of Solomon / Canticle; Est fons, ex quo manavit fluvius, id est Christus irrigans torrentem (Joel 3,18); Mater viventium, non temporalis, sed spirituali et aeterna vita in coeli (Gen 3,20) Genesis; Vas Dei admirabile (Sir 27,12) Sirach.

Maria und Kirche / Mary and the Church.

Mater est, imo avia Ecclesiae (Offb 12,3) Revelation; Regina, patrona et mater Ecclesiae (Spr 8,17) Proverbs; Aurora Ecclesiae (Spr 4,12) Proverbs; Atlas Ecclesiae primitiae, uti et est modernae (Spr 31,17) Proverbs; Doctrix Apostolorum (Hld 4,2;) Canticle / Song of Solomon; Apostolis caeterisque fidelibus purissimum speculum vitae christianae et perfectae (Hld 1,3) Song of Solomon / Canticle; Ecclesiae collum (Hld 4,4) Song of Solomon / Canticle; Materfamilias Ecclesiae (Spr 31,14) Proverbs; Ager et vinea primitiae Ecclesiae (Spr 31,16) Proverbs; Candelabrum, id est Ecclesiae lampas (Sach 4,6) Zechariah; Lucina Ecclesiae parturientis (Offb 12,1) Revelation; Mediatrix totius Ecclesiae et omnium fideli (Spr 31,29) Proverbs; Mediatrix angelorum (Spr 31,29) Proverbs; Mediatrix Dei et hominum (Hld 3,10) Song of Solomon / Canticle.

Jungfruallichkeit und Matyrium Mariens / Virginity and Martyrdom of Mary.

Rubus ardens incombustus (Ez 43,2) Ezekiel; Ignis in rubo est Deus in B. Virgine conceptus (Ex 3,3) Exodus; Lana candidissima (Ex 3,3) Exodus; Castitatis symbool (Sir 24,19) Sirach; Martyrum princeps et regina (Spr 31,10) Proverbs; Multoties martyr (Hld 1,12) Song of Solomon / Canticle; Plus quam martyr (Hld 8,7) Song of Solomon / Canticle; Mulier fortis (Spr 31,10) Proverbs; Mulier sapiens (Spr 14,1) Proverbs; Hervina omnium fortissima (Spr 31,10) Proverbs.
Priestertum und Eucharistie / Priesthood and the Eucharist.

Manna (Sir 24,27) Sirach; Crater continens et propinans nobis carnem et sanguinem Christi (Spr 9,3) Proverbs; Sacerdos mystica (Spr 8,23) Proverbs; Mensa altaris (Spr 9,2) Proverbs; Sacerdos et altare (Spr 9,2) Proverbs / Schöpfung und Maria / Mary and Creation / Prima creaturarum (Ex 15,18) Exodus; Primogenita omnis creaturae (Sir 24,1) Sirach; Sanctissima microcosmos (Spr 8,22) Proverbs; Microcosmos gratiarum (Spr 8,22) Proverbs; Minor mundus (Spr 8,22,27) Proverbs; Opus magnificum (Spr 8,23) Proverbs; Fabrica divina (Spr 8,23) Proverbs; Centrum, ad quod confinunt omnes creaturarum perfectiones (Spr 8,29) Proverbs; Regina mundi (Spr 8,15) Proverbs; Vapor caritatis (Weish 7,25) Wisdom; Candor lucis aeternae et spectulum sine macula Dei majestatis et imagino bonitatis illius (Weish 7,25) Wisdom; Coelum animatum (Spr 8,27) Proverbs; Dominia, doctrix et stella maris (Dan 12,3) Daniel; Est transcendentens et altioris ordinis (Spr 31,29) Proverbs; Margarita, quae omne pretium superat (Spr 31,10) Proverbs; Quasi aurora in nativitate sua (Sir 26,18) Sirach; Quasi luna un conceptione Domini (Sir 26,18) Sirach; Sicut luna est humanitas Christi, ita luna est et Virgo Deipara (Offb 12,1) Revelation; Sicut luna, ita et Beata Virgo est et dicitur Regina coeli (Offb 12,1) Revelation; Sicut luna hic mulierem fulcit, ita B. Virgo Ecclesiam suis precibus et meritis, quasi basis et columna, fulcit et sustentat (Offb 12,1) Revelation; Quasi sol in nativitate Domini (Sir 26,18) Sirach; Mulier amicta sole, quae totum orbem illuminat (Gen 22,2) Genesis; Stella matutina in medio nebulae (Est 9,16) Esther; Stella maris (Sir 43,7) Sirach; Stella ex Jacob (Est 5,2) Esther; Ver spiritale (Sir 45,7) Sirach; Fusca (Hld 1,5) Song of Solomon/Canticle; Vellus Gedeonis (Gen 22,2) Genesis; Quasi mons virtutum caeteris sanctis excelsior (Hab 3,3) Habakkuk; Lilium convallium (Jes 45,8) Isaiah; Oliva speciosa in campis (Sir 24,19) Sirach; Palma (Sir 24,18; Spr 24,18) Sirach and Proverbs; Phoenix femininarum, virorum et angelorum (Sir 24,18) Sirach; Rosa in Jericho (Sir 24,18) Sirach; Quasi platanus, patulis diffusa ramis (Sir 24,19) Sirach; Aspalathus (Sir 24,20) Sirach; Comparetur Cinnamomo et balsamo (Sir 24,20) Sirach; Myrrha maris (Sir 24,20) Sirach; Myrthus Dei (Sach 1,8) Zechariah; Terra visionis (Gen 22,2) Genesis; Mare amaritudinis (Gen 22,2) Genesis; Moria (Gen 22,2) Genesis; Lampas inextinguibilis (Spr 31,18) Proverbs; Virga aurea Assueri (Est 5,2; Sir 24,16) Esther and Sirach; Tegit terram quasi nebula (Sir 24,6) Sirach; Nubes levis (Jes 19,1) Isaiah.
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