Mary’s Mission at the Foot of the Cross of Jesus in John 19:25-28a; in light of Isaac’s role in the Narrative of Abraham in Genesis 22:1-19

A Thesis in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Licentiate of Sacred Theology with Specialization in Marian Studies

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Daytonesis (USA), ex aedibus International Marian Research Institute, et Romae, ex aedibus Pontificiae Facultatis Theologicae Marianum, die 14 September 2017.
# Table of Contents

Précis .......................................................................................................................... iv

Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1

Status Questionis ...................................................................................................... 2

Methodology ................................................................................................................ 4

Chapter one: Isaac’s Role in the Narrative of Abraham in Genesis 22:1-19

1.1. Introduction ......................................................................................................... 8

1.1.1. The Nature and Object of the Narrative of Abraham ...................................... 8

1.1.2. Methodology for the Narrative of Abraham ...................................................... 9

1.1.3. The scope and location of Genesis 22:1-19 ................................................. 10

1.2. Isaac’s role in Genesis 11:27-25:11 ................................................................. 12

1.2.1. Isaac in the foregoing contexts (Genesis 11:27-21:34) of Genesis 22:1-19 12

1.2.2. Isaac in the context after of Genesis 22 (Genesis 22:20-25:11) ................. 17

1.2.3. Isaac in the Genesis 22:1-19 ........................................................................... 19

1.2.3.1. Texts of Genesis 22:1-19 .......................................................................... 19

1.2.3.2. Commentary on the texts related to Isaac: Genesis 22:1-8: Preparatory of the sacrifice of Isaac ................................................................. 20

1.2.3.3. Analysis of Genesis 22:9-14: sacrifice of Isaac ................................. 24

1.2.3.4. Analysis of Genesis 22:15-19: result of sacrifice .............................. 27
1.3. Isaac’s role in Genesis 22:1-19 ................................................................. 29

1.3.1. Isaac: the meaning of life of Abraham and a witness of the faith of Abraham 29

1.3.2. Isaac: the link to the history of salvation and a witness of God’s justice ... 30

1.3.3. Isaac: a key cooperator in history between God and Abraham ..................31

Conclusion ........................................................................................................ 32

Chapter two: Mary’s Role in the Crucifixion in John 19:25-28a .. 35

Introduction ........................................................................................................ 35

2.1. Analysis of the context: John 19:25-28a .................................................. 37

2.1.1. Mary in the theological themes of the Fourth Gospel ............................37

2.1.2. The Analysis of John 19:25-28a ...............................................................44


2.2.1. Mary in the Christological Perspective: a witness ..................................55

2.2.1.1. Mary’s witness to Jesus ........................................................................56

2.2.1.2. Mary, a witness of God’s justice and mercy .........................................59

2.2.1.3. Mary, a visible witness of the Holy Spirit ............................................61

2.2.2. Mary in Spiritual and Ecclesial Perspectives ..........................................63

2.2.2.1. Gift: God’s gift given by a grace ..........................................................64

2.2.2.2. A Bridge: Spiritual Maternity and Mediation .......................................65

2.2.2.3. Blessing for the disciples ....................................................................69
2.2.3. Mary in anthropological aspect ................................................................. 70

2.2.3.1. Active involvement in the history of salvation................................. 70
2.2.3.2. Perfect disciple: a model of faith, hope, and love.......................... 72
2.2.3.3. The entire consecration with immolation with Jesus.................... 74

Conclusion......................................................................................................... 77

Chapter three: Similarities of Isaac’s Role and Mary’s Mission... 79

3.1. The meaning of typology............................................................................. 79
3.1.1. Isaac and Jesus........................................................................................... 81
3.1.2. Mary and Abraham..................................................................................... 82

3.2. Typological relationship between Mary and Isaac in their mission 85
3.2.1. A witness of God ......................................................................................... 86
3.2.2. A link of salvation......................................................................................... 90
3.2.3. Model of People of God in faith, obedience, love, and discipleship....... 95

Conclusion........................................................................................................ 103

Bibliography...................................................................................................... 106
Précis

The Second Vatican Council’s proclamation of Mary as our mother and model is a special gift for today’s Church. The Church also invites people of God to receive Mary as our spiritual mother in the Christian life. The mother of Jesus has been discovered in her role and mission from the Scriptures and in current Catholic teachings. The Vatican II stresses Mary’s closeness with us in our Christian life as well as her unique and excellent role in the mystery of Christ and the Church. Her Mission is continuously being enacted in Christians who believe in God’s grace and mercy in Mary. The Scriptures proclaims Mary’s significance as our mother and model in light of insights of each evangelist. Especially, the Fourth Gospel conveys the importance of her mission as a witness, a link, and a model. Chapter eight of Lumen Gentium presents the preparation of her mission from the Old Covenant. Her role is prefigured as a symbol, figures, and events in the Old Testament. The Church recognized her mission was prepared from the beginning of the salvation of humankind. This thesis tries to approach a deeper understanding of her mission in the Church through the study of Isaac and his role in the Old Covenant. In particular, the mother of Jesus has a special role in the history of salvation related to the mission of all Christians. It is valuable to pursue a study on the comparison between the role of Isaac in the Old Covenant and the mission of Mary in the Fourth Gospel for understanding their similar contribution in the history of salvation. It will help Christians who are living a faith life accomplish the same mission as both Isaac and Mary achieved in the history of salvation.

This thesis presents the mission of Mary compared with that of Isaac through the analysis of the context of Genesis 22:1-19 in the narrative of Abraham and that of John
19:25-28a in John’s Gospel. Both events are a climax in Old and New Covenant in their serious and theological significance in the entire history of salvation. Both roles are related to our mission in the Church. As a witness, a spiritual mother, and a model, the mother of Jesus actively served in the work of salvation both in the world and in the Church. Mary at the foot of the Cross contributes to this great mission and will serve it continuously in and with Jesus.

In chapter one, the narrative of Abraham is introduced with the Covenant between Abraham and God. One of the promises of the Covenant is the promise of Isaac and Abraham’s descendants. It shows the importance of Isaac in Abraham’s life and God’s Covenant. Through the methodology of narrative analysis, Isaac and his role are discovered in the overview of the entire story of Abraham from his call to the climactic event on Mount Moriah. The additional explanation seen in the scope of the entire context and research about the event on Mount Moriah is included in this chapter. For a better understanding of Genesis 22:1-19, the preliminary readings before chapter 22 and the chapter after the stories are to be understood. Then, through the simple analysis of the text related to Isaac (Genesis 22:1-19), the integral summarization of his role in the Old Covenant and salvation history is presented.

In chapter two, the mother of Jesus at the foot of the Cross is described in the light of the theological insights of the evangelist of the Fourth Gospel. First, the theological point of view the John’s Gospel is presented based on by canonical and exegetical research. Considering the mother of Jesus in the theological views, she is discovered to be a faithful witness and an active model. The analysis of John 19:25-28a is followed by. The role and mission of Mary in the history of salvation are explored in Christological, ecclesiological, and anthropological perspective. It is following what Pope Paul VI
proposed in his apostolic exhortation, *Marialis Cultus* for those who study the Blessed mother and have a devotion to her. In these perspectives, the mission of the mother of Jesus and its importance in the history of salvation for the Church becomes explicit.

Chapter three presents the comparison between the role of Isaac in Genesis 22:1-19 and the mission of Mary in the Fourth Gospel. It is typologically compared with the roles of Isaac and Mary, but it is not by way of a direct parallel comparison. It is the comparison of the role of each in the history of salvation in the covenant with God. There is a similar background; such as their attitude at the desperate moment on Mount Moriah and at Calvary, their valuable identity, submissiveness to the main character, Abraham and Jesus, and active involvement in passiveness. The first section explains the meaning of typology illustrating examples of Mary and Abraham, and Isaac and Jesus. In the second section, Isaac is presented a type of Mary in three aspects. Each aspect is related to our mission in the Church today. Therefore, teachings in the Church documents are mentioned with Mary’s mission in the Church.¹

The last chapter provides a conclusion. It is the summary of the whole thesis and a vision for our mission in the Church. The first section offers the role of Isaac focusing on his role as a witness, bridge, and model of faith, his obedience, and sacrifice. The second section gives the brief summary about the mission of the mother of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. It reviews her role as a witness to God, helper of Jesus in his work of salvation, and a model in virtues and discipleship. The final section is about the brief review on the reflection of the similar role of Isaac and Mary. However, Mary is beyond Isaac and his

role. Hers is for universal salvation and continuing faith life. The mission of the mother of Jesus calls all Christians to participate in her mission and to obtain ultimate happiness in and through both Christ and the Church. This thesis aims at discovering for a deeper understanding of the mother of God in the contemporary Church and offers an effort to understand and imitate the role of Mary in the salvation history.
Introduction

There are dramatic and radical events both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament; dramatic because of their paradoxical results; radical because of a fundamental decision of protagonists. One is Isaac’s sacrifice by Abraham in the narrative of Abraham (Genesis 22: 1-19) in the Old Testament and the other is Jesus and Mary in the Crucifixion in the New Testament (John 19: 25-27). Firstly, “Isaac’s sacrifice by Abraham,” called simply “binding Isaac” (“Akedah” in Hebrew)\(^2\) in the Jewish Christian tradition, is a climactic episode in the relationship between God and Abraham. God called Abraham and made a covenant with him assuring him of three particular promises (land, descendants, and blessings), and of its continuity to his descendants. (cf. Genesis 12) This episode begins with Abraham’s journey of faith to God (Genesis 12), leads to the climax in the episode of Akedah (Genesis 22) and continues to demonstrate the fruitful results (Genesis 23-25) of his faith.

However, in the episode of Akedah, there is a hidden protagonist besides God and Abraham. It is Isaac who seemingly appears insignificantly, but in fact, takes an indispensable role in the episode. He is first introduced by the account relating to God’s blessings that will be given to Abraham from God which becomes a primary theme in the relationship between God and Abraham. Therefore, Isaac’s roles need to be observed within Jewish Christian tradition. In the present thesis, Isaac’s roles will be enlightened through the Abraham’s narrative: he played a role as a witness to the revelation of God, as a key person in relationship between God and Abraham, and as a bridge\(^3\) for God’s people.

Similarly, in the New Testament we also discover a protagonist who seemed hidden and


\(^3\) Isaac’s role as a bridge is relevant to Mary’s mission for spiritual maternity in the New Testament. It will be explored in a comparison between Isaac and Mary in chapter three of this thesis.
insignificant, but indeed had a great role in the dramatic and radical event of the salvation history. It is the Blessed Virgin Mary who was present with Jesus at the Cross as a witness and a gift for modeling Christian discipleship. In the Crucifixion of Jesus, Mary has a unique and essential role in discovering the nature of God, the mystery of Christ, and the Church as the means of salvation for the people of God.

The present thesis would like to explore the link between Mary’s mission at the foot of the Cross of Jesus and Isaac’s role in the narrative of Abraham, to deeply and broadly understand the mission of Mary in the history of salvation in the light of Isaac’s role for the sake of Israel, the people of God in the Old Testament. It reminds people of the truths that the Second Vatican Council has noted in chapter eight of Lumen Gentium entitled “the Blessed Virgin in the mystery of Christ and the Church” (LG 53-66), and helps them fully accept Mary as a witness, a bridge, and a model in their lives. This study will present Isaac and Mary in the two Covenants having similar roles in the relationship of two other protagonists; that is, roles of Abraham and Jesus Christ as a witness, a bridge, and a model. A deep comprehension of the role of the Blessed Virgin will bring benefits which come from the knowledge of Mary. For instance, people can learn more about the knowledge of God, God’s grace, Mary’s mediation and blessings for them, as a model for their mission.

Status Questionis

Isaac’s role in the Old Testament has been less studied than that of Abraham in the Christian traditions. Isaac’s role can be discovered by recognizing the role of Abraham in his relationship with God. Therefore, for the sake of general information about the narrative of Abraham, I would like to employ commentaries of Vawter in On Genesis: A New Reading, commentaries on Genesis of Von Rad, and commentaries of Nahum Sarna. They will present

The Church theologians have developed many studies on the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary since Vatican II because of its thematic significance with Mary’s role in the mystery of Christ and the Church. As a result, there have been many works in the light of the spirit of

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Vatican II. This thesis describes the significance of her mission focusing on Mary at the foot of the Cross of Jesus in John’s Gospel, so that people can get a spiritual reflection on the meaning of the role of Mary in Christological, ecclesial, and anthropological aspects. Raymond E. Brown offered good biblical commentaries on the Passion Narratives and Mary’s presence with Jesus in John’s Gospel. He described the features on Mary in the Fourth Gospel compared to the synoptic Gospels. In this study, Mary’s role overall will be presented through the analysis of the context employed in John 19: 25-30, but Mary’s role in the Christological, ecclesial and anthropological perspective will be present with exegesis from biblical and theological works, the works written after the Second Vatican Council.

Among them, Ignace de la Potterie takes into his accounts the role of Mary related to the Church; such as the role of her spiritual maternity or archetype of the Church. On the basis of the chapters, which have been developed in this study, the third chapter will present with a thematic comparison of the role of Isaac (first chapter) and the mission of the mother of Jesus (second chapter): a witness, a bridge and a model of our mission.

Methodology

In chapter one, this present study will employ the method of narrative analysis of the Scripture for recovering the relationship between God and Abraham, and Isaac’s role between

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two protagonists. This method implies a contextual reading of the entire chapter of Abraham’s episodes from Genesis chapter 11:27 to Genesis chapter 25. The method of narrative analysis will help us to “be attentive to elements in the text which have to do with plot, characterization and the point of view taken by a narrator.”\(^7\) Besides, it involves the literary analysis of early writers on the episode of Genesis 22. Both methodologies direct us to a text which tells a story and engages us in its narrative world and in the system of values contained therein.\(^8\)

Before describing and analyzing the context of Genesis 22, it is helpful to review the entire narrative of Abraham from the previous text of the event of Moriah to the result of the event. It includes Abraham’s genealogy, various events related to Isaac and Abraham on the journey in accordance with the word of God, and the achievement of God’s covenant with Abraham. In describing these episodes, the canonical approach also contributes to acquiring a better understanding of the significance of Isaac in the history of redemption as well as in the whole context of the narrative of Abraham.

In chapter two for the sake of presenting Mary’s mission at the foot of the Cross of Jesus, analysis of the text of John 19:25-28a will be undertaken under the guidance of commentaries of the biblical dictionaries and exegesis of biblical scholars. In addition, the exegetical insights or spiritual reflections on the context will be employed in a certain sense to obtain a deeper understanding. It will help to develop views on Mary’s mission in the mystery of Christ and the Church. For re-reading the text succinctly, the literal and spiritual sense of reading will be accompanied by the analysis of the texts.

In chapter three, in comparison of the roles of characters in the Old and New Testament, the method of typology, the spiritual sense of readings based on the theological

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reflections between Christ and Isaac, and between Mary and Abraham will be illustrated as an instrumental means so as to present the similarities of roles of Mary and Isaac. The methodology of typology helps in understanding the similarities of both roles between Isaac and Mary due to the fact that there is a thematic connection through types and anti-types.

Each chapter is as follows: the first chapter, the present study will begin with Abraham’s genealogy for the sake of describing previous situations and backgrounds for the event of “Binding of Isaac.” Events on the way of journey of Abraham toward the land promised by God will be dealt with in relation to his descendants, and in the episodes, Isaac’s significance will be discovered among the events. Then results after the event of Genesis 22 will be described concurring with what God promised to Abraham. In the analysis of the context of Genesis 22, each verse will be described with the spiritual meaning in accordance by commentaries of biblical writers. In the last part of chapter one, integral meanings of Isaac’s role in the relationship between God and Abraham will be synthesized as a conclusion.

In the second chapter, a general view on Mary in the Fourth Gospel will be dealt with in the theological and exegetic explanation of Mary’s presence at the foot of the Cross of Jesus from theologians such as Raymond Brown, Francis J. Moloney and Aristide M. Serra. Mary’s role in Fourth Gospel will be presented with the theme in which biblical authors intended to involve Mary. Mary’s witness to the Trinity in the history of salvation, and her role as a witness, a link, a gift, and a model for all Christians will be described in the second chapter.

In the third chapter, the similarities of the mission of Mary at the foot of the Cross of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel and that of Isaac in the narrative of Abraham will be compared. The comparison will be focused on the roles of a witness, bridge, gift, and a model of both characters, but Mary’s mission is beyond the role of Isaac. This chapter concludes that both
characters are a model for all Christians in the contemporary Church.
Chapter one: Isaac’s Role in the Narrative of Abraham in Genesis 22:1-19

1.1. Introduction

1.1.1. The Nature and Object of the Narrative of Abraham

What the authors of Genesis strived to describe through the narrative of Abraham has been diversely studied by the theological exegetes throughout past years;\(^9\) in particular, with regard to Abraham’s faith, his role of mediator for God’s blessing, and extraordinary obedience. Whoever entirely observes the whole narrative of Abraham in Genesis comes to praise God and respect Abraham through the narrative touching our hearts. Among Abraham’s episodes, Abraham’s ‘binding of Isaac,’ named Akedah in Hebrew, on the Mount of Moriah is a pivotal climax of the story drawing our attention. This episode offers those who hear this episode a poignant impression of the blessing of God achieved from its result as well as a catharsis obtained through its extreme seriousness and dramatic results.

Biblical scholars have been interested in its literal analysis revealing the protagonists of this episode as Yahweh who tests the faith of Abraham, and Abraham who obeys Yahweh even in his suffering from the sacrifice of offering his loving son. However, I believe there is another hidden protagonist in this episode, a person who is going to be a gateway for passing through Yahweh’s test for the faith of Abraham. It is Isaac. The Christian tradition describes Isaac briefly, but the Rabbis of Judaism highly emphasize Isaac, calling this event the

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“Binding Isaac.” Isaac speaks only a word in Genesis 22 and he seems to be described as a person who does not explicitly take charge of his action, in thought and his heart, so that people observing this scene might think he is not important and meaningful in this episode. Does not the role of Isaac in Genesis 22 exist or though there is a role in a certain sense, it is subordinated to Abraham, is it not of distinctive importance? Then whenever Jews call upon God for the sake of asking help or looking for their identity why do they mention \textit{Yahweh of Abraham, Yahweh of Isaac, and Yahweh of Jacob} which underlines Isaac’s important role as one of their fathers?

For responding to this query, the first chapter tries to reflect the role of Isaac, who is given an important role with his father Abraham, but this role is not explicitly uncovered in this episode. I would like to discover the hidden role of Isaac in the salvation of Israel through studying the context related to Isaac in the narrative of Abraham by analyzing the texts in Genesis 22:1-19, so as to understand the meaning the author of this episode intended to give to readers and also to look at it as a new insight. Further, by looking into it through a way of hermeneutical perspective, we can have an opportunity to think of the relevance between Isaac and Jesus Christ in that they both had an ineffable role in the perspective of accomplishment of the promises of God for the salvation of human beings, beginning with a call of Abraham and reaching an apex in Jesus. Also, we can search the link between Judaism and Christianity, between modern theology and Judaic theology.

\subsection*{1.1.2. Methodology for the Narrative of Abraham}

This thesis will employ a narrative analysis method in view that Genesis 22: 1-19 is a composed story. First, I will present boundaries and a scope of the context in the next section;

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\footnote{Eun Joo Bae, “Isaac,” \textit{The Korean Catholic Encyclopedia [Hankuk Catholic Dae-Sa-Jeon]}, vol. 9 (Seoul: Institute of the Korean Catholic History, 2006), 6981.}
in section 1.2, I will try to explain the role of Isaac in the context of before and after Genesis 22:1-19. In section 1.3, I will describe the role of Isaac through a deeper understanding of the text through an analysis of the context related to Isaac. I will synthesize and conclude with the role of Isaac revealed in the contexts of Abraham’s narrative.

1.1.3. The scope and location of Genesis 22:1-19

When taking into consideration of the previous and following contexts of Genesis 22:1-19, it can be regarded as an independent story in Genesis. The first reason is that there is a change of location in this episode. Genesis 22:1-19 is composed within the framework of Abraham’s leaving Beer-Sheba by the command of Yahweh and coming back to the same place again. The previous context of the text of chapter 22 presents the fact that Abraham resided as an alien in the land of the Philistines (Gen 21:34) and after the text of chapter 22, a narrative emerges regarding the descendants of Nahor who remained in Haran (11:27-32). Secondly, there are changes of characters and theme. The previous text of chapter 22, Genesis 21:22-34 shows the reciprocal covenant of Abraham and Abimelech. However, in the text of chapter 22, Abraham and Isaac appear as two important protagonists with regard to the theme of Yahweh’s test on Abraham including Abraham’s faith and obedience to God. Finally, in the following context of chapter 22, the theme is about Nahor’s genealogy and the preparation of the marriage of Rebekah and Isaac, episodes which are achieved as the result of Genesis 22. Thirdly, the introductory phrase of Genesis 22:1 and 22:20 “After these things…” is a literary form introducing a new episode and at the same time connecting it with the previous context. Therefore, from these three reasons, the Genesis 22:1-19 can be

11 Gordon J. Wenham, World Biblical Commentary, Genesis 16-50, vol. II (Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1994), 98.103. The authors of the Scriptures used the particular literary forms of their times for the better communication with the audience, though they wrote them by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. There is a significant connection between a literary form that
regarded as the independent narrative. Simultaneously, it is presupposed to be dependent on the entire narrative of Abraham through the meaningful connection with both the before and after contexts of Genesis 22:1-19.

With regard to the location of the contexts, most biblical scholars define the scope of the narrative of Abraham by referring to Genesis 11:27-25:11. The reason is that the contexts within Genesis 11:27-25:11 are consistent in theme, storyline, and content based on the three factors of God’s promise made within the framework between the birth and the death of Abraham. That is, the entire storyline of the narrative of Abraham is composed of the introduction (11:27-32), prologue (12:1-9), development (12:10-22:19), and conclusion (25:7-11). Genesis 22:1-19 is the last part of development and presents three aspects; the last trial in Abraham’s difficult experiences, the severe test of God to Abraham, and the climax of the narrative of Abraham.

As we can commonly see in the Old Testament, the narrative of Abraham has a form that shows that trials in favor of human beings become a test for humans in favor of God. This form often occurs especially in the period of the wilderness (Cf. Deut. 13:3; Judg. 2:22). Human beings are educated and purified in order to transform into personalities which are appropriate to God’s people through this test. In the narrative of Abraham, several tests or trials appear, but in particular, that on Mount Moriah, the audience can grasp the author’s intent in this event as a test for Abraham (Cf. 22:1).

As a result, Abraham’s obedience and faith were perfect on Mount Moriah and from his
virtues, the achievement of the promises is able to be commenced. In this respect, Nahum M. Sarna mentions the event on Mount Moriah as the decisive and ultimate test for Abraham’s worthiness to be able to achieve God’s promise as the father of a new nation. It was the test of Abraham proving his unconditional love and faithfulness to God without his enormous gifts that he received and the wealth he achieved by God. The most difficult decision in this trial is offering his son, Isaac. Therefore, in order to discover the role of Isaac in Genesis 22:1-19, it will be helpful to explore the narrative of Abraham in the perspective of ‘offspring’ from the initiative of Abraham’s narrative (12:1).

1.2. Isaac’s role in Genesis 11:27-25:11

1.2.1. Isaac in the foregoing contexts (Genesis 11:27-21:34) of Genesis 22:1-19

The narrative of Abraham begins with Abraham’s situation. There was no hope of offspring. In the genealogy of Terah, the fact that Abraham would not have an offspring is noticed through the twofold emphasis of Sarai’s infertility in the texts: “Sarai was barren (11:30a); she had no child” (11:30b), and this fact repeatedly occurs in other episodes (Cf. 15:2; 16:1.6; 17:17; 18:11). Actually, while the definition of genealogy means “the history of a particular family showing how the different members of the family are related to each other,” that is, the genealogy manifests the connection between family generations and members. However, 11:30 rather manifests not only generational disconnection in spite of

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15 Sarna, The JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis, 393.
16 Sarna, The JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis, 393.
17 In the early Jewish traditions, they prayed in the difficult period as follows: “May he who answered Abraham on Mount Moriah answer you and hearken this day to the sound of your cry” (Mishna Ta’an, 2:4) People of Israel asked God to give a compassion for them just as He was mindful of the Akedah and was filled with compassion to Abraham. In Jewish tradition Isaac is a good example of wholehearted loyalty to God and his teaching as much as Abraham. Sarna, The JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis, 394.
taking the formula of genealogy (11:27) taking into consideration of the former other genealogies, but also the fact that Sarai is barren presents that beyond the fact that Terah and Abram would not have a child in their direct line, the family tree of Shem, the son of Adam would become extinct at the tenth generation from Shem.\textsuperscript{20}

In this situation, chapter 12 presents Abraham called by God in Haran and three divine promises given to him (12:2-3.7). The first promise of them concerns the ‘offspring’ followed by promises of the blessings and the land. A few candidates for Abram’s heir in favor of the achievement of God’s promise on offspring appear in following episodes. There is not a particular assertion about Abram’s heir when Abram starts his journey from Haran, but soon Abram’s nephew, Lot who accompanied Abram on the journey (11:31; 12:4)\textsuperscript{21} seems to be the first effective candidate because of his closeness by blood. However, Lot is separated from Abram to walk his way in chapter 13, so he is not to be an heir of Abram. “Lot chose for himself the entire Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east; thus they separated from each other” (13:11).

After the separation from Lot, there seems no candidate for Abram’s heir, but the divine promises about a descendant (12:2) and land (12:7) are reconfirmed and concretized in chapter 13. Especially, it is remarkable that the promise of land is combined with unknown offspring as well as with Abram. Indeed, after Lot’s leaving from Abram, the information about the heir is obscure, but nonetheless the divine promise related to a descendant becomes obvious with God’s announcement to Abram: “The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, “Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever” (13:14-15). God’s assertion informs a new vision for Abram’s

\textsuperscript{21} Haran’s death in 11:28 gives the reason of Lot’s participation with the journey of Abram.
future and increases curiosity about someone who will be an heir of Abram.

After Lot’s separation from Abram, Eliezer of Damascus seems to be the only person to inherit Abram’s heritage in the absence of his son (15:2). Abram’s lamentation saying “for I continue childless, וְאָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ עֲרִירִי” is an assertion to show Abram’s vanity and disappointment that he must live on earth without his offspring and pass away. However, God confirms Abram whose own son will inherit him, not Eliezer (Cf. 15:4). With God’s message, though Abram’s life is still in a hopeless state having no child, the divine promise about his own heir becomes clearer than before.

The information on the descendant of Abram is remarkable in 15:18, a verse which confirms a promise for the land by the covenant with God. “On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, ‘To your descendants, I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates’” (15:18). The divine promise is a changed in this covenant from the promise of the land ‘Lord will give to Abram and to his descendants forever’ (13:15) into ‘Lord will give to just Abram’s descendants’ (Cf. 15:18) It means that the descendants are heirs of the land that is promised by Lord.

Subsequently, in chapter 16, the third valid candidate of the heir of Abram appears. Sarai who is barren realizes her status and chooses her best way as a wife; that is, she tries to get children from her maid, Hagar (16:2). Ishmael who was born from Hagar is surely a son of Abram (Cf. 16:4). Abram may have considered Ishmael as his heir for thirteen years.

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24 The word, “covenant” is more significant than a promise because when it is not observed, they need to repay it with death. One who will not observe the covenantal promises will have the same fate as the carcasses which was slaughtered and separated in a half for a covenant. It is the formal covenant of both parties. Peter F. Ellis, *The Men and the Message of the Old Testament* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1963), 12.

25 According to the ancient law, a woman who is childless could get children from her maid (Cf. Law Code of Hammurabi, 146), accessed August 14, 2017. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/ancient/hamframe.asp. We can see these cases in Genesis 30:6.8.10.12.
However, it is discovered that the authentic heir of Abram is not Ishmael in chapter 17. Chapter 17 is more important as related to the posterity. The divine promise to the posterity, which has been continuously discovered from chapter 12 and chapter 15, becomes visualized and concretized; particularly, it is revealed who the heir is and the fact that all the promises of the Lord converged on him. First of all, the promise of land for the heir and his posterity coming after the heir is reaffirmed by the covenant. “And I will give to you and to your offspring after you, the land where you are now an alien, all the land of Canaan, for a perpetual holding; and I will be their God” (17:8). Secondly, the divine promise that his posterity will make a great nation is gradually repeated (Cf. 13:16; 15:5) and finally in chapter 17, it becomes much clearer in both quality and quantity (Cf. 17:16); Not only a great nation but also kings or rulers of peoples will issue from Sarai. In 17:16, three new names appear to announce the beginning of a new era. What is remarkable is that a new era specifically begins and is developed in focusing on Isaac, a son of renamed Abraham and Sarah. For instance, God establishes a covenant with Isaac, not Abraham and Sarah. “I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him” (Cf. 17:19; 17:21). This text is an anticipation to inform that all God’s promises to Abraham will

26 Abram in his age of one hundred years old comes to have Isaac. It says that Sarai does not bring forth a child for thirteen years after the birth of Ishmael. Therefore, Abram’s hope for his descendants would be concentrated on Ishmael (Cf. 17:18).
27 The promise of the land is discovered and confirmed gradually and concretely from “this land” (12:7) into “this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates” (15:18) and from this land Abram sees (Cf. 15:18) into “the land where you are now an alien, all the land of Canaan” (17:8). A scope of the land which Isaac will live on is settled again in the center of Isaac later (Cf. 31:1).
28 The promise of descendants that “I will make of you a great nation” (12:2) is changed into the promise that “I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth,” (13:16) and it will be changed into the promise that Abram’s descendants will be increased as much as the number of the stars (15:5).
29 Abram’s name is changed into Abraham, Sarai into Sarah and the name of a child between them is first mentioned as Isaac. In the ancient Near Eastern world, the name of a man is regarded as the very essence of his being and identified with his personality. Therefore, what a new name is given to a person or a change a name means to be a new being with a new identity and to live a new life in a new era or a new state. In a word, it is connected in creativity. Nahum M. Sarna, Understanding Genesis (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), 129-130. Lord who renames Abram into Abraham and Sarai into Sarah proclaims a launching of a new generation which Abraham is going to be the father of a multitude of peoples through his posterity with the birth of Isaac and Sarah is going to be the mother of all peoples, and even issue the kings of the peoples who will rule the people (Cf. 17:16). Other examples of changing name are Jacob (32:29; 35:10), Joseph (41:45) and Daniel and his friends (1:7). Isaac’s name was ordained by the Lord before his birth (Cf. 17:19), so there is no change of it.
transfer to Isaac and this transition makes it possible that Israel\textsuperscript{30} will become the covenantal people of God.

The repetition of divine promise that an offspring of Abram will issue from Sarai is confirmed again through the skeptical laughter of Sarai (18:12-15) just like the laughter of Abram (17:17).\textsuperscript{31} Their negative laughter is changed into ‘authentic and joyful laughter’ (21:6) with the birth of Isaac (21:2), one of the promises of God.\textsuperscript{32}

The context of chapter 21 has an important meaning relating to Isaac. After eight days of the birth of Isaac, Sarah asks Abraham to drive out the son of Hagar since she saw they were playing together. Abraham allows sending Ishmael and his mother into the wilderness by the will of God. The reason that Abraham had to drive out Ishmael is suggested, in spite of his grave sufferings (22:11). One reason is that the authentic heir cannot be mocked.\textsuperscript{33} The more important reason is that Ishmael is not the heir (\textit{vry})\textsuperscript{34} of the promise (Cf. 12:1-3). “So she said to Abraham, ‘Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac’” (21:10). Sarah’s request seems to be a motherly love for her son, but actually it is authorized under the providence of God with the matter of the inheritance. God said to Abraham: “Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is

\textsuperscript{30}The assertion, “I will be their God, אֱלֹהֵי אֵת הָעַם הַיּוֹם לְךָ” (Genesis 17:7b, 8) manifesting that a special relationship of love and covenant between God and Israel appears here with the name of Isaac in chapter 17. God makes a covenant with Isaac and becomes a covenant counterpart with him.


\textsuperscript{32} A word play about the name of Isaac manifests the meaning Isaac gives to the life of Abraham and Sarah. Isaac, צחק is derived from Hebrew verb, צחק meaning ‘he laughs or he will laugh.’ Someone sees that imperfect word צחק and אל, the name of God, is combined, so interprets the meaning as ‘God laughs or smiles.’ Cf. David Noel Freedman, ed., \textit{The Anchor Bible Dictionary} v.3, H-J (New York: Doubleday Dell Press, 1992), 463; Richard J. Clifford and Roland E. Murphy, “Genesis,” \textit{The New Jerome Biblical Commentary}, 24.

\textsuperscript{33} The Hebrew word, (Isaac, צחק) means “laugh at” as well as “smiles”; Richard J. Clifford and Roland E. Murphy, “Genesis,” \textit{The New Jerome Biblical Commentary}, 906-909.

\textsuperscript{34} The Hebrew word, צחק has meaning of ‘possess,’ ‘inherit’ (15:3.4.7.8; 21:10; 24:60; 28:4; 45:11; Exo. 15:9; Lev.20:24). It has a meaning of ‘inherit’ here just as in 15:4.
through Isaac that offspring shall be named after you” (21:12). It is true that Isaac is indeed the only heir of promise to inherit Abraham’s name and possession. Hence Isaac only remains in the land where God promised to give to Abraham’s descendants after Ishmael’s leaving. Now the divine promise remained entirely in Isaac. In a word, Isaac, who is asked to be immolated to God in Genesis 22:1-19, is the crucial person in Abraham’s narrative having a pivotal role in the history of Israel.

1.2.2. Isaac in the context after of Genesis 22 (Genesis 22:20-25:11)

After Isaac’s immolation, the test of God for Abraham ends by the proclamation of God’s promise just before the actual death of Isaac where God’s promise is confirmed. First of all, Genesis 22:20 seems to appear abruptly, but the introductory phrase, “After these things,” shows us that this new context is linked with the former texts of chapter 22. An introduction about Nahor’s descendants in 22:20 reminds us to look back to the genealogy in Genesis 11:27-31, but actually this phrase provides us in advance the information about Isaac’s marriage with Rebekah by emphasizing the appearance of Rebekah. This appearance of Rebekah indicates that Isaac’s marriage is the accomplishment of God’s promise related to the abundant descendants.

Genesis 23 shows that another promise of God connected to the land is to be actualized by a process that a part of the land of Canaan belongs to Abraham and from this assertion readers of the story know that this land will soon belong to Isaac. In Genesis 24, the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah makes us anticipate the achievement of the promise through

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35 This promise reminds us the first divine promise of “I will make of you a great nation and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing” (12:2).
36 Isaac’s place as an authentic heir of Abraham will be kept. In the chapter 25, it is manifested in that the descendants who are derived from Keturah, an Abraham’s concubine are sent away from Isaac to the eastwards (Cf. 25:6).
37 Theologians in Christian tradition call the event of Akedah as Isaac’s sacrifice or his immolation because he dedicated himself entirely to God as the people of Israel did a burnt-offering at the celebration for God (Cf. Heb. 11:17-19).
the abundance of descendants.\textsuperscript{38} In Genesis 25, the author shows that Isaac is the only successor among Abraham’s descendants. Abraham sends his children from Keturah in the East and now Isaac is left in the promised land to become the only successor, the transmitter of God’s blessings, and the bridge that will maintain the people who will continue God’s promise as God mentioned in the covenant with Abraham (cf. Genesis 25:5). Finally, as soon as Abraham passed away, God gives the blessings to Isaac (25:11). Therefore, all promises that Abraham received from God will become true through Isaac and transfer to his descendants (Cf. Genesis 26: 2-4).

In summary, Genesis 22:1-19 is intermediate between the formal context (Genesis 12-21) showing the process that Isaac becomes Abraham’s appropriate heir and the latter context (Genesis 23-25) displaying the accomplishment of the three promises between God and Abraham. Finally, Genesis 25:11 states that Isaac actually is Abraham’s heir.

Genesis 22:1-19 describes the crisis of the failure of God’s promise with Abraham, and simultaneously it explains this episode’s connection with the formal episode that shows the accomplishment of God’s promise after Genesis 23. We can find three motivations in Genesis 22:12 and Genesis 22:15-18; the first motivation is Abraham’s obedience, the second is God’s legitimating of the promise by his proclamation, and the last is Isaac’s survival in the Akedah without escaping or death. Now, the role of Isaac in the relationship between God and Abraham will be explored in the analysis of the texts of 22:1-19.\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{38} The fact that Rebekah will be a new mother of Israel is described in the blessing of Raban (Genesis 24:67). This blessings seems to be similar in the form as the blessings of God after the event of Akedah (Cl. 22:17). Also, the motherhood of Rebekah in Israel appears in the scene that Isaac receives Rebekah in his mother’s tent (Genesis 24:60). The assertion about the Sara’s tent means that Israel will get again a new mother of Israel who will bring forth the descendants of Abraham. Cf. Gerhard von Rad, \textit{Genesis}, trans. John Marks (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), 254.

\textsuperscript{39} We can see Abraham and Isaac’s episode in the entire salvation history because Abraham was the chosen to be the ancestor of Israel, the people who God chose to accomplish God’s plan for salvation of the entire human beings. Thus, we can say that Isaac is also the chosen one for the God’s plan for the salvation like Abraham, the protagonist with God in the history of salvation.
1.2.3. Isaac in the Genesis 22:1-19

1.2.3.1. Texts of Genesis 22:1-19

1. After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, ‘Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’

2. He said, ‘Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt-offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.’

3. So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt-offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him.

4. On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away.

5. Then Abraham said to his young men, ‘Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.’

6. Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together.

7. Isaac said to his father Abraham. ‘Father!’ and he said, ‘Here I am, my son.’ He said, ‘The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?’

8. Abraham said, ‘God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son.’ So the two of them walked on together.

9. When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on the top of the wood.

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Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son.

But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and said, ‘Abraham, Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’

He said, ‘Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.’

And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt-offering instead of his son.

So Abraham called that place ‘The Lord will provide’; as it is said to this day, ‘on the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.’

The angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, ‘By myself I have sworn, say the Lord: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son,

I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offering as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for them, because you have obeyed my voice.’

So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham lived at Beer-sheba.

1.2.3.2. Commentary on the texts related to Isaac:

Genesis 22:1-8: Preparatory of the sacrifice of Isaac

And it came to pass after these things,
God tested Abraham, and said to him:

‘Abraham’; and he said: ‘Here am I.’

The first sentence of chapter 22 ‘After these things’ is “the conventional introduction to a new section” (15:1; 22:20; 39:7; 40:11). It is premised on the event in chapter 21 in a certain sense and simultaneously encompassing up to Genesis 11:27 in a broad sense.

He said, ‘Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt-offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.’

22:2 describes the main theme by saying that God puts Abraham to the test. It explains what the test is for Abraham. Isaac who would be submitted is introduced as the only son that Abraham beloved. The word ‘your son (בֶּן)’ manifests Abraham’s life from the period of hopelessness when there is no offspring in Genesis 11:27 to the event of his getting a son (21:2); ‘your son (בֶּן)’ includes his hopelessness and hope, disappointment and new hope, and his sorrow and joy. Therefore, Isaac is the life itself of Abraham and Sarah. Abraham indeed loved Isaac so much as Sarah did. The perfect tense verb “your beloved: אָהַבְת” means a father’s attentive love. The word “ךָיְהִיד” is the second person suffix of the Hebrew word “יליד”, having the meaning of ‘the only one’ as the one unique and priceless possession which can never be replaced. Abraham experienced an acute agony even when he sent Ishmael from him (21:12), and now it is more painful to kill his only beloved son, the son who will inherit his possession and continue his life. As a father, it would rather be better

43 “Test” ( ры” ) means a trial that we need to be sacrificed. When this word is used between God and Israel, it gives a theological meaning. When it is used with the text that Israel tests God, it is used negatively; it means Israel’s negative attitude to God (Numbers 14:22; Exodus 17:2; Psalms 78:18.41.56; 106:14). Israel must not test God (Deuteronomy 6: 16). However, when the same word ‘ ры’ is used in the text that God tested Israel, it has a positive meaning; God wants to clarify the faith of the person who he chose. In 22:1, it is used in a positive sense. Usually the testing by God is concerned with obedience (Ex. 16:4; Judg. 2:22) or the fear of God (Ex. 20:20) and in this sense, Abraham needs to be acknowledged to be deserved to be the Father of Israel by the covenant. Westermann, Genesis 12-36: A Continual Commentary, tran. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 356.
to immolate himself to God in place of his son.

‘Your only one,’ also reminds us the promise of God in 15:4 and 21:12; the promise that his descendants shall be named after Abraham ‘through Isaac.’ Isaac is truly the heir of Abraham, especially the only son who will inherit all that was given from God. Therefore, compared to his time when Abraham had completed his seventy-five years life in his first response to the call by God in 12:1, now in a certain sense he should give up not only the past twenty five years after a call but also his present and future life in 22:1-2.\footnote{God did not give any warranty by giving the special protection or blessings as God did for Ishmael in 21:15-20.} God’s command seems to be incredibly cruel, in that God’s promise to him might be nullified; he might lose his faith in God who is faithful to His promise, not only lose his son. At the same time, it is the event of manifesting an irony and paradox of God.\footnote{God’s command is an irony because it contradicts with the promise with Abraham to make him of the great nation and of the source of the blessing. However, contrary to the fact that the salvation of the world is impossible due to the discontinuity of an offspring, the fact that finally God’s promise for Abraham will be accomplished by Abraham’s obedience and consecration to God shows us a paradox of God.}  

\begin{tabular}{l}
\textit{6a} Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it on his son, Isaac; \\
\textit{6b} and he himself carried the fire and the knife. \\
So the two of them walked on together.
\end{tabular}

Abraham distributes the burdens for the burnt-offering giving the wood to Isaac and the fire and the knife to himself. This action implies father’s attentive love concerning for his son to be hurt by the dangerous objects in spite of the immediate immolation of him.\footnote{Gerhard von Rad, \textit{Genesis: A Commentary} (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), 235. Von Rad also demonstrates Abraham’s inner emotion in acting to the command of God. His tempo is slow to move noticeably as if he drags it. It indirectly manifests his agonies on the pathway. We can observe a conflict in the test for Abraham. It is the conflict between the love of Abraham for Isaac and his obedience to God. These two elements of the conflict are contrasted, intensified, and reconciled in Gen. 22; Von Rad, \textit{Genesis: A Commentary}, 235.} After the division of the burdens, Abraham walked together with his son. “The two of them walked on together: יאול יאול שַׁנַּהְרָה יאול שַׁנַּהְרָה” has a significant meaning. In chapter 22, the Hebrew word, יאול יאול is usually used to describe Abraham’s action to be obedient to God (Cf. 22:3.6.8.13), but it is
in this phrase used to describe the intimate and attentive relationship with a father and a son with the word “together: יִשְׁרָאֵל” giving us an information of Isaac as the only son accompanying Abraham on the way of being obedient to God. This scene describes the pitiful and inseparable love of Abraham preparing for the death of his son while walking together with his son, and simultaneously of Isaac accompanying his father on the way of obedience without knowledge of anything to come. In this scene, it is confirmed that Isaac is the indispensable and precious son for Abraham as the only his beloved son.

7 Isaac said to his father Abraham, ‘Father!’ And he said, ‘Here I am, my son.’ He said, ‘the fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?’

8 Abraham said, ‘God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son.’ So the two of them walked on together.

The silence between Abraham and Isaac manifests Abraham’s inner agonies between Abraham’s love for his son Isaac and his obedience to God. In 22:7-8, Abraham’s inner emotion is slightly revealed through the only conversation with Isaac in chapter 22. Even though the narrator discovers that God tests Abraham in 22:1, Abraham never noticed it was the plan of God. Just as Abraham in 22:1, Isaac is also ignorant of the plan of Abraham, as was seen in the question of Isaac in verse 7. The way to the mountain to pray is the same as usual, but Isaac is not aware of the fact that he will be the sacrifice. In this sense, the stance of Abraham is parallel to that of Isaac. Just as Abraham is not aware of the will of God, Isaac is ignorant to the plan of Abraham. Also, just as Abraham is obedient to the plan of God in ignorance, as Isaac walks without hesitating along side with Abraham in ignorance to the plan of his father. Isaac’s silence after the short answer of Abraham in v.8a saying “God

47 The fact that Isaac knows the instruments for the burnt-offering manifests that he has an experience prayed with the method of the burnt-offering. It means that Abraham has taken Isaac for praying to God in precious time.
himself will provide the lamb for a burnt-offering,\(^48\) my son” seems to manifest Isaac’s entire obedience to his father.

In v. 8b, “They walked together” is compared to v. 6b, “So the two of them walked on together.” It is possible to annotate that both sentences describe the same kinds of obedience of Abraham and Isaac. The imperfect third person verb “לָכַֽת” can be interpreted as the explanation of the obedience of Isaac compared to that of Abraham. Isaac did not doubt and rebel; rather he continuously walked with his father. He is a kind of a cooperator of Abraham in his obedience to the will of God. In this phrase, Isaac’s attitude to follow Abraham is not just passive one, but actually, it is a very active obedience by his choice. Isaac chose an act being obedient to Abraham.

1.2.3.3. Analysis of Genesis 22:9-14: sacrifice of Isaac

9 When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.

10 Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son.

22: 9-10 consecutively enumerates the seven verbs: “built an altar: וַיִבֶּן, ” “laid the wood: וַיֶעֱצֹּק, ” “bound his son Isaac: וַיְקַעְד, ” “laid him on the altar: וַיַּעֲקֹּד אֶת-יִצְחָק בְנוֹ, ” “reached out his hand: וַיַּעֲקֹּד אֶת-יִצְחָק בְנוֹ, ” “took the knife: וַיַּעֲקֹּד אֶת-יִצְחָק בְנוֹ, ” “to kill his son: וַיֹּטְפֵּה בְנֵיהוֹ. ” The narrator reduces the flow of the story describing each movement. The list of verbs heightens the tension of the listeners and sympathy with Abraham and Isaac, and

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\(^48\) In the answer of Abraham, his inner thought or emotion is not revealed. It is not clear that Abraham is shifting the responsibility to God about Isaac’s question or he unwillingly anticipates God’s future plan for preparing other sacrifice in place of Isaac. Otherwise he might wish Isaac to be saved by God. However, we can see that Abraham’s answer was his ardent prayer wishing that his son will be saved by God in v. 14; Abraham called the place where Isaac would be saved as “הַיָּם לָךָ: the Lord will provide.” Gordon J. Wenham, *World Biblical Commentary: Genesis 16-50*, vol. II, 111.
simultaneously gives a new insight on the importance of Isaac who is soon going to be killed.49

The narrator mentions nothing but furnishes readers the consideration that Isaac is offering himself entirely. Isaac is obedient to the actions of his father in silence, neither rebelling nor complaining. Isaac seems to be submissive to his father without escaping or resisting it in spite of the presumption about his destiny as the sacrifice. He is bound gently.50

In this text, Isaac’s active passiveness is revealed just like in 8b. That an old man can tie a young healthy youth suggests to us that Isaac agreed to the will of Abraham. Therefore, this text proves that Isaac is ready to sacrifice himself to the will of his father at any cost, as Abraham is ready to be obedient to the will of God.51

12b For now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.

In the biblical tradition “to know: יִדעִי,” does not mean to get the abstract knowledge through the theoretical examination or objective analysis. It is the actual knowledge obtained through the actual experiences of love, sufferings (Isa. 53:3), sin (Wis. 3:13), war (Jud. 3:1), peace (Jud. 59:8), and good and evil (Gen. 2:9; 2:17). In this passage what God knows about Abraham through the experience is his ‘fear of God.’ “The fear of God: אֵד אֱלֹהִים,” which

49 Daniel Harrington is taking the Abraham and Isaac story in Genesis 22 as a good example to explain the method of the literary criticism. Literary criticism uses words, images, characters and movement as well as a message and form from the biblical passages. In particular, he stresses that this passage (v.9-10) provides a good effect to draw indirectly the reader deeply into the emotional experiences of the characters. Daniel Harrington, Interpreting the Old Testament (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1981), 17. 20.

50 The imperfect verb “יִדעִי” is used only here. “The Akedah: עֲקֶדָה” in Jewish tradition is originated from this text. Westermann, Genesis 12-36: A Continual Commentary, 360. By this verb, Isaac is presented to have been treated like the sacrifice for the burnt-offering. Gordon J. Wenham, World Biblical Commentary: Genesis 16-50, vol. II, 109. Isaac does not flee and resist against his father’s action, even though he is stout enough to revolt against his father.

occurs often in the Old Testament is not simply “an emotion of exultation and joy at the
discovery of God’s intense concern and love for man” or the blind terror and trembling
about the people’s reaction to the manifestation of divine presence, but the obedience to the
divine commands. “The fear of God” means to acknowledge God, believe in Him, and
obedient to Him. Therefore, “fear of God” is “the principle of human behavior” in the
presence of God (Gen. 20:11; 42:18; II Kings 4:1; Isa. 11:2; Prov.1:7a; Job 1:1.8).
Abraham’s absolute love, which stems from his fear of God leads him to entrust his only
beloved son, the son of his life and hope, to God. When God said, “I came to know: יַרְאָהוּ,”
God commended for Abraham’s fear of God.

The place of Isaac is in the midst of the acknowledgment of God about Abraham. The
gravity of the existence of Isaac plays an important role to prove Abraham’s fear of God
which involves the depth of Abraham’s faith and obedience. The fact that Isaac’s
preciousness to Abraham is due to the crucial factor of demonstrating how much Abraham’s
fear of God is. The divine command (22:2) seems to contradict the divine promise that the
blessings would be given through Isaac. Besides, God seems to break his promise and make
Abraham doubtful as to the faithfulness of God. In such a situation, will Abraham be faithful
to God? 22:3-8 intensifies Abraham’s conflicted stance between the love of son and
obedience to God. Abraham in his deepest agony finally chooses the will to consecrate his
son to God to prove his faith, which God will raise up his son (Heb. 11:19), and fear of God.

Isaac is put in the place of a witness proving Abraham’s faith.

13 And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went

55 Gerhard von Rad, Genesis: A Commentary, 236.
וֹ וַיַעֲלֵהוּ לְעֹלָה תַחַת בְּנ

and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt-offering instead of his son.

By employing the same verbs as the verbs in 22:2, 22:13 establishes the fact that Abraham entirely consecrated Isaac to God by his obedience. God who knew Abraham’s perfect faith and faithfulness suddenly intervenes, saves Isaac, and provides the ram instead of Isaac. God accomplishes Abraham’s answer to Isaac. “God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt-offering.” (22:8) by providing the ram in place of Isaac. This means God accepted the sacrifice of Abraham as the whole burnt-offering. The ram has meaning beyond the replacement of Isaac. It was the proof of the omniscience and omnipotence of God, God who knows in advance and provides what we need (22:8,14) and simultaneously provides a sign of justice (18:25,29) and faithfulness (17:19,21). God never killed the innocent (Cf. 18:16b-19:29) and never broke the promise with Abraham (12:2,3, 7; 13:15-17; 15:4-5; 17:1-22).

1.2.3.4. Analysis of Genesis 22:15-19: result of sacrifice

15 The angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven,

16 and said, ‘By myself I have sworn, says the Lord: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son,

56 The verbs of “take,” “go,” and “offer” occurs repeatedly in v.13 so as to manifest its fulfillment of the command of God by Abraham. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt-offering instead of Isaac.
58 The ram was usually used as the sacrifice for a burnt-offering (Cf. Levi. 1:10-13). The burnt-offering in Israel is the only sacrifice to burn the offerings entirely. It was regarded as the perfect sacrifice because the sacrifice was consecrated wholly (Levi. 6:15-16). Therefore, to provide Isaac as the burnt-offering means that Abraham entirely entrusts Isaac to God’s mercy. Abraham questioned the righteousness of God asking “Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?” in 18:23. If God saves the whole people because of ten people, he is the just God. However God was the true righteous God who saves even one righteous person without neglecting and God beyond the expectation of Abraham. In the mountain Moriah, God accepts Abraham’s sacrifice and returns his son as well. Thus God manifested his justice and righteousness.
59 God made three promises with Abraham such as the posterity, the land, and the blessing. These promises are converged on Isaac concretely and repeatedly in Genesis 13, 15, and confirmed as the covenantal promise in Genesis 17. These promises can be finished helplessly in Moriah, but God in the end completely keeps his promises by returning Isaac to Abraham again. God proves his faithfulness through the event of Moriah.
I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies,

and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.’

God promised to Abraham in 12:2-3, concretized it in 15 and 17, lastly made it converge on Isaac, and made a covenant. Further, after the event of Moriah, God confirmed and guaranteed every promise by swearing (22:16). Verse 17 and 18 is the first and the only sworn promise of God in Abraham’s story. The passage, “your son, your only son” in v.16, the expression used in 12:1 manifests that Abraham perfectly passed the test. This pass brings forth the blessing. “This is the first and only divine oath in the patriarchal stories.”

From the first time, Abraham’s story is regularly related to the blessing (12:23; 14:19; 17:16.20; 24:1.35), but in this passage the verb “blessing: בָּרָךְ” has a reinforced meaning by using the infinitive absolute of בָּרָךְ, “so making the contents of this promise surpass all others.”

It is assured in the divine definitive assertion on blessing (v. 15-17), as well as in the fact that the blessing will reach to all the nations of the earth (v. 18). This blessing is not new, rather has been mentioned already in Genesis 12:2-3. It is just confirmed by the divine oath and it certainly becomes a universal promise for the salvation; for instance, the promise Abraham would make a great nation progresses into the promise that his offspring will possess the gate of their enemies (22:17). The blessing which was to be transferred through Abraham (12:3) will be transferred by his descendant to all the nations (22:18). This transition makes sure of the fact that Isaac is placed in the center of the divine promises and plays a role as a link for the salvation of human beings. Now the divine promises (12:1-3) are

completed and from 22:20 the promises begin to be fulfilled.

1.3. Isaac’s role in Genesis 22:1-19

Genesis 22:1-19 has a role that joins Genesis 11:27-21:34 to Genesis 22:20-25:11. The context of 22:1-19 involves the meaning and gravity of 11:27-21:34 in it including not only both the personal life of Abraham and the future of Israel but also the destiny of the human race related to salvation. Isaac is in the midst of the central axis of it. We can explore his role in the context of 22:1-19 in the third part of this chapter.

1.3.1. Isaac: the meaning of life of Abraham and a witness of the faith of Abraham

As mentioned at the beginning of the narrative of Abraham (11:27-31), in Abraham’s hopeless that there is no offspring, Isaac was born by the promise of God. Isaac was both life itself and the fullest meaning of life for Abraham and Sarah who had waited disappointingly and yet hoping for their future. Isaac, who will inherit what Abraham possessed, was the only son, beloved by Abraham, who walked toward death in the darkness of the hopeless. For Abraham, Isaac was the only heir who lived again from God through the test and suffering of the event of Moriah. For Sarah, Isaac was the son to bring forth her joy, hope for her life, and her laughter: Isaac washed away the humiliation of Sarah (21:7) who had to live in suffering from her bareness,63 lifted up her status (17:16), and provided true laughter (21:6).

The importance of Isaac goes beyond these individual desires for Abraham and Sarah. He is the son Abraham consecrated to God. With regard to Abraham, the event of Moriah was the most serious trial in his life. It was Isaac that God has chosen as the sacrifice for a burnt-

63 Women’s suffering from their having no children in the Old Testament is repeated in several books: Rebekah (Gen. 25:21), Rachel (Gen. 29:31-30:24), Manoah, the mother of Samson (Judg. 13:2-30), Hannah (1 Sam. 1:1-2:21), and the Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4:8-17).
offering. This fact means that the existence of Isaac was so important that he could be the definitive factor in the test proving the faith of Abraham (Cf. 22:2). Abraham passed the test by offering his only son not withholding (22:12, 16) and proved his perfect obedience to God. He was regarded as the person of faith and obedience to God (15:6) and was rectified (12:12) as the person of ‘fear of God.’ What is remarkable is that Isaac is there in the midst of proving of the faith of Abraham. Isaac can be mentioned as the only human witness of both the righteousness and the faith of Abraham.

1.3.2. Isaac: the link to the history of salvation and a witness of God’s justice

God called Abraham to bring salvation to the human race. The vocation of Abraham is related to the hope reaching for the universal salvation of the human race beyond the salvation of Israel (12:3; 17: 3-6). God provided Abraham three promises in his divine plan of salvation and these promises converge on Isaac related to him.64 So for Isaac, the heir of Abraham, the divine promises begin to be accomplished and are shared with all the nations. Therefore, Isaac is the indispensable character for God to fulfill his promises and his plan for the world. Indeed, Isaac is the only link to sustain the saving plan that God has began through Abraham. God made a covenant with Isaac beyond Abraham (17:21). Therefore, Isaac is a covenant counterpart with God; thus he becomes the type of joining God’s people to the covenant for the future (Cf. Exodus 20). On God’s behalf, we can observe Isaac as being necessary to accomplish God’s plan for the work of salvation. In addition, as the counterpart of the covenant succeeding the promises which were given to Abraham, Isaac is the only hope in the history of salvation for the sake of teaching the way of the Lord which leads to justice and fairness (Cf. 18:19) after Abraham in the land of the divine promise.

64 Isaac and his posterity are among the divine promises of great importance to the history of salvation of human beings. Other promises are subordinate to the promise of offspring as was examined above.
Besides, Isaac is the witness for proving who God is. The birth of Isaac demonstrates the omnipotence of God creating from nonexistence into existence (18:14), the omniscience of God foreseeing the future beyond unlimited time and space (15:13; 18:15), the Omni-benevolent of God rising the collapsing family (11:27-31). Moreover, through Isaac God has proved that he is just by giving back the innocent son to Abraham without any harm and he is faithful to his promise to Abraham (12:2.3.7; 13:15-17; 15:4-5.18; 17:1-22). In a word, Isaac is announcing who God is and is the witness of God as he was the witness of Abraham; in particular, the witness of God’s justice in chapter 22.

1.3.3. Isaac: a key cooperator in history between God and Abraham

The place of Isaac is of the essence of the history between God and Abraham. As was mentioned above, Isaac was the witness revealing both main characters’ righteousness in the history of the relationship between God and Abraham. We cannot say the Abraham story with God without Isaac. The narrative of God-Abraham is accomplished within the context the placement of Isaac between two main characters, God and Abraham. The role of Isaac has a climax in the event of Moriah. Symbolically, Isaac was the ram consecrated to God as the burnt-offering to both God and Abraham. Through the burnt-offering, God and Abraham have the definitive and dramatic encounter; hence the history of salvation for human beings began to be performed from the call of Abraham assuredly, and it could be linked to the next generation.

In the midst of the fact that the history of salvation between God and Abraham began to be achieved through Isaac, the role of Isaac should be affirmed. One of the reasons that Abraham could pass the test of God is in the fact that Isaac did not flee from the choice of Abraham to be obedient to God. The achievement of Abraham at Moriah was impossible to
be fulfilled without the silent agreement of Isaac associated with his father in the way of an active passiveness. Isaac was silent to the answer of Abraham of “God provides the sacrifice” (22:14) and followed his father continuously. He participated in the obedience of Abraham by gently being bound by the hand of Abraham (22:9); the obedience that Abraham is acknowledged as a God-fearing person. Accordingly, it was not just Abraham but also Isaac who gave glory to God by proving his faith and obedience to God through his association with Abraham. In conclusion, Isaac is not the passive witness proving the faith of Abraham by the helpless sacrifice, but rather a cooperator taking active passiveness. He is the cooperator of the obedience of Abraham. The very existence of Isaac makes his role of prime importance. Therefore, Isaac can be mentioned as the witness and the cooperator of the history of salvation between God and Abraham.

**Conclusion**

Genesis 22:1-19 has been analyzed in diverse ways of literature, systematic method, and etymological method through the studies of biblical scholars and meditations of Patristic Fathers. From these studies and meditations, important themes reflecting the intention of the narrator of the episode; that is, themes on the faith and obedience of Abraham to God have been explored, and the didactic intentions through comprehension of the historical and periodical background have been discovered. However, this thesis tried to present the internal dynamics within the relationship among God, Abraham, and Isaac through the study of the role of Isaac in the narrative of Abraham. It draws us into the deeper understanding of the meaning of the episode as the narrator intended. By discovering the role of Isaac, we can better understand how the depth and width of the faith of Abraham and his obedience to God was, who God has been and is, and how God’s plan for the salvation of human beings is
radical and faithful. Also, we can understand how much the blessings of God are provided for people who surmounted the trial and suffering and obtained the triumph and finally, can understand the fact that God’s blessing lies in the self-offering obedience.

In the context of Genesis 22, Isaac is not emerging distinctively, even though he is important to both God and Abraham. In fact, he seems to be regarded as passive in an absolute sense. Yet, when we go into a deeper reading of the episode, he is discovered as a protagonist who is playing a significant role between two protagonists: God and Abraham. Isaac witnesses both by his simplicity and his trust in his father. Isaac shows a quiet, but active cooperation in the way that he does not cry out in pain and suffering coming from the binding and sacrifice. Whereas Isaac’s role and attitude do not apparently emerge, they definitely are played in the relationship of God and Abraham. Isaac helped to bring salvation and opened the way of blessings for the human race as a bridge.

For this reason, Jews reflected upon Isaac as a model in the situation of persecution and martyrdom, and strengthened their faith and obedience. In particular, they asked Isaac’s intercession to help them in difficulties depending on self-offering and sacrifice of Isaac. It can be said that Isaac showed an ideal image of Jews. New Testament scholars shared this similar insight. They often connected Jesus and Isaac in the methodology of typology. They put the theological elements of Akedah in the New Testament, while stressing the love for God leading to the dedication of his son, forgiveness and repentance, universal salvation, the function of faith, and the image of the Son who actively cooperates to God the Father. Early Church Fathers like Irenaeus and Origen also conveyed this tradition about Isaac. They

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65 The representative verses related to Isaac in the New Testament are Hebrew 11:17-20; James 2:21-23; Romans 8:32. Among them, John 3:16 and Romans 8:32 offer the reflection on the relationship between Jesus Christ and Isaac, and the relationship between God and Abraham.

regarded Isaac as a type of Jesus and linked the episode that Isaac offered himself in obedience to his father to the scene that Jesus’ obedience to God the Father for the redemption of human beings. Jews do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as in the savior, but through Isaac, we can find a key for opening an ecumenical conversation with them. However, Isaac is not just a type of Jesus. He can be said a type of the mother of Jesus in the role of salvation history. In the next chapter, this thesis will explore the mission of the mother of Jesus, a main character in the salvation history in the New Testament.
Chapter two: Mary’s Role in the Crucifixion in John 19:25-28a

Introduction

Like Isaac in the Old Testament, the Blessed Virgin Mary is having a similar role in the New Testament. She does not appear explicitly, but undertakes an important mission with her Son, the Savior in the history of salvation. In this chapter, the mother of Jesus will be identified with her unique and singular role in the crucifixion of Jesus in John’s Gospel (John 19:25-28a).

The mother of Jesus is introduced differently in the four Gospels according to the evangelists’ theological insights in the New Testament. It is because Mary is intimately related to the identity of Jesus and connected with his disciples who come to believe Jesus as the Son of God. Each evangelist presents his theological viewpoint about Mary by indicating her role and presence differently in the context of the Marian texts.

Mark and Paul portray Mary as a Jewish woman and mother who brought forth Jesus (Gal 4:4; Mark 3:31-35)\(^{67}\) by giving her a mention in the identity of Jesus. Mary is present where the origin of Jesus is proposed (Mark 3:35; 6:3). For instance, Mary appears in a town of Nazareth in Mark 6:3 for proving the origin of Jesus as the truly human being. In Mark 6:3, Jesus is mentioned as “the son of Mary.” This physical relationship between Mary and Jesus cannot offer any privilege to Mary\(^{68}\) in light of Mark’s theology, but it explains the origin of Jesus.

In Matthew, Mary is presented as “the mother of the Messiah,”\(^{69}\) a woman who brings forth Jesus and plays an important role in the work of salvation of God (Matthew 1-2; 12:46-50; 13:53-58). From the beginning of Matthew, she occupies a significant place in the


\(^{69}\) Buby, *Mary in Galilee*, vol. 1, 62. Jesus is sketched as *the son of David* and *son of God* in Matthew’s Gospel. (Matthew 1: 2-6); Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* (An Image Book: Doubleday, 1979), 134.
Jesus’ genealogy as a witness who reveals Jesus as Messiah. She is one of five women among the named women of Tamar (Genesis 38), Ruth, Rahab (Jos. 2), Bathsheba (wife of Uriah), and Mary, the mother of Jesus (Matthew 1:3, 5, 6, 16), who had an important role in the birth of the Messiah and an important role in the history of salvation in Matthew’s genealogy. In the Nativity narrative of Jesus in Matthew 1-2, Mary testifies Jesus as the Messiah by being present with Him (Cf. Matthew 1:20; 2:11)

In Luke and the Acts of Apostles, Mary is presented as the Virgin Mother of Jesus and “a woman of faith” (Luke 1-2; 11:27-28); in particular, Acts of Apostles, a book which seems to be written by the same author as Luke who presented Mary as a model of all Christians (Acts 1:14). Both books describe Mary as a model for disciples through faith and prayer. In Luke 8:19-21, Mary is introduced as a disciple rather than Jesus’ physical mother. Modern exegesis sees that Jesus’ assertion in 8:19-21 signifies that she listens to the Word of God and practices what she believes. To listen and practice the Word of God is the attitude of the disciples. Therefore, Luke situates Mary in the place of the model for all the disciples.

Like the Synoptics, the Fourth Gospel presents the image of the mother of Jesus and her role through the theological insights of the evangelist. Mary is situated in contexts of witness to Jesus in the Fourth Gospel; John is revealing the identity of Jesus and simultaneously proving his theological insights. Just as Luke presents Mary’s virginity as a clue to the identity of Jesus as the divine and human person in the Nativity narrative, so too the evangelist John indicates that Mary’s role is beyond the role of the mother of Jesus in the work of salvation. One of the significant events is the wedding feast of Cana (John 2:1-12),

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71 Buby, *Mary in Galilee*, vol. I, 100-106.
which belongs to the Book of Signs (John 1:19-12:50),\textsuperscript{74} emphasizing faith in God and the Messianic sign of Jesus. The other scene is Mary at the foot of the Cross of Jesus (John 19:25-27), which belongs to the Book of Glory (John 13:1-19:42) emphasizing the love of Jesus.\textsuperscript{75} Mary is present in both scenes witnessing the identity of Jesus who is revealed as God through his words, and missionary works as the Apostle of God. Also, Mary bears witness to glorification of Jesus through the merciful and just God the Father. In both scenes, Mary is described as a disciple actively playing an important role through her close cooperation with the primary protagonist, Jesus.

This thesis will concentrate on the role of Mary at the foot of the Cross and beyond it to her mission in the Fourth Gospel; her mission is based on the text of John 19:25-28a. In section 2.1, two aspects will be described: Mary in the theological themes of the Fourth Gospel and the analysis of the context of John 19:25-28. In section 2.2, the Christological perspective related to the role of the Blessed Virgin in the Fourth Gospel will be presented in the first part, the spiritual perspective in the second part, and the anthropological perspective will be proposed in the last part. Finally, the integral thoughts on the role of Mary in the Fourth Gospel will be the conclusion.

2.1. Analysis of the context: John 19:25-28a

2.1.1. Mary in the theological themes of the Fourth Gospel

The biblical scholars who explain theological themes of the Fourth Gospel employ several themes referred in the first two chapters of the Gospel.\textsuperscript{76} It virtually includes the primary themes of the Gospel of John; such as the Christological perspective of the

\textsuperscript{74} Buby, Mary in Galilee, vol. 1, 113.
\textsuperscript{75} Buby, Mary in Galilee, vol. 1, 113.
\textsuperscript{76} Brown notes that we can see theological themes in the Prologue such as “logos,” “charis,” and “pleroma.” Raymond E. Brown, The Anchor Bible: The Gospel According to John (i-xii) (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966), xxiv.
Incarnation that the Word became flesh (John 1:13-14), the eschatological perspective that deals with life, faith, the Messianic hour, glorification,77 the sacramental perspective78 that symbolizes the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, and the anthropological perspective that stresses features as a beloved disciple. It is helpful to understand Mary’s place in these themes of the Fourth Gospel because Mary has a significant role as one of the main characters in John’s theological views, particularly with respect to her mission.79 The evangelist has an intention to express his theological views by showing the mother of Jesus as a model for Christians.

One important theme related to Mary is the mystery of Jesus’ Incarnation (John 1:13-14) which is introduced in the Prologue. “Who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God, (v.13) and the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a Father’s only son, full of grace and truth. (v. 14)” The Christological aspect in the Incarnation is manifested in the virginal conception and birth of Jesus.80 The Word became flesh without man, but rather with the Word’s fully divine nature. The virgin birth of Jesus signifies the divine filial relationship of Jesus with God.81 He was born by the will of God, not by the will of a human person. It means there is no human father in his conception. Simultaneously it presents his entire human nature in the word flesh. In verse 13-14, we can discern Mary’s presence and participation as the virgin and mother in the event of the Word of God becoming flesh, even though her name is not mentioned. The evangelist John usually calls Mary “the mother of Jesus” (John 2:1, 5, 12;

77 Buby, Mary in Galilee, vol. 1, 120-121.
78 Cf. Buby, Mary in Galilee, vol. 1, 120. Buby notes that there are some signs that show the Eucharist and Baptism in the scene of Cana narrative; such as the themes of water, blood, wine, woman, disciple, and hour. In addition, these themes are parallel of the narrative of Cana and the texts in the Calvary.
80 According to the analysis of Ignace de la Potterie, many authors regard verse 13 “autou” in the singular, rather than the plural. De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant (New York: Alba House, 1992), 96-122. Other exegetes related to this topic are works of Harnack, Zahn, Resch, Blass, Loisy, R.Seeburn, Burney, Buchsel, Bismard, Dupont, F.M. Braun, Mollat, J. Galot and McHugh. Buby, Mary in Galilee, vol 1, 115.
81 De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 115.
19:25) and “woman” (John 2:4; 19:26). It indicates that Jesus is born of a human mother. This woman is participating in the work of salvation and is assisting the Savior through the power of the Holy Spirit. Her existence and her virginal motherhood witness Jesus’ identity as the Son of God and the Son of humankind.

The next theme related to Mary is the eschatological perspective in the Fourth Gospel; this refers theme to the terms of life, faith, the messianic hour and Jesus’ glorification. Regarding life and light, the Prologue of the John’s Gospel involves a verse that life and light came into the world (Cf. John 1:3-9). Life and light are contrasted with the terms of death and darkness (Cf. John 1:5-10). From the beginning of the Gospel the evangelist emphasizes these contrasting terms such as the light and darkness, the life and death and the good and evil (John 1). Jesus gives life to the son of a royal official. The verb “ζη, live” was used repeatedly three times in the verse John 4:50, 51, and 53.82 In chapter six, Jesus states him as the bread of life to help people believe in him and receive a life on earth and eternal life (John 6). In the Johannine view, this is the purpose that Jesus came to the world and the way he glorifies God the Father (Cf. John 20:31). The mother of Jesus has a decisive role in this theme. For instance, when the light entered the world, she received the light of the Word, so she assisted the coming of the light (John 1). Besides, the mother of Jesus helped Jesus’ disciples to open their eyes in the darkness as to be able to see the light and draw them to this belief in Jesus (John 2:11).

The term ‘the hour’ in Greek “ὥρος,” is another theme of this perspective. Regarding ‘the hour,’ the Jesuit theologian Jean Galot proposes that the hour fundamentally manifests “the final glorification of Jesus,”83 as well as his passion and the death. In John’s Gospel,

‘the hour’ appears in diverse texts.\textsuperscript{84} Its first appearance is at the event of Cana (John 2:4). Galot presents that the hour which Jesus mentioned as the response to his mother’s request draws us into the Paschal mystery involving the passion, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus.\textsuperscript{85} The mother of Jesus was with Jesus in the hour of Jesus from his birth to his death in his messianic hour. Mary is placed in the center of Jesus’ hour; facilitating the hour (John 2), being involved in the hour with Jesus (John 2; John 19) and witnessing the hour of glorification of Jesus (John 2; John 19).

The fourth theme is related to the word “woman.” Galot states the word ‘woman’ used several times for other women by Jesus in the Fourth Gospel.\textsuperscript{86} It was mentioned for the Samaritan woman (John 4:21), to the adulterous woman (John 8:10), and to Mary Magdalen (John 20:13).\textsuperscript{87} However, for Mary, it was used twice in the scene of Cana and Calvary (John 2:4; 19:27). The use of “woman’ by Jesus toward his mother seemed to be abnormal, though it was not out of disrespect for her.\textsuperscript{88} Theologians of the Fourth Gospel discover a special theological view of using the word ‘woman.’ Ignace de la Potterie notes that ‘woman’ is a sign for her mission both at Cana and Calvary.\textsuperscript{89} At Cana Jesus manifests himself as the Messiah by displaying a divine sign of his Messiasship. In this scene, Mary’s role as a woman is seen in the theological view of the evangelist; it is not from the filial relationship of mother and son but is from the Messianic relationship for the sake of his disciples and people who need redemption.\textsuperscript{90} Mary exercises her intercessory role in asking help for people who need

\textsuperscript{85} Cf. Galot, S. J., Mary in the Gospel, 127; Buby, Mary in Galilee, vol 1, 121.
\textsuperscript{86} Galot, S. J., Mary in the Gospel, 134.
\textsuperscript{87} Galot, S. J., Mary in the Gospel, 134.
\textsuperscript{88} Cf. Buby, Mary in Galilee, vol. 1, 122.
\textsuperscript{89} De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 202.
\textsuperscript{90} De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 202.
This is why Jesus called Mary as ‘woman,’ not ‘mother.’ Mary is there as a helper for people rather than as the mother for Jesus.

Ignace de la Potterie demonstrates the eschatological meaning of ‘woman’ and ‘hour’ succinctly. The wedding feast of Cana symbolizes the messianic wedding feast in the light of eschatological insights. Jesus is a spouse of people who is expecting the messianic kingdom, while Mary is placed as a representative of the people who will participate in the feast of heaven. In the messianic hour, people who are at the feast will rejoice with the wine which Jesus would offer to them. Jesus’ calling Mary as ‘woman’ also occurs in the scene of Calvary. De la Potterie continues to note the word ‘woman’ was applied to Eve in Genesis 3:15 in the Old Testament. He comments on the view of the evangelist on ‘woman’ by linking the Daughter of Zion to “woman” symbolizing the messianic people. The Daughter of Zion is the symbolic figure, for the Christian community composed of the disciples whom Jesus loved in eschatological time.

Mary as ‘woman’ stands for the bride who would be with her spouse in the heavenly feast. She is a bride who collaborates with Jesus in his messianic work. She helps the exercise of Jesus’ sign changing the water into wine for people. “At Cana, she helps him prepare the wine, to set the table of the banquet, and she dispatches those in the house (Pr 9:1-5) … Already at the hour of the sign, John shows us the Virgin-Bride integrated at the

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91 This point of view can be seen in the assertion of de la Potterie and Serra on Cana episode. A. Serra interprets the Cana episode in the new covenant of Israel connected to the covenant of Sinai (Exodus 19:8; 24:3-7), so he sees Mary’s role situated in the place of Moses. It is mediation or intervention in the mystery of salvation. It is a role the evangelist intended to an advice for a disciple of Jesus. De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 189-190; A. Serra, Contributi dell’antica letteratura giudaica per l’esegesi di Gv 2,1-12 e 19:25-27, Rome, 1977, 139-228; A. Serra, Maria a Cana e sotto la Croce, Saggio di mariologia giovannea, Rome, 1978, 30-37.

92 The Church mentioned in the liturgical texts for the Vespers of the Epiphany; “Today the Church is united to her heavenly Spouse, for… the guests are gladdened by the water changed into wine.” Bertrand Buby, Mary in Galilee, vol. 1, 124.

93 De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 203.

94 De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 203.

95 De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 203.

96 De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 206. De la Potterie deals this topic in order to explain the role of Mary at Cana.
deepest level in the plan of redemption.”

Moreover, she will lead those who believe in Jesus and obey the word of his spouse. Jesus also plays a role in leading his community into union with his mother. Jesus hands over his mother to his disciple, and the mother of Jesus receives a new mission as the mother of the disciple. Thus, the beloved disciple takes Jesus’ mother as his mother. Therefore, three are united at the Crucifixion of Jesus who serves for the salvation of human beings and the glorification of Jesus Christ. This view helps to understand Mary’s role in her spiritual maternity and as the image of the Church.

Thirdly, Mary has an important role in the Sacramental theme in the Fourth Gospel.

In the Fourth Gospel, the Sacrament of Baptism and the Eucharist are mentioned in accordance with views of some scholars. Jesus talks with Nicodemus about the spiritual new birth of human beings. “Very truly, I will tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born above” (John 3:3). The rebirth comes from God (Titus 3:5; Jas. 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23). This conversation reveals the Sacrament of Baptism in the Fourth Gospel. Jesus continues to talk of the spiritual rebirth which can be achieved by water and the Holy Spirit. The symbol of the Baptism is water and the Holy Spirit (John 3:5).

The Sacrament of the Eucharist is mentioned in chapter 6 in the Fourth Gospel. “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh” (John 6:51). Jesus keeps

98 De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 208.
99 Bertrand Buby, Mary in Galilee, vol. 1, 120.
speaking about the bread and life. “Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you” (John 6:53). He notes that his Body will be our bread of life. At the Cross, he surrenders his body and life for our salvation. In this sense, the Sacrament of Eucharist is completed at the Crucifixion, when he immolates his entire life for our salvation.

The two Sacraments in the Fourth Gospel are manifested in various episodes. Because the Sacrament occurs in an encounter with Jesus Christ, individuals meet Jesus and his presence, so they come to believe in Jesus and share the encountering with others. At Cana narrative, Mary is present with Jesus at a wedding feast and asks her son to make the situation better. Jesus changed water into wine, even though his hour has not yet come (John2:4). The elements of wine and water are the symbol of Baptism and the Eucharist. The mother of Jesus and Jesus’ disciple were in Cana and experienced the messianic sign of Jesus. The Mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple stood at the foot of the Cross. They witness the water and blood flowing from Jesus’ side, symbolizing Baptism and the Eucharist (Cf. John 19:34-35). They are witness to the birth of the Church and the work of the Holy Spirit. The mother of Jesus was in the place of the rebirth of the Body of Christ at Calvary and the Church and assisted in the establishment of the Eucharist by offering his body and life at the Cross.

Concerning the mother of Jesus, the evangelist portrays her unique role in his theological themes at the episode of Cana and Calvary. The mother of Jesus was associated in the work of salvation of Jesus in the insights of the Fourth Gospel, as we briefly examined above. Now for the sake of deepening our understanding the role of the mother of Jesus at the Cross, the analysis of John 19:25-28a will be explored. This analysis will manifest the

101 It creates in them the beginnings of the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ. Mary becomes the mother of the Church and the beloved disciple represents all of us who are under Mary’s protection.
meaning of spiritual and ecclesial perspective in the mission of Mary at the foot of the Cross.

2.1.2. The Analysis of John 19:25-28a

It is important to know the meaning of the Greek texts of John 19:25-28a succinctly. This leads us deeper in understanding the insights of the evangelist and spiritual meaning within it. However, before referring to the analysis, there are two accounts to be investigated; one is the structural link of the episode Cana and Calvary; the other is the theology of Passion narrative of the Fourth Gospel. In the first place, Scriptural theologians accept that the Gospel of John was structurally divided into four major parts: The Prologue (1:1-18), the Book of Signs (1:19-12:50), the Book of Glory or Book of Agape (13:1-20:31) and the Epilogue (21:1-25). Mary, the mother of Jesus is involved in the event of Cana (John 2:1-11) belonged to the Book of Signs and in the Crucifixion of Christ at Calvary (John 19:25-27) belonged to the Book of Glory. The Cana event is the episode of the first missionary work of Jesus, and the scene of Calvary is the last moment of Jesus on earth. The mother of Jesus is present in both meaningful events in the Fourth Gospel. Therefore, she was present at the birth of Jesus (John 1), in the work of Jesus (John 2) and his death of Jesus (John 19). Mary’s mission in each occasion is extended in John’s theological and spiritual sense.

Both narratives at Cana and at Calvary have the connection with the Johannine theological themes, structure, vocabulary, characters and their symbolism. Stephen K. Ray gives an account on the link of two events. He asserts the Fourth Gospel has a chiastic structure using a chiasm to balance the first part and the last part in paragraphs, phrases, or in

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episodes. Mary’s significance is also stressed in this structural method of the Gospel. “Similarly, as other scenes in the Gospel texts, the scene of Mary is placed structurally by the intention of the evangelist.” That is, Mary appears at Cana in Jesus’ first mission and at Calvary in his last mission. The evangelist in the Fourth Gospel stresses the presence of Mary and her mission in her relationship with Jesus and his mission. Mary’s mission in the both narratives is connected in the light of the theological intention of the evangelist. It is manifested in its similarities of vocabularies, themes, characters and the action of Jesus to Mary.

Secondly, the passion theology of the Fourth Gospel is to be considered. The evangelist of the Fourth Gospel demonstrates the passion narrative showing Jesus’ initiative. R. E. Brown explains that John’s Gospel emphasizes Jesus’ glorification and his authority in the passion narrative, while the Synoptic stress that Jesus faced suffering and death. In Mark and Matthew, Jesus is abandoned, suffered and mocked, accused and abused without any support from friends around the cross. Especially at Gethsemane, Jesus asked the Father to take away his cup and in Golgotha, he prays crying out that he has been forsaken. Brown notes, “In their passion narratives of Mark and Matthew dramatize how difficult it is for Jesus to go through his crucifixion and how he is clearly recognized as belonging to God only after he has suffered to the full.” However, John’s Gospel presents Jesus having authority for choosing his passion and death. He governs the situation, the time and his life. Jesus refers to his passion and death; “I lay down my life…no one has taken it away from me;
rather I lay it down of my own accord” (John 10:17-18). The evangelist underlines Jesus’ returning to the Father to glorify God’s name and to fulfill the Scripture. Jesus is present as the Son of Man who came from heaven and everything is under his control. In front of Pilate, Jesus tells Pilate in the trial, “You have no power over me at all.” He dies surrounded by his followers whom he loves. Therefore, his last words given to his mother and the beloved disciple are deliberate from his willing intention.

Francis J. Moloney states that the Passion narrative of the Fourth Gospel can be divided into five sections: the crucifixion (John 19:16b-22), the seamless garment (v. 23-24), the mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple at the Cross (v. 25-27), the death of Jesus and the gift of the Spirit (v. 28-30), and the gift of water and blood after the death (v. 31-37). The context of the mother of Jesus at the Cross is placed in the center of the entire Passion narrative. It has an important function for the evangelist. Moloney describes that Jesus intends to build a close relationship between his mother and his disciple as a new community, the community that is one in believing in and accepting the Word of God.

Two aspects that were mentioned above will help in understanding the meaning of the texts before the analysis of the contexts of John 19:25-28a. The analysis will be concentrated on the words related to the mission of Mary at the foot of the Cross. Through the analysis of the text of John 19:25-28a, we can deeply observe the mission of Mary at the foot of the Cross of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel.

εἰστήκεισαν δὲ παρὰ τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Μαρία της μητρίς του

Meanwhile standing near the cross of Jesus

108 Brown, The Death of Messiah vol.1, 33.
109 Brown, The Death of Messiah vol.1, 34.
In verse 25, four women\textsuperscript{112} are standing near the Cross of Jesus. Mary and Mary Magdalene are well-known women in other texts in John 2:1-11 and John 20:14-18, but the other two are not mentioned in other texts. Rudolf Schnackenburg comments that four women have roles in the scene by the intention of the evangelist. Mary and Mary Magdalene play a special role related to other texts, but two other women were needed to contrast with the four soldiers.\textsuperscript{113} They represent people who are faithful to the Savior, while the soldiers represent people who are against Him. However, Jesus Christ came to redeem all people.

The word παρὰ (near) is a spiritually important word because it shows their closeness at the Cross of Jesus. Four women are close to Jesus suffering beside the Cross. It is used for the disciple whom Jesus loved in the following verse. However, the disciple was standing beside Mary and is not mentioned standing beside the Cross. Though there is a little difference between four women and the disciple, they are all standing (εἰστήκεισαν) by Jesus who is suffering. The word “εἰστήκεισαν” is an active plural third perfect verb of “ἰστημι.” It simply means “to stand” or “to cause stand,” but in this scene, it has a more spiritual meaning representing “stand firm” or “exist” with Jesus in his suffering. Four women are standing in the close area of the Crucifixion of Jesus who is suffering from his passion.\textsuperscript{114} These women are more active and passionate than the apostles of Jesus because they stood next to Jesus on

\textsuperscript{112} Some exegetes state there were three women at the Cross including the mother of Jesus. For example, Speyr asserts that three women were there because of the theological insight of the evangelist. The mother of Jesus stood there as the purist person, Mary Clopas as the normal person and Mary Magdalene as the person who redeemed from her sin. It symbolizes the Savior redeemed all kinds of people on the Cross. Adrienne von Speyr, \textit{The Mystery of Death} (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988), 116. However, most Catholic scholars insist that four women stood at the Cross.


\textsuperscript{114} This fact is different with the assertion in the Synoptic Gospels. Women in the Synoptic Gospels are looking at Jesus’ suffering at a distance and do not mention the mother of Jesus. The Gospel of John is the only one to mention the mother of Jesus at the Cross.
the Cross.

Verse 25 states that four women are standing near Jesus, and the disciple whom Jesus loved is standing by Mary. Women are looking at Jesus a distance away from the Cross in the Synoptic Gospels, but women including Mary and the disciple were standing in the Gospel of John. Mary and the beloved disciple were needed for the theological insights of the evangelist of the Fourth Gospel. Jesus reveals the meaning of the presence of Mary and his disciple at the Cross right before his last moment of death.

26

Ἰησοῦς οὖν ἴδὼν τὴν μητέρα καὶ τὸν μαθητὴν παρεστῶτα ὅν ἴησόν, λέγει τῇ μητρί, Γύναι, ἵδε ὁ υἱὸς σου.

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother. ‘Woman, here is your son.’

In verse 26, the mother of Jesus, the word “Γύναι, woman” is used by Jesus. As was mentioned above, the disciple was standing beside Mary. The word “standing by, παρεστῶτα” symbolically manifests the special relationship of Mary and the disciple by describing the distance between both. It gives the account that they are already close before the link of this new relationship established by Jesus.

Brown mentions two significant words emphasizing the relationship of both protagonists; the mother of Jesus and the disciple whom Jesus beloved.\(^\text{115}\) The mother of Jesus stands near the Cross of Jesus, not only to be present with Jesus. This gives us an impression of seeing the mother of Jesus as a representative with the beloved disciple. The audience may think that her presence is not just for being with her dying Son; rather it is for a certain symbolic meaning as an ideal disciple or the mother of the new Covenant. René

Laurentin summarized the meaning of Mary’s presence at the Cross describing that Mary’s presence at the Cross reminds us of the daughter of Zion. The beloved disciple becomes her son, “the personification of son of Israel, who gathers around the Daughter of Zion.”

Mary stands at the Cross as the mother of the representative of all humanity, responding to God and as the mother of Messiah and the mother of all the new people.

Jesus first talks to his mother calling her “woman (γυνη)” and proclaiming her new motherhood for his disciple. Brown explains that Jesus’ primary words to his mother signify her priority in the episode. He states that the mother of Jesus is exemplified among the disciples who are close to Jesus. The mother of Jesus is mentioned first among other women who are attached to the Cross of Jesus and is first spoken of, before the disciple whom Jesus loved. Brown indicates that it is in view of idealizing the mother of Jesus for the disciple. As some theologians noticed, Mary may be the symbol of “Daughter of Zion,” people elected, messianic people, and the New Jerusalem.

Brown summarizes that “woman” is indicating the fact that the role of the mother of Jesus is extended to the disciples by Jesus who desires the formation of an intimate relationship between his mother and his disciples just as his relationship with his mother. In view of the theological meaning, the enlargement of her mission as the spiritual motherhood is related to the role of New Eve who has been mentioned in writings of the Patristic Fathers. Like Eve, Mary is called “woman” (Genesis 3: 15; John 2: 15; 19: 26). In

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116 Mary’s presence at the Cross is typologically regarded as the Daughter of Zion, the mother of the people of the promise or the mother of the new covenant presented in Isaiah, chapter 66 and Zephaniah 3:14-17 and discovered in Lumen Gentium 55, the document on the Church of the Second Vatican Council. Her identity as the daughter of Zion was introduced in the Annunciation in Luke 1: 28-32. She is the mother of Messiah and the new covenant of Jesus.

117 De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 221.


119 It is referred to John 2:4; Apoc. 12:1.

120 Brown, The Death of the Messiah, 1020.

121 Brown, The Death of the Messiah, 1020.

122 De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 221.

123 De la Potterie, The Hour of Jesus (New York: Alba House, 1994), 12-14; Cf. De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 220-221.

Christian exegesis, when “woman” in Genesis 3:20 signifies Eve, the mother of all the living, the mother of Jesus in John 19:25 signifies the New Eve, the mother of the disciples.\textsuperscript{125} It is clarified in the Book of Revelation 12; the woman in the Book of Revelation chapter 12 is directly related to the woman in Genesis 3:15 because it identifies the mother of Messiah; she struggles with the dragon, the ancient serpent of Genesis 3 and brings forth the Messiah and new people. Therefore, Ambrose and Ephraem called Mary a figure of the Church; Brown does the same.\textsuperscript{126}

The mother of Jesus and Jesus’ disciple in this scene reminds us of the event of Cana (John 2:1-11) and the last supper of Jesus (John 13:23) with his disciples. At the Cana event, the mother of Jesus was called “woman,” and through her intercession, the disciples believed in Jesus. Therefore, Jesus’ sign at Cana spiritually makes in faith a particular relationship of the mother of Jesus with his disciples. At the last supper, the disciple whom Jesus loved leaned close to the breast of Jesus introducing this special relationship. Jesus showed how to practice love for his disciples. The word “\(\acute{a}g\alpha\pi\acute{a}w\)” is often used in the Johannine literature.\textsuperscript{127} It signifies “to love” in general, but “With reference to God’s love, it is God’s willful direction toward man.”\textsuperscript{128} This word occurs a quite often since chapter 13 belonging to the Book of Glory in view of stressing the love of Jesus. We call it the Book of Agape.

Jesus calls his mother “\(\Gamma\upeta,\) woman” as he called her at Cana narrative. In both cases Mary’s role is important. Jesus talked first to his mother calling her “woman” at Cana and last spoke to his mother calling her in the same way at Calvary. It means that mother of Jesus was present at Jesus’ first mission and his last mission. The evangelist is interested in

\textsuperscript{125} Brown, The Death of the Messiah, 1021.
\textsuperscript{126} Brown, The Death of the Messiah, 1022.
\textsuperscript{128} Spiros Zodhiates, TH.D., ed., “\(\acute{a}g\alpha\pi\acute{a}w\)” in The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament (Chattanooga, TN: Amg Publishers, 1992), 66.
Mary as a witness of Jesus, his words and his works from the beginning to the last moment of his life on earth. She was present to witness the Crucifixion of Jesus and his redemption as well as to get a new mission which is given to her: to be a mother of the community of Jesus’ beloved as she had received the Word of God in her womb to become the mother of Jesus in her first mission (Cf. John 1:14).

The word “woman” occurs in two important texts in Genesis 3:15 and in the Book of Revelation 12:1. What is interesting is that two books are the first and the last book of the Scriptures. The Church sees that the woman in both books is the mother of Jesus and the Church. The evangelist might have considered the link of woman in Genesis with woman in the Johannine literature because the Prologue of the Gospel seems to be the reminiscent of the Genesis in account according to the Johannine scholars.

The word “ἴδε” is a “particle of exclamation and calling attention to something present (Matt. 25:20, 22, 25; Mark 11:21; John 1:47; 19:5, 14).” It highlights the following assertion which Mary should pay attention. The word occurs in the scene of something important given by Jesus.

In verse 27, the disciple hears that Jesus entrusts his mother to him. The same word “ἴδε” presents the importance of following assertion of Jesus as was observed above. The

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disciple is commanded to receive the mother of Jesus as his mother. His active reception to the word of Jesus is stressed in the subsequent verse. The disciple took the mother of Jesus into his household. The viewpoint on Mary as the spiritual mother for the disciple is discovered in the text of John 19:27. “Behold, your mother! From that hour, the disciple took her into his household.” At first glance, the word “behold” indicates that the following assertion will be identified to be someone important (Cf. John 19:4-5; 14; Tobit 7:12) or to signify person’s new role and identity (John 1:36, 47-51). The Mother of Jesus will be the mother of the beloved disciple from then on. Jesus revealed his mother as a woman to be the mother of his disciple. The disciple took the mother of Jesus into his own household. The word “ἔλαβεν” is an active third person aorist verb of “λαυβάνω,” which has the meaning of ‘to actively take and to receive or accept.’ The aorist verb “ἔλαβεν” signifies that the disciple definitely and completely accepted mother of Jesus as his mother. The word “ἰδιός” means properly someone’s own. 

R. E. Brown describes that the word “λαυβάνω (take)” suggests that the disciple internally and spiritually receives the mother of Jesus into his space and his own property. It means that the intimate and new relationship between the mother of Jesus and his disciple was spiritually formed. It is initiated by Jesus Christ, but the disciple accepted the new relationship with the mother of Jesus. John chapter 19 verse 27 shows the active decision of the beloved disciple by using “ἔλαβεν,” an aorist verb. For Mary, it is a new mission, but for Jesus, it is the formation of the new relationship and a community of faith. The new family in faith in Jesus is established at the cross as the last action of Jesus.

“λαυβάνω (take)” is used in mentioning whether someone takes the Word of God and

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130 De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 218.
133 De la Potterie mentions this: “He took her into his intimacy.” He took her into his interior life and his life of faith. De la Potterie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 227-228.
believes in him. “But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God” (John 1:11, 12). It is also used in Jesus’ assertion to give the Holy Spirit to his disciples. “When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22). In three occasions “λαυβάνω (take)” is significantly used in an aorist verb form. In John 1:11, 12 the word is related to the word “belief” in the Word of God. The Christian who receives the Word of God and believes in him receives the mother of Jesus by the acceptance of the Word of God. In John 20:22, Jesus offers the Holy Spirit to his disciples using the same word “λαυβάνω (take).” A new family of Jesus should receive the Holy Spirit into their intimacy in faith.

28 Μετὰ τοῦτο εἰδὼς ὁ ᾽Ιησοῦς ὅτι ἡδη πάντα τετέλεσται,

                                            28 After this, when Jesus knew that all was

edioi, touto. 135
dei, oti. 136
tetelo, 137

and diwyo. 138 These four verbs manifest their deeper meaning with each different tense. First, “to know” is a perfect tense used as to acknowledge the following situation completely. Jesus completely knew that he had finished all that he must to do. Secondly, the verb “to finish” is used twice, but each usage has a different meaning. The

135 The verb εἰδὼς is a perfect participle active form of the verb “οίδα.” It “strictly means to have seen, perceived, apprehended; hence it takes the present meaning of to know, and the pluperfect becomes an imperfect.” Spiros Zodhiates, TH.D., ed., “είδω eídō,” in The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament, 508-509.
137 “τελειωθῇ” is a subjunctive aorist passive verb of τελειόω, which has the same meaning as the word τελέο; it means “to carry through, complete, reach the end, yet between them there is at times a slight difference. Spiros Zodhiates, TH.D., ed., “τελειόω teléo,” in The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament, 1376.
former form “signifies the reaching of an end or goal meaning to finish or accomplish a task, to terminate a course.”\textsuperscript{139} Thus it includes the meaning of termination. In contrast, the latter form “speaks of the continued realization of a purpose throughout the performance of a task.”\textsuperscript{140} It has a meaning of the entire process. It describes that Jesus knew what he should finish has been completed to the Scripture definitely would be fulfilled. Thirdly, “to thirst” is the verb of present tense. Jesus is thirsty. It also means that Jesus finished the work of God.\textsuperscript{141}

In conclusion, John 19:25-28a has been interpreted literally, of Jesus’ concern for his mother; and symbolically, of discovering the theological insights of John; such as through the meaning of the presence of “woman”\textsuperscript{142} and the achievement of “the hour” by Jesus. The mother of Jesus has the new mission as the mother of the Church or the mother of Christians in the light of the Cana narrative (John 2). The role of Mary at the foot of the Cross can be said “the mother of the eschatological community” as the personification of the Zion of the prophets.\textsuperscript{143} André Feuillet interprets the beloved disciple as the representative of the community of Christ’s disciples. That is, John represents the children of Zion and Mary is the mother of Jesus’ disciple.\textsuperscript{144} This interpretation stresses the role of Mary’s mediation for her children.

Francis J. Moloney stresses Mary’s active role more than the mediation of Mary in the account of Feuillet. Mary is the mother of Jesus who receives the Word of God, and at the foot of the Cross, she receives a new and expanded role as the mother of Jesus’ disciples.\textsuperscript{145}

\textsuperscript{141} Peter F. Ellis comments that “to thirst” signifies Jesus’ completion for the work of the Father. He connects it with the Psalm 69:21, “for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” Jesus completed what was written in the Scripture for him. Ellis, The Genius of John (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1984), 272.
\textsuperscript{142} The synoptic Gospels have a group of women looking on from a distance at the cross (Mark 15:40). Only in John’s Gospel, Mary presents with Jesus and is called by Jesus with the form of vocation.
\textsuperscript{143} André Feuillet, Jesus and His Mother: The Role of the Virgin Mary in Salvation History and the Place of Woman in the Church (Still River, Massachusetts: St. Bede’s Publication, 1974), 127.
\textsuperscript{144} Feuillet, Jesus and His Mother: The Role of the Virgin Mary in Salvation History and the Place of Woman in the Church, 208.
Mary’s existence at the foot of the Cross is rather an active role than merely a passive presence to be taken care of by the disciple of Jesus. Therefore, the beloved disciple of Jesus is not just a son to substitute Jesus to take care of the mother of Jesus, but a representative of the community that was intimately bound with the maternal role of Mary for the new family of Jesus.146

2.2. Marian perspectives in John 19:25-28a

2.2.1. Mary in the Christological Perspective: a witness

The word witness expresses the faith and love for God and Jesus Christ in the early Christian community. In John’s Gospel, many individual witnesses appear to attest to the identity of Jesus. The Greek word for witness, “μαρτυρία” emerges in John’s Gospel for the faithful to believe in Jesus and it is confessed by personal experiences while being transferred to other generations. J. Terence Forestell states that “μαρτυρία” in the Fourth Gospel is used more times than in the synoptic Gospels. It appears fourteen times in John’s Gospel, seven times in the Johannine epistles and nine times in Apocalypse, contrasted with four times in the synoptic Gospels (Mark 14:55.56.59; Luke 22:71).147 The more use of this word in Johannine texts signifies the importance of witness in the theological view of the Fourth Gospel.

Some individuals appear bearing witness to Jesus. The first person is the John the Baptist. John mentions, “I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God” (John 1:34). He is a witness rather than a baptizer in the Fourth Gospel.148 John proclaims the identity of Jesus as “the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world” (John 1:29) and

Jesus’ authority to give baptism in Spirit (John 1:33). He testifies Jesus’ divinity with the assertion that the Holy Spirit is present with Jesus (John 1:32). He witnesses to Jesus as the paschal lamb to slaughter for his people and continues to the Cross bearing it himself by being martyred as a prophet and Messiah.

Nathanael appears as a witness following John in the first chapter in the Fourth Gospel. He comes to see Jesus, listens to him, and then believes in Jesus confessing him the Son of God. He sees Jesus as the Messiah calling Him as the king of Israel (John 1:49; Mark 15:32). The Samaritan woman is a representative of witnesses in the Fourth Gospel. She encountered Jesus and comes to believe, and finally, proclaims what she saw and believed in Jesus to others (John 7-42). She testifies Jesus is the Messiah (John 4:29). Elsewhere Martha and Mary, Lazarus and Mary Magdalene, and the Beloved disciple are witnesses to Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. They testify and believe in Jesus’ divinity through their faith and activity.

Above all, the mother of Jesus is a prominent witness in the Fourth Gospel like the synoptic Gospels. The mother of Jesus appears differently in each Synoptic Gospel in accordance with the insights of each evangelist. The Fourth Gospel stresses the witness of the mother of Jesus just in a few episodes when compared to her appearance in Matthew and Luke. However, in a few episodes, she is an outstanding witness of Jesus like the John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel. Notably, the presence of the mother of Jesus at Cana and at the foot of the Cross of Jesus shows Mary’s witness in diverse aspects. Three aspects among them will be presented in this chapter: Mary’s witness for Jesus’ identity, God’s mercy and justice, and the Holy Spirit’s presence with Mary.

2.2.1.1. Mary’s witness to Jesus

In the Fourth Gospel, the mother of Jesus witnesses to her Son from the first moment
to the last moment of Jesus’ mission for the salvation of all. Mary’s primary role in the Fourth Gospel is her role as a witness; she was a witness to Jesus’ Incarnation, a witness to Jesus’ first public mission for the faith of his disciples at Cana (John 2:1-11), and a witness to the only self-offering of Jesus on the Cross for his people.149 In this regard, Mary’s role is mainly seen as a witness in the Fourth Gospel. This is similar in Luke’s Gospel where Mary is a witness who heard the first word of Jesus in Luke in the temple. “Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” (Luke 2: 49) The mother of Jesus is a witness of the first word of Jesus in Luke and John. The mother of Jesus takes the Word in her womb in faith and then leads his followers of her son to faith (John 2: 11).

Especially, at the foot of the Cross, Mary was standing as a witness of the mystery of Christ’s returning to the Father as well as a witness when she received the Word of God in her womb in the mystery of God’s becoming flesh. In other words, Mary was there at the moment of the mysteries of Jesus’ Incarnation (John1:13-14)150 and was there explicitly at the time of his redemption for the salvation of people (John 19) in the Fourth Gospel. The evangelist in this scene stresses the fact that the mother of Jesus was present at Jesus’ coming and leaving the world for the salvation of all. She virtually is a witness of the work of salvation in and through Jesus. The mother of Jesus was present with Jesus in the entire life of Jesus: conception, birth, early life, public ministry and at his death.

Mary’s presence in the Incarnation in the Prologue of the John’s Gospel indicates that Mary is a witness of Jesus as God and as human. “The Word became flesh” is the expression that God became a human person to save his people in the Fourth Gospel. “The Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). Mary came to know that God came into the

149 Cleo Mcnelly Kearns, The Virgin Mary, Monotheism, and Sacrifice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 87.
150 Mary is not directly mentioned in the Incarnation, but is called as “the mother of Jesus” or “the mother” in the Fourth Gospel.
world and became human when she received the Word of God in her womb. She is the special witness of this event because she is the one who offered her humanity to Jesus.\textsuperscript{151} The mother of Jesus believed his Son’s divinity and true humanity through her experience in the Incarnation.\textsuperscript{152}

At Cana, Mary’s confidence for Jesus is manifested through her communication with Jesus. She has sympathy for the difficulties of those who are in need, tells it to her Son, waits for his answer, and makes people ready to exercise his command. Johannine theologians mention that the sign of Cana is the first Messianic sign of Jesus. Jesus manifests his Messianic salvation by offering abundant and high-quality wine from the water in the wedding feast (John 2:10). The mother of Jesus and servants who listen to his command according to Mary’s request become witnesses to Jesus in this first Messianic sign. Jesus disciples saw this sign and believed in Jesus. The mother of Jesus takes the Word in her womb in faith in Incarnation and then leads his followers of her son to faith (John 2:11).

At the Cross (John 19:25-28), the mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple bear a witness to Jesus as one with him in his humanity. They witness to Jesus’ death, returning to the Father and the breath of His Spirit. Jesus suffered from the weakness of the physical human reality and died as a weak human person on the Cross. The flesh returns to the Word of God at the Cross after fulfilling his mission on earth according to the will of God. The mother of Jesus is standing to witness at the moment of his returning to God as she was present when her Son came into the world. She is a constant witness of Jesus and His life from the beginning to the last moment of his life.

The person who witnesses to and believes in Jesus as God and savior can be called a

\textsuperscript{152} The Fourth Gospel emphasizes the divinity of Jesus in several signs. At Cana Mary was participated in one of his Messianic signs. Mary is also introduced as a witness of his humanity by offering her humanity to Jesus. It means that the evangelist manifests indirectly Mary as a witness and provider of his humanity.
martyr. Pope John Paul II states in his encyclical *Redemptoris Mater* (1987) portraying Mary as the mother of the redeemer in developing her role and faith to Jesus in the work of salvation. Mary participated in the Messianic mission of Jesus in the work of salvation. The mother of Jesus was a witness for the completion of the mission of Jesus and simultaneously a martyr enduring the suffering from her Son’s last agony. Therefore, Mary is a witness Jesus’ identity, his mission and his entire life in the history of salvation. Moreover, she came to bear witness to the truth revealed at the moment of the death and glorification of Jesus before any of his disciples.

2.2.1.2. Mary, a witness of God’s justice and mercy

The mother of Jesus is a witness of the faith and love of Jesus for God and his people. Jesus came into the world to redeem humans by the will of God. Jesus began to initiate people to believe in God the Father to receive eternal life (John 6:40). In the conversation with the Samaritan woman, he says that he wants to give an eternal life to those who believe his words and worship God in spirit and truth (John 4:14, 24). However, it is not all assertion of Jesus for people. He revealed the truth about God as the Father of loving-kindness.

Jesus presents himself “as the revealer of God” and presents himself as the truth, and “the action on earth by which God reveals Himself.” Jesus shows the truth by his teaching through his entire life. He came to proclaim God the Father to manifest God’s love for people (Cf. John 3:16). The Incarnation is the expression of God’s love for humankind. God communicates with humans through sending his beloved Son to the world. In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus came to us to glorify God the Father (John 3:16).

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154 James, A. Hickey, *Mary at the Foot of the Cross* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988), 51-52. Hickey states that Mary was so brave, that she could stand beneath the Cross and give witness to the Crucified Jesus.
The Crucifixion of Jesus is a complete revelation of God’s justice and loving-kindness. The theology of the Fourth Gospel indicates that God’s justice for the sins of human beings is exercised through the passion and death of Jesus on the Cross. In this view, Jesus suffered and died for the salvation of human beings to accomplish the will of God, his Father. Simultaneously, in this process, God’s mercy is revealed through the suffering and death of the Son of God on the Cross. Jesus is the beloved Son of God, who is offered as the sacrifice to redeem God’s people through his death on the Cross. This is the love of God for people. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” (John 3:16). Jesus’ unconditional and primary choice for the will of the Father made him do the perfect sacrifice and bring salvation to his people.157 Jesus’ action is his obedience and love for God. He absolutely agreed to God’s will and exercised his belief and love. The mother of Jesus accompanies him in accordance with his will.

The mother of Jesus is present and seen through the revelation of Jesus’ love for God and God’s love for the people Jesus saved. In a certain sense, she was present as the mother of Jesus with the Son of the Father. She participated in the offering of her Son whether she knew the full meaning of his passion and death or did not know it. She is a visible parent providing for her child and people in the work of salvation through Jesus, while the Father is an invisible parent to offer his only begotten Son for his people (Cf. John 3:16). The mother of Jesus is witnessing God’s love and mercy for his people. Hers is a sacrifice with her Son. She is a participant in this work of salvation on behalf of her Son and God the Father. She is a witness and also a participant in the decisive moment of the salvation history. The mother of

Jesus totally surrendered herself to the will of the Father at the foot of the Cross with Jesus.\textsuperscript{158}

\subsection*{2.2.1.3. Mary, a visible witness of the Holy Spirit}

The Holy Spirit is present when the Word became flesh. “And the Word became flesh and lived among us” (John 1:14f). The fact that the Word became flesh involves the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit in the theme and role. In a literary sense, “Greek verb “\textit{\textgreek{a}k\textgreek{p}n\textgreek{v}d\textgreek{w}}” (Shekinah)” has the same consonants as the Aramaic word for God’s presence.”\textsuperscript{159} In the Old Testament, the word was signifying “the tent or tabernacle of meeting that was the place of God’s presence among people” (Exodus 25:8-9).\textsuperscript{160} The same verb indicates the overshadowing of Holy Spirit in the Gospel of Luke. “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you” (Luke 1:35). It is used in John 1:14 in the scene of the Word who dwelt among us. It signifies God’s presence among his people. The Holy Spirit is “overshadowing” in the entire Gospel of John. The Holy Spirit is protecting Jesus in the womb of Mary and taking care of Jesus in Mary. Therefore, Mary becomes a witness to the Holy Spirit through the way of Jesus’ becoming flesh within the Incarnation. The Holy Spirit will be offered in Jesus’ glorification to his disciples (John 19:30).

In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus shows what the role of the Holy Spirit is and how important it is. He is an invisible witness to God the Father and his Son in the Fourth Gospel, while Jesus is the visible witness of God. Jesus mentioned the Holy Spirit as a witness, to the truth about Jesus, and God the Father (Cf. John 14:15-31). The Holy Spirit in John’s Gospel

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{158} National Conference of Catholic Bishops, \textit{Behold Your Mother: Women of Faith: A pastoral letter on the Blessed Virgin Mary}, November 21, 1973 (Santa Clara, Calif.: Shrine of our Lady of Peace, 1985), no.120.
\item \textsuperscript{159} Hiesberger, \textit{The Catholic Bible: Personal Study Edition} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 148. It is a footnote of John 1:14.
\end{itemize}
is the Advocate who will teach everything and remind people of all Jesus told them (John 14:26). “The Paraclete who is the Holy Spirit in John is a teacher, a witness to Jesus, and a prosecutor of the world, who represents the continued presence on earth of the Jesus who has returned to the Father.”\footnote{The Catholic Bible: Personal Study Edition, 172. The Greek meaning of Paraclete derived from the legal terminology is “spokesmen, mediator, intercessor, comforter, and consoler.” Jean Marie Hiesberger, ed., The Catholic Bible: Personal Study Edition, 172.} The Holy Spirit appears in the discourse of Jesus with Nicodemus and a discourse on the bread of life in chapter 7. “It is the spirit that gives life, while the flesh is of no avail” (John 7:63). Jesus continues to say about the spirit. “The Words I have spoken to you are spirit and life” (John 7:64). The Catholic theologians interpret this verse as the revelation of the Spirit by Jesus.\footnote{Jean Marie Hiesberger, ed., The Catholic Bible: Personal Study Edition, 159.} Jesus visibly reveals the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit invisibly witnesses to Jesus.

The mother of Jesus is a witness to the Holy Spirit in this sense. She accepted the spirit and life in her womb, and she received the Holy Spirit (Cf. John 1:14). Therefore, she is also a visible witness to the Holy Spirit. At the foot of the Cross in the Passion narrative, the mother of Jesus and his disciple witness to the death of Jesus and his glorification in returning to God. His last action virtually was to give his breath to the new community represented by Mary and John. His spirit and life were moved spiritually and symbolically to the new community in an invisible way in the Holy Spirit. Mary and the disciple are witnesses of this movement from Jesus into the Holy Spirit; another pattern of the presence of God.

recipient of the grace of the Holy Spirit. The crucifixion in the Fourth Gospel represents Jesus’ passion, death, and his return to the Father; also, it includes the descending of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples and the birth of the Church. John expresses theological, mystical and the implicit presence of the Holy Spirit at the Cross. Jesus and the Holy Spirit are both witnesses of each other. Jesus is a visible witness to the Holy Spirit while the Holy Spirit is an invisible witness to Jesus. Coping with Jesus, Mary bears witness to the Holy Spirit at the birth of the Church and his community; at the same time, she witnesses to the Holy Spirit. The mother of Jesus participated in the birth of the Church with the beloved disciple at the foot of the Cross. The disciple and Mary were visible key witnesses, but the Holy Spirit was an invisible witness.

In conclusion, the mother of Jesus is a witness of the Holy Spirit. The Fourth Gospel is a revelatory Gospel which manifests the role of Mary as a witness to the Holy Spirit and an assistant of his work from the Incarnation to the glorification of Jesus. The revelation of the truth is the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is present in the entire Gospel from the beginning to the last moment of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. Jesus gradually reveals the Father and the Holy Spirit to believers. The Holy Spirit is also the witness to reveal the presence of God through his presence with Jesus. He works in an invisible mission in the plan of God for salvation and continues to work in the Church. In this sense, Mary is a witness to the Holy Trinity through being present to them and doing a mission with the Holy Spirit in the work of salvation.

2.2.2. Mary in Spiritual and Ecclesial Perspectives

The mother of Jesus is a model of holiness for Jesus’ disciple. Especially, it is evident by

164 John Paul II, *Mother of the Redeemer (Redemptoris Mater)*, no. 25, 37.
her presence at the foot of the Cross. Mary was standing upright at the foot of the Cross near the suffering Jesus in his last moment of his life on earth. Modern authors state that Mary’s faith and her faithfulness to God are marked in this scene. She was present with Jesus in the sacrifice and suffering of the redemptive work of her son and persevered up to the end of his saving work. She was in grief and distress with her Son and his cross. Pope John Paul II noted her faith and courage as the mother and woman at the foot of the Cross. He highlighted the dignity of the woman by mentioning Mary as the model of our faith.165

2.2.2.1. Gift: God’s gift given by a grace

The Lord chooses the one whom he loves to give his mother to him as gift.166 The mother of Jesus is a gift to the beloved disciple of Jesus. In the Fourth Gospel, the beloved disciple is the first recipient of Jesus’ mother and the first member of Jesus’ new Covenant after his death. He receives the mother of Jesus as his mother at the Cross. Mary’s motherhood as the mother of Jesus is a primary privilege, but it extends to all followers of Jesus by the command of Jesus at the Cross. The mother of Jesus was given to the beloved disciple as a gift by Jesus. It seems to be done regardless of the consent of Mary at the Cross, but God willed that it would be accomplished under the consent of Mary. The text mentions just the response of the beloved disciple without mentioning of the reaction of Mary. This means that the mother of Jesus is already a believer in Jesus unlike other disciples in the Fourth Gospel (Cf. John 2). She is given for strengthening the faith of Jesus’ disciples at Cana and is provided for being their mother after Jesus’ death and resurrection. It proves that her


166 A gift is defined as “Something that is voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation: a voluntary transfer of real or personal without any consideration or without a valuable consideration.” “gift,” Webster’s Third New International Dictionary on the English Language Unabridged (Springfield, Massachusetts: G&C: Merriam Company Publishers, 1969), 956.
existence is a gift from God for those who believe in Jesus; this gift is subordinated to Jesus in fact that Jesus is God’s grace and a gift for people who are in need salvation, forgiveness, and eternal life. According to the Fourth Gospel, “the grace and truth come through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). Therefore, the mother of Jesus is a gift for those who believe Jesus Christ and follow his words.

Jesus Christ is a gift for the human race. He was given to us by God (Cf. John 3:16). In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus and his abundant gifts were granted to people. He manifested them as signs; he offers a quality wine at Cana, (John 2:1-11) feeds about five thousand people with five barley loaves and two fish in Galilee, (John 6:8-13) and lastly offers his life (John 19:1-37). Moreover, his signs for love and grace were more abundant than people had expected. The water was changed into a high-quality wine, the food was left as much as twelve baskets after feeding all, and he gave his life to his disciples with his mother. Jesus’ gift and grace are overflowing to us. The mother of Jesus is his overflowing gift to us.

2.2.2.2. A Bridge: Spiritual Maternity and Mediation

Mary is a bridge which connects her son and humankind in the view of the evangelist John. She accepted the Word of God in her womb in the work of God’s salvation in the moment of the Word becoming flesh. She is the first link between the Trinity and human beings in the new Covenant. At Cana, Mary played a role as a mediatrix between Jesus and those who need wine and faith; wine is necessary for the couple who had just married and faith for Jesus’ disciples. At Calvary, Mary becomes a mediatrix for the community of a new Covenant by Jesus and his Spirit. Aristide Serra notes that Mary plays a role for the community of believers at Calvary and now continues her role in the life of the Church.\footnote{Aristide M.Serra, O.S.M., Maria a Cana e presso la croce (Roma: Centro di Cultura Mariana, 1978), 101.}
Serra notes that Mary prefigures the Church which is bringing the dispersed children of God into Christ.\textsuperscript{168}

The mother of Jesus stood at the foot of the Cross as a bridge for linking Jesus with a new community which believes in Jesus and keeps his new commandment of John 13:1. De la Potterie notes that the mother of Jesus is typified as a Daughter of Zion for the new community.\textsuperscript{169} Her role is changed from the mother of Jesus into the mother of members of a new family gathered through their faith in Jesus. She plays an intercessory role at Jesus’ last moment on the Cross. Her action is active in obeying her Son’s mediation for us. Her position at the Cross does not seem to be active, but rather seems to be passive. However, that passiveness is indeed her obedience to the will of God, while the reaction of Jesus is active. She needed courage and perseverance for enduring with her Son at the Cross. Her active obedience to the will of God made it possible to stand at the Cross and to listen to the Word of Jesus. As her mission by Jesus, finally, without question and hesitation, she receives the disciple as her son as Jesus wanted. The audience knows that she would be a good mother for a new son as she was for Jesus. The Church acknowledges the mother of Jesus as the mother of the Church and the spiritual mother of all members of the Church from this verse in John 19:25-27.

Ignace de la Potterie introduces the article of M. de Goedt about “the diagram of revelation” in the Fourth Gospel (John 1:21; 1:36; 1:47; 19:25-27).\textsuperscript{170} De la Potterie explains that character A in the episode sees character B and declares about B. The Greek word ἰδε (Behold or Look) is used in this revelatory episode.\textsuperscript{171} At the foot of the Cross, the mother of Jesus is both the mother of the beloved disciple and of Jesus, just as Jesus declared.

\textsuperscript{168} Aristide M.Serra, O.S.M., \textit{Maria a Cana e presso la croce}, 101.
\textsuperscript{169} De la Poterrie, \textit{Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant}, 224.
\textsuperscript{170} De la Poterrie, \textit{Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant}, 217.
\textsuperscript{171} De la Poterrie, \textit{Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant}, 217.
The mother of Jesus will be the mother of all disciples and the each disciple will be the son of the mother of Jesus. Ignace de la Potterie presents “Jesus reveals a new dimension to the maternity of Mary, a spiritual dimension and a new role for the mother of Jesus in the economy of salvation: but at the same time, he reveals that the primary role of the disciple is to be “son of Mary.” Therefore, Mary and the disciple are in a new relationship in the ecclesiological and spiritual dimension.

The role of bridge guides us to the role of Mary’s spiritual maternity. Mary’s motherly mediation for her new children is connected to Jesus. The mother of Jesus is linked to believers of Jesus as well as Jesus, her Son. Her mediating role is not admitted since she is the mother of Jesus, but because of the fact that she is the mother of Jesus’ followers, the new community. On the Cross (John 19:25-27) Jesus gives a new role to Mary as the mother of his beloved disciple. He calls Mary “woman” as he did at Cana with his particular intention for his mother. This is an extended mission for Jesus’ mother, not as a role of Jesus’ own mother, but as a role of a mother of his disciples. Jesus extends her role at the Cross. If the mother of Jesus at Cana offered her compassion, solidarity and her concern for the newly married couple who were in need, at the Cross, she has a much more extended mission for taking care of all Jesus’ disciples as a mother of the new community. Her motherly care, compassion, and solidarity flow naturally to a new community of those who believe Jesus and his words by the designation of Jesus. She stands next to her Son Jesus and next to her new son the disciple. She became the mother of the disciple, the new community born by Jesus.

172 De la Poterrie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 218.
173 The disciple signifies “a symbolic personification of fidelity to the Lord” in this scene. De la Poterrie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 220.
175 Rossier, “Biblical Perspectives on Marian Mediation,” 75. Rossier also stresses that Jesus’ assignment his mother to his disciple is not for the care of his mother after his death, but is for her motherly solidarity with his disciples.
The mother of Jesus stood at the Cross of Jesus as a bridge at “the juncture of the two Testaments.”176 “She stands at the threshold of a new humanity redeemed by the Blood of her Divine Son.177 Cardinal Hickey states Mary shows her faith and holiness at the Cross.178 Her faith and her holiness make her an ideal model and type for the regenerated in faith by Jesus.179 By standing at the Cross, she manifests her faith and her courage at the cross in unison with Christ and his suffering. Her attitude encourages people who participated with her at the Cross and people who listen to the episode to have a deep faith and to strengthen their faith in Jesus.

Regarding the mediation of the mother of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, we first examine Mary’s role at Cana. At Cana, Mary speaks two words to the mother of Christ, both of which are related to Mary’s mediation; “The wine gave out,” (John 2:3). “Do whatever he tells you” (John 2:5). The first word is the word to her son and the second word to the servants. Mary acts as a mediator in this area. She serves as the link between the Son and those who listen to him. The mediating role of Mary is related to her role as a mother. She tells her Son what she needs and guides people to follow her son's words. This role of Mary is further amplified by an additional point of view at the Cross of Jesus. Mary plays a dynamic role in the relationship among those of Jesus, the invisible and divine Father revealed by the words and actions of Jesus, by other followers of Christ including the beloved disciple, and the Holy Spirit. Jesus teaches the people of God how to petition the Father. It is through Jesus himself. “Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete” (John 16:23-24). On the Cross, Jesus prays and acts for the

176 James A. Hickey, Mary at the Foot of the Cross, 54.
177 Hickey, Mary at the Foot of the Cross, 54.
178 Hickey, Mary at the Foot of the Cross, 54.
179 Hickey, Mary at the Foot of the Cross, 54.
salvation of people of God as a mediator. At the same time, Jesus made Mary a mediator between himself and the Christian by making Mary the mother of disciples.

In summary, by the result of Jesus’ mediating role on the Cross, Christians can now call directly upon God the Father, and they can say to God what they need through Jesus. Christians can ask Mary’s intercession because they received Mary as their mother from Jesus. Today the Church regards Mary’s role as the spiritual maternity which for Christians is extended to the dimension of a universal motherhood.180

2.2.2.3. **Blessing for the disciples**

Mary’s consent to the Word of God in the Fourth Gospel is manifested in “Do whatever he tells you” at the episode of Cana (John 2:5). It has the same nuance with the assertion, “Let it be done to me according to your word” in Luke 1:38. Her actual word affirmation makes her the mother of Jesus. In the fourth Gospel, Mary begins a mediating role in the mission of the New Covenant. De la Potterie mentions Mary’s unique role in the New Covenant compared to Moses’ role in the Old Covenant.181 In the Sinai covenant, when Moses received the Words of God and told the people of Israel, they responded with one voice, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient” (Exodus 19:8, 24:3, 7). The same word used in Exodus is employed in the context at the event of Cana. Greek word “ποιεω” meaning “do, accomplish, and create”182 (of the will of God and his mission) shows us the faith and obedience of the people to God. In both cases, Moses and the mother of God are mediators between God and people.183 The mother of Jesus helps the servants and disciples listen to the word of God and faithful to the covenant of God (John 2:1-12). The

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180 De la Potterie, *Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant*, 213.
182 *Bible Works 6*, “ποιεω” in Greek version Bible (BGM) John 2:5.
servants are cooperating with Mary in doing a mission to bring out messianic wine at the feast (John 2:7). Her intervention with the servants results in the miracle of Jesus and results in making all people at the feast happy and satisfied. In this sense, the mother of Jesus is a blessing for people and Jesus’ disciples. At Calvary, the beloved disciple is cooperating with the mother of Jesus in accomplishing his mission received from Jesus Christ (John 19:25-27). The beloved disciple is a symbol of all faithful disciples. He was called to be standing with the mother of Jesus at the foot of the Cross and receiving the mother of Jesus in his home. For him, to take Mary as his mother by the word of his teacher is a special gift and blessing. The mother of Jesus is given to the faithful disciple as the spiritual mother and blessing for him.

2.2.3. Mary in anthropological aspect

In this section, we turn our attention to Mary in an anthropological point. The Scripture shows the history of salvation of the human race by God; Mary too is exercising a role for human beings in Jesus’ redemptive work. We are a part of redemption and have a primary role in our salvation and our cooperation with God. To find the mission of Mary in the Scripture is to find ourselves in the history of salvation. If we find the deeper meaning of Mary's role and mission as a cooperator in the work of salvation in the Scripture, we can learn the profound meaning of life and our mission. We will consider three anthropological aspects of Mary’s mission: an active involvement, the perfect discipleship, and a model for all disciples.

2.2.3.1. Active involvement in the history of salvation

Mary’s active involvement is important to her mission in the Fourth Gospel. It is indirectly revealed at the episode of Cana and Calvary. The mother of Jesus attended the wedding feast at Cana and she knew of the lack of wine for guests. She told her Son the fact
that there was no wine. Then she asked the servants to do whatever her Son tells them. She does not seem to act directly to help the needy just as Jesus did when he heard about the lack of wine. However, consequently, she is actively involved in his first public sign of Jesus with the servants who did what she asked for. “She brought about by her intercession the beginning of miracles of Jesus the Messiah.”\(^{184}\) Jesus also seems to be tolerant of the situation which needs his help and resists the request of his mother, but soon he indirectly takes action responding to his mother. Jesus and Mary cooperated in the work of salvation for the need at Cana. It would be one of those events that they have worked together in the work of salvation since the Word become flesh. The mother of Jesus leads servants to do whatever the words of Jesus commands as a leader of the servants.\(^{185}\) Her active involvement in the work of salvation has a good result because of her faith in Jesus. They received good wine in quality and quantity as well in the physical dimension and helped believers in the spiritual dimension through their cooperation.

At Calvary, the mother of Jesus is associated with the redeemer at the foot of the Cross. She stood at the foot of Cross and listened to the last words of the Redeemer. She united with her Son “in keeping with the divine plan, grieving exceedingly with her only begotten Son, uniting herself with a maternal heart with His sacrifice, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this Victim which she herself had brought forth.”\(^{186}\) She also consents in silence to becoming a mother for the disciple by these words of Jesus: “Woman, behold thy son.” Her active passivity is an essential element of her active involvement in the unique mission of Jesus. Her passivity in silence at the foot of the Cross responds very

\(^{184}\) Pope Paul VI, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: Lumen Gentium*, 58. (Hereafter LG). What is important in understanding the teachings of the Second Vatican Council on Mary is that the mystery of the mother of Jesus is part of the mystery of Christ and the Church in the history of salvation. The role of Mary in the work of salvation is subordinate to that of Jesus, who was the only savior of mankind and continues in the life of Christians in the Church. The Church sees that her intercessory role and active involvement in the Church is continuing among the servants and all believers.

\(^{185}\) Mary in Luke tells that she is the handmaid of the Lord (Luke 1:26). Mary’s leadership for the servants is manifesting through her talk in the theological view of Luke.

\(^{186}\) LG 58.
actively in the work of salvation. She did not say anything but stood beneath the Cross.
Standing in that situation near her Son is itself an active action for her mission as the mother of Jesus and a new mission as mother of his disciples. Her mission needs her union with Jesus in the heart by true love. As Jesus loved his disciple to the end, mother of Jesus was associated in the saving work of Jesus with her active passivity to the very end of her life.

2.2.3.2. Perfect disciple: a model of faith, hope, and love

Pope John Paul II emphasized Mary’s discipleship presenting her role as the model for all Jesus’ disciples. The mother of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel is a perfect disciple. A term of a true disciple in the Fourth Gospel is designated as a ‘servant (diakonos)’ according to Ignace de la Potterie. Disciples of Jesus are servants who are obedient to the word of God, faithfully following Jesus, while staying close to the master. She responded to the word of God in the event of Word’s becoming flesh and heard the Word of Jesus at the Cross with the disciple whom Jesus loved. The characteristic of a discipleship and a witness is to see and to listen to the word of God. In John’s Gospel, the mother of Jesus accepted the Word of God in her womb, and as a result, the Savior came into the world. Nobody received the Word; but only those who believe the truth accepted the Word. Seeing, listening, and believing the Word of God is an important element for a disciple of Jesus. The mother of Jesus was the first seer, listener, and believer. Adding to this, Raymond Brown states another

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188 Ignace de la Potterie, *Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant*, 190.
189 Ignace de la Potterie, *Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant*, 190.
factor of discipleship in the Fourth Gospel.\textsuperscript{191} It is an act according to what they hear and then brings others to Jesus. John the Baptist witnesses Jesus and guided his two disciples to Jesus. Andrew saw Jesus as the messiah and brought his brother to Jesus. The mother of Jesus bears witness to the entire life and mission of Jesus and brings those who believe in Jesus to the eternal life. In this sense, she has all the elements of a perfect disciple of Jesus, so is called a model of discipleship.

At first glance, at Cana in chapter two, Mary is portrayed as a model of authentic faith. The mother of Jesus asked what she needs from Jesus the Savior and waited for him to exercise his power to be seen for those who were in need. Her confidence in the Savior brought a fruitful result to people who needed help. She informed the servants to do whatever Jesus commanded. She moved the heart of Jesus through her faith and her warm love for the guests and changed the situation: the water was changed into wine, the servants entirely experienced the sign of the Messiah and the disciples came to believe in Jesus. These transformations are accompanied by those who listen to Jesus’ words and follow his life.

Mary’s commitment to faith by telling the servants “Do whatever he tells you” (2:5) is the example of her faith and trust to Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. Moloney refers to her as “the first believer”\textsuperscript{192} by highlighting that faith is an important element for discipleship. The mother of Jesus is one of Jesus’ beloved disciples through her faith, hope, and love at the scene of Cana. Mary’s asking the servants is an exhortation to trust without hesitation, though she does not know the meaning and result of what Jesus tells the servants.\textsuperscript{193} She had already received the Word of God in her womb at the moment of his first coming into the world. It is not impossible that she would ask other servants to exercise whatever Jesus commands. She

\textsuperscript{191} Raymond E. Brown, \textit{The Gospel according to John I-XII}, 79.
\textsuperscript{192} Francis J. Moloney, \textit{Mary: Woman and Mother} (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1989), 36.
willingly and actively is involved in the life of neighbors by responding to the Word of Jesus and by leading the servants to respond to the word of Jesus. She loved neighbors as much as she could by observing their difficulties. Moreover, she believed in Jesus and his active exercise for those who are in need and who hope for salvation that Jesus will bring. Through her request for wine, the first messianic sign of Jesus happened, and his disciples believed in him. She believed in Jesus and brought disciples to faith in Jesus (John 2:11).

Mary’s discipleship is perfectly manifested at the foot of the Cross. She was with the suffering Jesus and Jesus’ disciples (women and the beloved disciple). However, Jesus spoke his last words to his mother and his beloved disciple. That is, Jesus told Mary and John to fulfill their missions after his death. The mother of Jesus heard the Word of God and accepted it at the last moment of life of Jesus on earth. This is her discipleship and her active participation at the Cross in the Fourth Gospel. However, the most important truth is that Mary accepted whatever she does with Jesus, even at the moment of the death of her son. She endured difficulties, sufferings, and death of her son for the salvation and was present with him near the Cross. The mother of Jesus participated in her son’s desire and hopes for people. She associated in her son’s mission by standing near the Cross with the courage. Then she receives her new mission as the mother of Jesus’ disciples. At the Cross, she is transformed into the mother of Jesus’ disciples. Scholars call her the spiritual mother of all believers or the mother of the human race. She lost her son but spiritually got new and many children.

2.2.3.3. The entire consecration with immolation with Jesus

Rene Laurentin explains the meaning of consecration. John 194 Consecration is “to move

an object or a person into the sacred domain of God.” 195 The movement has two aspects: one is “the separation from the profane” and the other is “the union or identification with God.” 196 Laurentin states the example of Uzzah who touched the Ark of Covenant and was struck down instantly (2 Sam 6:6-8). 197 The Israelites could not get too close to the ark consecrated for God. The ark was considered as the presence of God. The other aspect is union with God. The sacred is identified with God so that it should be respected like God. When the movement of object or person into the domain of God means consecration, it means the transference from human egoism into holiness and divinization. 198 In this sense, a sacrifice is an act of consecration involving separation and union, and transference from human love into God’s love. 199 René Laurentin takes some examples from the Old Testament: the high priest Aaron (Ex 29: 1ff; Lev 8:1ff), Nazirites (Nb 6:1-12), the Temple in Jerusalem (1Kings 8:1-16), and some prophets (2 Kings 2:23). 200

How the Mother of Jesus surrendered her Son to God is a consecration. She gave her life to God from the beginning at the conception of Jesus in her womb. Now she gives her favorite son in her life to God. The Church states that the truth and reality of the Cross include the sacrifice of Jesus for the salvation of people. Christ reveals the love of God for people and his love for God and people by surrendering his life on the Cross. The mother of Jesus is present at Jesus’ sacrifice on the Cross participating in his suffering and death with her suffering and death in her heart. St. Luke indirectly manifested Mary’s suffering at the Cross by the prophet Simeon: “a sword will pierce your own soul, too” (Luke 1:35). The entire participation and offering of the mother in the sacrifice of Jesus can be examined in

light of the meaning of the sacrifice of Jesus. Jesus gives up his life for people and their salvation. It was his love. “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13).

J. Terence Forestell, a scholar of the Scriptures, explains the meaning of the death of Jesus, focusing on Jesus’ sacrifice. He stresses the death of Jesus is the expression of love for God and at the same time love of Jesus in favor of people. He illustrates the parable of the good shepherd (John 10:11-13). The faithful shepherd gives his life to save his sheep from the threat of wild beasts (John 10:15). Jesus voluntarily gives his life for the benefit of people and shows his true love for God and his people (John 11:18). J. T. Forestell continues to demonstrate that Jesus’ offering of his life in favor of people on the Cross is on one hand, “an act of self-devotion for his friends (John 15:13)”202 and on the other hand, an act of “the whole life of Jesus as obedience to his Father.”203 In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus reveals God’s love for people from the example of the good shepherd (John 10:11-18)204 and through Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus (John 3:16). The climax of God’s love for his people is manifested in the Crucifixion. “The evangelist sees the final events of Jesus’ life on earth as the ultimate proof of his love for his own (13:1) and evaluates his entire career as a manifestation of God’s love for the world (3:16).”205 Jesus offered his life for God and his people.

Concerning Jesus’ sacrifice, J. T. Forestell explains the word “αγιάζειν” in John 17:19. “The verb means ‘to make holy’ or ‘to consecrate,’ that is to transfer someone or something from the sphere of the profane to the sphere of God who is the Holy One par

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202 Forestell, The Word of the Cross, 75.
203 Forestell, The Word of the Cross, 75.
204 Forestell, The Word of the Cross, 76. The death of friends can be called in a wide sense a sacrifice, but it is not clear that his death is a sacrifice in John’s Gospel.
205 Forestell, The Word of the Cross, 76.
excellence.” In the Old Testament it is used in diverse ways; for instance, the Sabbath (Genesis 2:3), the firstborn (Exodus 13:2), the Nazir (Numbers 6:11), and all offerings to God, priests, and Levites (Exodus 19:22). In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus’ death on the Cross is sanctifying himself by his sacrificial immolation. The sanctification can be achieved by God, not a victim. God consecrates and sanctifies offerings that humans made.

The mother of Jesus is with Jesus’ immolation on the Cross. She was standing with him participating with her heart in his sacrificial immolation. Standing at the Cross looking at her dying Son is her sacrifice and her offering to God. She is present with Jesus as a suffering mother, a sacrificial disciple following Jesus, and a model showing how to dedicate self to God. As such, Jesus voluntarily offered himself to God on behalf of God’s people, as Mary offered herself in accordance with the will of God and her Son by standing at the Cross.

Conclusion

In conclusion, when we think of our life relating to the mission of the mother of Jesus, we can apply her mission to our Christian life. In the Fourth Gospel, a person individually meets with Jesus. The Gospel shows us that Jesus has a particular relationship with every individual. Each individual in the Fourth Gospel has “their own personal roles and significance for the mystery of salvation.” This mission is broader when they keep their roles in mind, and it makes them mature in reaching fulfillment. The mother of Jesus was a witness of the Trinity: Jesus, the Father, and the Holy Spirit and a cooperator with them in the work of salvation. She was in the mystery of Christ and the Church so that she is collaborating with the work of the Church in the work of salvation of the Church as the

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207 Forestell, The Word of the Cross, 77. Terrence illustrates the ways that things may be sanctified on his footnote 75.
208 Forestell, The Word of the Cross, 77.
209 De la Poterrie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 218.
210 De la Poterrie, Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant, 222.
mother of the Church and a model for all members of the Church. Moreover, the mother of Jesus and the disciple in the Fourth Gospel are a model for the faithful and fruitful fulfillment for all disciples. Especially, Mary is the gift, bridge, and model for all believers. She is also leading people to Jesus with her special intercession and glory of that she accomplished already on the journey of faith, hope, and love. Therefore, she became our spiritual mother for us to be able to unite with Jesus and get eternal life.

Considering the contemporary perspective for comprehending the mission of Mary, Mary is a leader. She is a leader of faith, care, and attentiveness. She has a leadership which does not escape from difficulties but rather jumps into problems to overcome them. She is a leader who offers her whole life to Jesus for others. On the cross, Jesus gave his life for us and gave us his mother as our mother and model of Christian virtues as an abundant grace. Mary is the most realistic and at the same time the ideal model we can imitate today. Her presence as a model is still efficient and effective on our journey of faith to God.

In John's Gospel, Jesus revealed to us God the Father and revealed his mother. Giving his mother to a disciple has a significant meaning for his all disciples. This is an important point of view of the Fourth Gospel that reveals the presence of Mary with the disciples. Mary was praying with and for Jesus’ disciples in the upper room waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:12-14). We can see that Jesus believed in Mary that she is the most loving and caring mother for the newborn Church which needs to care for her mother. Jesus’ offering his mother for us is essential in our mission and life. The Church needs the mother of Jesus as our spiritual mother and a model for discipleship. We can keep her mission like ours, imitating Mary in her motherly care, intercession, virtues, and discipleship. It will also be important to maintain this mission by continuing it in the next generation through our mission and example as Mary did and is doing.
Chapter three: Similarities of Isaac’s Role and Mary’s Mission

3.1. The meaning of typology

The typological sense of reading the Scriptures is one of the spiritual senses of interpretation. It is based on the method of describing the ancient reality in the Scripture; it connects an event with the New Testament to obtain the deeper meaning for the reality. The Catholic Catechism presents the importance of typological reading in the Church:

Christians therefore read the Old Testament in the light of Christ crucified and risen. Such typological reading discloses the inexhaustible content of the Old Testament; but it must not make it forget that the Old Testament retains its own intrinsic value as revelation reaffirmed by our Lord himself. (Cf. Mark 12:29-31) Besides, the New Testament has to be read in the light of the Old. Early Christian catechesis made constant use of the Old Testament. (Cf. 1Cor 5:6-8; 10:1-11) As an old saying put it, the New Testament lies hidden in the Old and the Old Testament is unveiled in the New.

The Pontifical Biblical Commission highlights the importance of interpretation of the Scriptures. One can get deeper meaning from the rereading of texts, but “one must reject as unauthentic every interpretation alien to the meaning expressed by the human authors in their written text.” The Commission defines the literal sense of Scripture as that which refers to the meaning expressed directly by inspired human authors. Its purpose is to study what is written and what was meant by the words through the resources of literary and historical research. The Commission states the spiritual sense “as understood by Christian faith, as the meaning expressed by the biblical texts when read, under the influence of the Holy Spirit,

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213 CCC 129.

214 The Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, 82.

215 The Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, 82.
in the context of the paschal mystery of Christ and the new life which flows from it.”

Therefore, it is useful for a deeper understanding to re-read the Scriptures in the light of the paschal mystery and the new life which results from it. In dealing with the text of the Old Testament, the spiritual sense is useful. One of the spiritual senses is typological exegesis. The Fathers of the Church used scriptural typology to find a deeper understanding of the Scripture texts. “Essentially it was a technique for bringing out the correspondence between the two Testaments, and took as its guiding principle the idea that the events and personages of the Old were ‘types’ of, i.e., prefigured and anticipated, the events and personages of the New.” For instance, in the typological sense of reading, Moses is symbolized as Christ in giving the law, and the sacrifice of Isaac anticipates the Crucifixion of Jesus at Calvary. Another example is the Ark of the Covenant as a type of Mary in a symbolic way. Mary conceived God within her as the Ark of the Covenant manifests the dwelling of God within it. Some scholars like Gerald S. Sloyan are critical about using the method of typology in the study of Scripture because they think it can be outside the meaning of Scripture rather than lead to a deeper understanding of the text. It is true, in a certain sense, but it is also true that it helps to a deeper understanding of the mystery of salvation related to the mother of Jesus. A typological reading between Isaac and Jesus, and Abraham and Mary are good examples for understanding the connection of Isaac and Mary, a typological topic of this thesis.

216 The Pontifical Biblical Commission, The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church, 85.
218 Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, 72.
221 The topic of this thesis is a typological relationship between Isaac and Mary, but Isaac and Mary is submissive to Abraham and Jesus in their parenthood-filial relationship, their roles in the history of salvation and its significance. Therefore, section 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 helps understanding the typological relationship between Isaac and Mary.
3.1.1. Isaac and Jesus

In Christian tradition, Isaac is mentioned as “a type of the Lord Jesus being offered up by his own Father for the sins of man.” The Fathers of the Church stressed Isaac’s self-offerings through obedience to his father. They saw the event on Mount Moriah as an archetype of the Crucifixion of Jesus. They saw the image of God letting his only begotten Son bear the cross to Golgotha in the example of Abraham who laid the wood on his son Isaac and took him to the place God had indicated, though he knew his son would die. St. Augustine states the relation between the Akeda and the death of Jesus in *City of God* as follows:

‘By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead.’ The apostle then adds, ‘From whence also he received him in a figure’ (Heb. 11:17ff). But a figure of whom, if not of Him of Whom the apostle says, ‘He spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all’? (Rom. 8:32) This is why, just as the Lord carried His cross, Isaac himself bore to the place of sacrifice the wood on which he was to be laid. Moreover, when the father had been forbidden to slay his son after all, because it was not fitting that Isaac should be slain, who was shed as a sign. Indeed, when Abraham saw it, it was caught in a thicket by its horns. Who, therefore, was prefigured by it but Jesus, crowned with Jewish thorns before He was sacrificed (Cf. Mark 15:16f; John 19:1)?

God gave his Son for the salvation of the world and human beings just like Abraham’s willing offering his son Isaac was the salvation of God’s chosen people. This aspect is found in a few parallels in the New Testament for Jesus. For instance, just as Isaac was the only begotten son whom Abraham loves (Genesis 22:2, 12, 16), Jesus Christ is “my

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Son, the Beloved” (Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22; 2 Peter 1:17) and the only Son for God.  

In addition, just as Isaac was obedient to God without hesitation in the midst of his ignorance to the plan of his father, Jesus was willingly obedient to God struggling in his fragileness of humanity (Cf. Matthew 26:42). Isaac is immolated on the top of the wood on Mount Moriah with faith and obedience to his father, though he is substituted before the moment of his death by the ram offered by God. He prefigures Jesus, who is immolated at the Cross as a replacement for the sinners and thereby completes the will of God by his obedience to God (Cf. Philippians 2:8). In Genesis 22, if the angel of God did not call Abraham twice and restrain him, Isaac would have died just like Jesus. Lastly, just as the blessings were given after the offering of Isaac, the eternal life for people was given after Jesus’ complete death. The history of salvation began to be fulfilled by the consecration of Isaac accompanied with the faith of Abraham in the Old Covenant, and it is accomplished by the death and resurrection of Jesus in the New Covenant. Therefore, the event on the Mount Moriah is said to prefigure the sacrifice of Jesus at the Cross in the history of salvation as well as prefiguring Isaac as Jesus Christ.

### 3.1.2. Mary and Abraham

Abraham is said to be a type of the mother of Jesus by her faith. The mother of Jesus in the New Testament is the reason that is connected to Abraham in the Old Testament. There are various relations between Mary and Abraham, but in three significant typological

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226 In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, Genesis 22: 2, “αγαπητος” is translated as “αγαπητος” meaning “your beloved son, whom you love.” This “αγαπητος” is used in Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11 and Luke 3:22 when the Father calls Jesus.

227 This point of view is different from Johannine view to see Jesus’ Passion. The Johannine view on Passion and death of Jesus is focused on his glorification, rather than his suffering and struggling. Therefore, there is no the scene of Gethsemane prayer of Jesus in John’s Gospel.

228 Abraham is mentioned as a type of the Father in Genesis 24:2. He sent his servant to get bride of his son. It seems that God the Father sent his Spirit to obtain bride the Church for Jesus. In the insights of Paul, Abraham seems to be a type of the true believers of Jesus in faith. (Romans 4:3) In faith, obedience, righteousness, he becomes a model for all Christians; Walter L. Wilson, “Abraham,” A Dictionary of Bible Types (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1999), 1.
aspects, Abraham is prefiguring Mary: in a unique vocation, a great witness, and as a faithful servant.

First of all, God called Abraham and Mary by giving both the vocation of parenthood in the history of salvation. Abraham became the father of the promised son and the father of Israel. Mary became the mother of the Messiah and all believers. Both were called as a chosen parent of God’s people in the history of salvation in the Old and New Covenant. This call was begun by the divine initiative but was able to be continued by the individual’s continual response to the call of God. In addition, it is not just for the salvation of an individual, but for the salvation of a community of God. Abraham shows how to respond to a call of God and how to be faithful to his vocation. He began his journey to consent to the will of God without any information and help from others.

The Blessed Mother Mary is called to be the mother of the Messiah in the Incarnation. Just like Abraham, God initiated this call by asking her response to the plan of God. Mary freely responds to the call of God (Cf. Luke 1:26-38; John 1:13-14). Mary’s vocation to be the mother of Jesus, the Savior is unique, singular and blessed. This call is for the salvation of the people of God just like the vocation of Abraham. Therefore, Abraham’s vocation is said to be a type of the Blessed Virgin’s vocation.

Secondly, Abraham is a type of the Blessed Mother as a witness to God. As we observed in the first chapter of this thesis, Abraham is a significant witness to God’s mercy, power, and justice. He had a child by the promise of God in an impossible time stage of his life. Abraham and Sarah could not have a child because he was advanced in age while she was sterile. Nevertheless, he is obedient to God and received a child according to God’s

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230 Buby, Mary of Galilee, 3 vols, vol. II: Woman of Israel-Daughter of Zion, 78. Buby states the meaning of vocation. “A vocation means a particular calling directed to this special individual to obtain free consent and cooperation in the immense symmetry which prepares and progressively realizes the human community.” Ibid., 78-79.
promise. Isaac is the promised son and the agent of the beginning of a covenant with God. Abraham witnesses God who is almighty and by whom nothing is impossible. Abraham is also a witness of God’s mercy. He asks God to rescue the righteous people in Sodom (Cf. Genesis 18:16-33). He obtained a promise from God to save Sodom if there are at least ten righteous people within the city. Finally, the city is destroyed because of the lack of righteous people. However, God is entirely proved to be just in the episode on Mount Moriah when Abraham is asked to sacrifice Isaac by God. Abraham is obedient to God, though he cannot understand the request of God. The conclusion of the episode shows the fact that God wants even one righteous person to live through the rescuing of Isaac by God’s mercy.

The Blessed Virgin Mother is a witness like Abraham. Mary witnesses God’s justice and mercy. God called Abraham for a great plan for the salvation of humankind. The call to Abraham was God’s revelatory activity in the plan for the salvation. God announces his presence to Abraham and makes a covenant, which reveals his will to save. He hears the plan of God for Israel and its fulfillment in his life; especially, he taught Isaac consistently to guide the way of God to his descendants. Abraham bears witness to God’s righteousness, loving-kindness, and powerful presence. Mary has the same experience as Abraham’s in begetting a child despite impossible conditions. She witnesses the powerful presence of God by the event that the Word becomes flesh in her womb. The Word is the Savior who came to save people by the love of God (Cf. John 3:16). Mary is obedient to the will of God, and later she is active enough to initiate Jesus into his active ministry at Cana (Cf. John 2). Her witness continues through the life of Jesus in his mission, passion, and death for the salvation of humankind. She witnesses God’s mercy and justice at the foot of the Cross (John 19: 25-30).

Lastly, Abraham and Mary are faithful servants. Abraham begot Isaac and Mary begot Jesus. Their sons are those who were sent for the sake of salvation for people in the Old
and New Covenants. Mary’s maternity and Abraham’s paternity reveal to us a profound faith in God. They received a child by their faith and offered their sons to God by faith. They are good servants who are obedient and faithful to the will of God even in their difficult situation; Abraham consented to the call of God to offer his son as a sacrifice on Mount Moriah and Mary stood at the foot of the cross according to the will of God in obedience to the call to offer her Son on the Cross for salvation. Mary’s attitude is well shown in Luke in her response: “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word” (Luke 1:38). Mary is a type of Abraham as a good servant in faith and obedience in the work of salvation.

Typological examples between Isaac and Jesus, and Abraham and Mary offer the possibility of a typological relationship between Isaac and Mary in New and Old Covenant. As was mentioned in the first and second chapter, Isaac is a type relating to Mary’s mission in the history of salvation for humankind. Based on the role of Isaac and Mary mentioned in the first and second chapter, the typological comparison between Isaac and Mary is to be explored in the next section 3.2.

3.2. **Typological relationship between Mary and Isaac in their mission**

The Blessed Virgin and Isaac appear at high points in the Old and the New Covenant. Isaac’s sacrifice in Abraham’s episode is a climax in the entire story, and the mother of Jesus appeared in the passion narrative in the Fourth Gospel have similarity. Both Isaac and Mary have similar features in their role and mission in the Old and New Covenants like Isaac and Jesus, and Abraham and Mary. Both figures are important in having a unique role in the mission of Abraham and Jesus. Isaac and Mary are supporting the mission of the two central figures by exercising their missions. Three similarities will be presented in a next section: a
A witness of God

Abraham in Genesis and Jesus Christ in the Fourth Gospel are witnesses of God as the main characters. Abraham bears witness to God’s power, mercy, and righteousness in the episode related to Isaac (Genesis 22:11-18). He experiences that nothing is impossible with God through Isaac’s birth; there is extravagant mercy in God’s rescuing Isaac; there is also the justice on God’s part which gives life to the just by the ram offered in place of Isaac on Mount Moriah.

Jesus in the Fourth Gospel is a witness of God the Father. He gives witness to God’s mercy for salvation, God’s love for people; for God is the Father of all. In the Prologue of the Gospel, Jesus reveals God the Father (Cf. John 1:1, 14, 18) because he was with God and sees God as the only Son. Therefore, he can tell who God the Father is (Cf. John 14:1-14). Jesus shows God the Father who loves people so much that he sent his only son for their salvation (John 3:16). Jesus reveals God as our Father through Jesus Christ and his action (John 20:17).

Like Abraham and Jesus, Isaac and Mary are a witness of God and a witness of both main characters, Abraham and Jesus. There are two similarities between Isaac and Mary as a witness. They are sub-characters of Abraham and Jesus as a witness to God and as the closest companion with them in their lives and missions.

The role of Isaac, which should be regarded as important in Abraham’s narrative, above all, displays the important place of Isaac, located between God and Abraham. Isaac bears witness both to God and Abraham. On the one hand, Isaac is a witness to God in his submissive obedience to Abraham. He walked with Abraham toward Mount Moriah and was
obedient to his father. He bears witness to God’s mercy and righteousness with Abraham by being a sacrifice on Mount Moriah. Isaac is between God and Abraham as a complementary subject and offers a passive way in exercising his faith in God. However, Isaac’s role as a witness has more than that of Abraham as a witness. Isaac is not just submissive to the role of Abraham as a witness to God’s mercy and righteousness by being rescued (Genesis 22:1-19) in the Old Covenant, but also testifies to reciprocal knowledge between God and Abraham. While Abraham is a primary witness to God in the entire narrative of Abraham, Isaac is a witness of both God and Abraham. At the same event, Isaac witnesses God’s mercy and righteousness. On Mount Moriah, Isaac witnesses to the fact what God does not want the righteous one to lose a life, rather God wants even one righteous person to live. Isaac testifies to the righteousness of God through his life. On the other hand, Isaac witnesses to Abraham by accompanying Abraham in the test of God. Isaac was aware that Abraham is always obedient and faithful to God in any difficult situation. God reveals his omnipotence, righteousness, and loving kindness through the life of Abraham. However, Abraham more specifically experiences God’s mercy through Isaac at Moriah. Isaac witnesses that Abraham is obedient to God and faithful to the will of God. He witnesses to Abraham’ belief in God; that is, nothing will be impossible for God. Isaac witnesses Abraham’s confidence in God’s mercy to the righteous, God’s blessing upon them, and God’s faithfulness in keeping his promises. Abraham more fully knows who God is through Isaac. On Mount Moriah, Isaac is present to prove who God is to Abraham and simultaneously to prove the moment that Abraham comes to know God. At this point, Isaac bears witness to Abraham. Isaac is a complementary character in his submissiveness to Abraham on Mount Moriah, but the main character as a witness of both God and Abraham.

Considering of the mother of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel (John 19:25-27), Mary is a
witness to God and Jesus at the foot of the Cross. She does not seem to be a main character in the episode, but rather the main character as a witness of God and Jesus. She was with Jesus at the foot of the Cross so that she could testify to all Jesus said and did at Calvary. She saw the suffering and death of Jesus and was standing near Jesus. She seems explicitly to be submissive to Jesus, but her presence with Jesus at the cross as a witness is active in the work of salvation. She is the main character as a witness at the Cross.

Jesus in the Fourth Gospel is a witness to God. He reveals God as the Father of all believers and testifies to the powerful presence of God through signs in his active ministry in John’s Gospel. Mary participated in the signs of Jesus as a witness. At Cana, she is a witness of Jesus’ first sign revealing God’s powerful presence, mercy, and loving kindness. At Calvary, Mary bears witness to Jesus’ revelation of God’s mercy and justice for the salvation of the people of God. Jesus reveals God’s love for humankind by offering his life to God and reveals God’s justice against sin by his passion and death. Mary witnesses God’s love and justice as well as Jesus’ abundant love for his people in the history of salvation. Therefore, Mary’s standing at the foot of the Cross is not only an action as the mother of Jesus for solacing his suffering and as a disciple of Jesus for participating in his work of salvation, but also as a witness to Jesus and God, and to the value of Crucifixion for the redemption and the redeemed. Like Isaac, Mary is a primary witness to God and Jesus in the history of salvation.

Secondly, Isaac was with Abraham from the first moment of this episode. He does not appear when Abraham begins his journey in Genesis chapter 12, but he appears in God’s promises to Abraham (Genesis 12:2-3). Abraham will be the father of a great nation with his descendants. To Abraham Isaac was indeed his only precious son. The existence of Isaac gives deep meaning to the life of Abraham. When Abraham could not have a future without his descendants, Isaac was born, and Isaac was for Abraham a continuation of life that would
live on as an example of Abraham’s life in the world beyond simply being a precious son. Isaac was the meaning of the life for Sarah in removing the disgrace that had been lifeless for a lifetime by not having a child who would bring about for her authentic laughter. In addition to this, there is a deeper theological meaning. Isaac exists as a witness of faith demonstrating before God between the relationship between God and Abraham. In Genesis 22, Abraham is subject to God’s test. In the midst of Abraham’s test of faith, obedience, and faithfulness to God, Isaac appears as a central figure. Here we can see the importance of Isaac’s existence. Isaac's presence is a measure of the strength of Abraham’s faith. Abraham’s love for Isaac is a measure of Abraham's faith in God because Isaac was his only chosen precious son. The faithfulness of Abraham (22:12,16), who does not spare his only loved one, has demonstrated Abraham’s perfect faith in God.

The mother of Jesus was with Jesus from the first moment of the birth of Jesus, even from earlier than his birth in the world. She was with Jesus in the hour of his birth, when the Word became flesh (John 1:14), and was in his first mission at Cana before his hour’s coming, (John 2) and was with him in his hour at Calvary (John 19: 25-27). She accompanied Jesus throughout his life and will continue to dwell in his kingdom. The mother of Jesus is beyond the role of Isaac in this sense because she will dwell in heaven and on earth with Jesus and with us.

The role of Isaac and Mary as witnesses also has a profound influence on Christians. It is our mission as Christians living today. Isaac is not called a witness in the text but shows a good example of being a witness to the faith of his father and the witness to God. Finally, he witnesses his faith by his sacrifice to God. The Virgin Mary is also a witness of Jesus Christ and the Trinity at the Incarnation, Cana, and Calvary. She does not cease to be the witness of the Trinity but rather develops into a testimony of her faith in action. She is the
one who witnesses her faith in action without it ever stopping. As Isaac, she shows her complete faith by being fully devoted to Jesus and by giving her life to the mission of Jesus. She is still witnessing to Jesus in heaven as well as on earth. This mission is a great lesson. We must be witnesses to Christ, and not as evidence of our own lives, but as a witness to his life. Isaac and the Virgin Mary are telling us that the mission of the new evangelization is not only to believe in Christ but to testify the Church’s faith in Christ.

3.2.2. A link of salvation

God called Abraham for the salvation of humankind. God’s will for this human salvation is universal and eternal, concrete and living. Abraham was used as a tool at the beginning of salvation history which has been completed by Jesus Christ. Abraham was called a tool and a cooperator in this universal mission for the saving of humankind. God’s plan begins with three promises to Abraham (Genesis 12:2). All three promises are linked to Isaac, the son of Abraham, and are focused entirely on Isaac. Also, after the complete trust between Abraham and God has been established, the realization of these promises was made in reality through Isaac. From the beginning of Isaac’s life, the fruits of the promises begin to be made and spread into the world. From this point of view, Isaac can be said to be the link in God’s saving work. Though God began his work of salvation from the covenant with Abraham, God will continue the covenant with Isaac, who will continue it through his descendants. Isaac is the person to take over for Abraham who teaches justice and righteousness (Genesis 18:19). He is the hope of the history of salvation. It means that Isaac is not merely a chain linking Abraham’s family line, but a link of universal hope for the salvation of all humankind.

The mother of Jesus is the link between Jesus and his followers in light of her
motherhood and mediating role. In *Lumen Gentium*, Jesus is the only mediator between God and man for the salvation of human beings. The mother of Jesus associated with the work of Jesus for the salvation. Her maternal role does not obscure nor diminish the unique and singular mediation of Christ, but rather it helps to show his power for his people. Nobody can replace him. The mother of Jesus is submissive to this truth in assisting his work for our salvation and in associating us in his mission on earth and in heaven.

Isaac and Mary were chosen by the Lord for their mission by grace. They were the Lord’s grace, a gift, and blessing for the Lord’s people and Christians. They are not merely chosen for Abraham and Jesus Christ but for the people of God; the special gift chosen by God for all people, who are willing to accept this mission and follow it throughout one’s life. These two missions and blessings are an example for Christians today. Faith is a grace, a blessing, and a gift. Christians feel more desperate need to believe in God and live according to God’s commandments because they have an experience of encounter with God. As Isaac and Mary, faithful to the Lord throughout their lives, had entrusted to the Lord all the joys and sorrows that come from the world and walked with the Lord, believed despite difficulties and persevered by being faithful in their sufferings and lived in God’s grace.

Just as Isaac did not live this blessing for himself, but served as a bridge for Israel in the history of salvation, and lived faithfully in the Lord, so too, the life of the Virgin Mary was the universal call for all faithful in God. Mary has the privilege and mission of being a spiritual mother for all peoples, which is incomparable to Isaac in the sense that she is helping God’s salvation work and giving us spiritual care as a mother. Christians are born as God’s children through the blessing of the Lord, and they can imitate Isaac and Mary in the continuing work of Christ’s salvation.

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231 *LG* 60.  
232 *LG* 60.  
233 Cf. *LG* 62.
Just as Isaac was chosen and had authority to be a son of inheritance under the providence of God, so the mother of Jesus was chosen and had the privilege of being the mother of Jesus by the grace of God and the mother of the disciple by the will of Jesus. Both events are fulfilled by divine power. Isaac was born of parents for whom it was impossible to bear a child and the mother of Jesus bore a son without a man. God’s providence intervened in their life for salvation. God took Sarah’s request to send the son of Hagar into the wilderness as part of the plan for salvation (Genesis 21:12). Isaac was the only son of Abraham to inherit his name and possessions including God’s Covenant as the promised heir of Abraham. He is the only hope for maintaining the way of God which was given to Abraham in the history of salvation. The way of God is the Old Covenant that God made with Abraham; to be the people of God, namely, to live a way of justice and fairness, faith, and love. In the same sense, the mother of Jesus is the only chosen mother for Jesus and his disciples in the plan of God’s salvation. She was selected to bring Jesus and his way to his disciples. Mary as a mother will bring all people to the Church, by nurturing and bringing them to maturity as disciples of Jesus and finally to eternal life with God. Isaac and Mary are blessings on the descendants of Covenants. Isaac is a type of Mary as he too has a significant role in the history of salvation.

Mary as a gift is subordinate to Jesus.\textsuperscript{234} She was full of grace to be the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:28), and she leads people to that grace (Cf. John 2:1-11). It is from Jesus through whom grace and truth come (John 1:17). The mother of Jesus is a special grace coming through Jesus for his community. Mary as a gift is compared to Isaac as a gift in the Old Covenant. Isaac is a gift to Abraham and his descendants for his nation and in the history of salvation. God blesses Abraham for his nation, and his blessing is to be transferred to his

\textsuperscript{234} Cf. \textit{LG} 62.
people through Isaac. Isaac given as a gift from God passes the blessings of Abraham to his descendants. In this sense, Isaac is a type for Mary as a gift and a servant who conveys this blessing to all generations; Isaac inherits it for Israel and Mary for Jesus’ community. However, the mother of Jesus’ inheritance is beyond the blessings of Isaac in both quantity and quality. The mother of Jesus as a gift offers grace and truth itself to his community, while Isaac is providing God’s blessings and commandments. The Church realizes that the mother of Jesus as a gift provides all believers grace and truth coming from Jesus. Mary is a special gift for us by Jesus, and this gift is guaranteed by the final declaration of Jesus on the Cross; “Behold, your mother” (John 19:25).

The mother of Jesus as a gift given by God is beyond Isaac as a gift in her mission. She is a unique “gift of sublime grace she far surpasses all creatures, both in heaven and on earth.”235 She is closely united with the Trinity; as “the mother of Jesus, the daughter of the Father, and the temple of the Holy Spirit.”236 She is slowly prepared to be the mother of Jesus in the economy of salvation and prophetically foreshadowed in the Old Testament.237 Fathers of the Church regard her as a new Eve to contribute to life or a Daughter of Zion as the personification of the poor and humble of the Lord.238 “The knot of Eve’s disobedience was untied by Mary’s obedience. What the virgin Eve bound through her unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosened by her faith.”239 She is perfectly prepared as the mother of God by the Holy Spirit240 and as the mother of the members of the Church by Jesus and the Holy Spirit (John 19:25-30). Therefore, Mary was perfectly prepared as the gift of the Trinity to rescue the people of God and fulfill the plan of salvation history.

235 LG 53.
236 LG 53.
237 LG 55.
238 LG 56.
239 LG 56; St. Irenaeus, ib: Harvey, 2, 124.
240 LG 56.
As Isaac is God’s gift in favor of people for the next generation as a link or a bridge while conveying the way of keeping what God taught, that is, the way of justice and fairness. The mother of Jesus is also a bridge between Jesus and his believers. She is a link between Jesus’ glorification and the birth of his community of disciples. Her role here is a new mission as the spiritual motherhood for the new community. Isaac, the father of Israel in the Old Covenant transfers the Old Covenant established between Abraham and God. He keeps the teaching and promises of the covenant and inherits them for his descendants, the people of Israel. Therefore, Isaac is a link between God’s promises and its accomplishment.

The mother of Jesus is a link between Jesus and his disciples. She presents Jesus to his disciples and leads them to faith in Jesus (Cf. John 2:11). Through her new mission as a mother of the new community, the Church is compared to Isaac’s role as the father of Jacob, the people of Israel. They become a parent in a symbolical and spiritual sense for the next generation. Of course, Mary’s motherly role is beyond Isaac’s parental role in her universal and eternal motherhood. Her motherhood stems from the mission of Jesus, our Savior. She is a link between God and humanity. Hers is a unique privilege in the world.\(^\text{241}\)

The mother of Jesus is associated with Jesus and his work in salvation and is associated with the beloved disciple.\(^\text{242}\) In the Fourth Gospel, Mary’s motherly role is not just as the mother of Jesus but also is related her relation to the beloved disciple (John 19:27). She was also with Jesus in his glorification and with his disciple at the beginning of the Church by the Holy Spirit (John 19:30). Jesus made this relationship of his mother and his Church. In this sense, Mary is a link and a bridge to connect intimately Jesus with his church. R E. Brown mentions this connection as Jesus’ last mission (John 19:28).\(^\text{243}\) Jesus gives his

\(^{241}\) Cf. LG 63.


physical mother a spiritual role in his glorification and the birth of the Church. The beloved disciple comes to have “a familial relationship” with Mary by Jesus at the moment Mary received her new mission. Mary’s role is continued in the Church. *Lumen Gentium* states Mary’s unique role as the spiritual mother of all believers is in the order of grace.

As a bridge, both Isaac and Mary are playing an intercessory role in the history of salvation. Isaac is stressed as a mediator for those who are asking God’s mercy in Jewish traditions. The people of Israel prayed for God’s mercy in their difficult situations in virtue of the sacrifice of Isaac. It is Isaac’s intercessory role for his people in the history of Israel and salvation. The mother of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel asks for those in need at Cana, and this brings about the fruitful result of the people and believers. Her mediation at Cana and Calvary for the new community and her role as a motherly intercession continues in the life of the Church.

### 3.2.3. Model of People of God in faith, obedience, love, and discipleship

Isaac is a model for Israel, while Mary is a model for all Christians. Following Isaac’s role in connection with the work of human salvation, Isaac reveals himself as an example of faith, obedience, and charity. Abraham’s faith, obedience, and love for God imply the faith, obedience, and love of Isaac for God. In the dramatic story of Abraham, the personality of Isaac is not discovered. The successful test of Abraham’s faith in and obedience to God was possible on account of Isaac’s obedience, trust, and his love to

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246 *LG* 62.
247 In Christian tradition, Isaac is not much highlighted as an important figure for people, but in Jewish tradition, Isaac is a model for the prayer and sacrifice. In Jewish literature, it is found that people ask Isaac’s intercession as a mediator to God for their difficulties; “Then Moses returned and begged the Lord for mercy and God remembered in their favor the Akedah of Isaac whom his father had bound upon the altar on mount Moriah. God turned back from his wrath and made his Shekinah dwell among them as before (Tg. Cant 1:13)”; Robert J. Daly, S. J., “Soteriological Significance,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 39, no 1 (January 1977), 53. (45-75)
248 *LG* 62.
Abraham through following his father’s actions silently. Isaac’s faith and obedience is the love for Abraham on Mount Moriah. Isaac as a gift of God manifested the faith, obedience, and love for Abraham’s God. Isaac was born as a gift from God at the beginning of the plan of salvation. With the strong belief that comes from the fact that he is blessed and loved by his parents and God, Isaac did not have any complaint against the action of Abraham, but rather quietly followed Abraham, and obeyed his will. Rather, Isaac helped Abraham’s act of faith, and was silent while sacrificing himself. He was bound by his father, while consenting to his father. He was not forced. This can be seen narrowly as his filial trust and love to Abraham, but broadly as his cooperating with his father in the work of salvation. Isaac actively collaborated with submissiveness in God’s salvation work and was an example of an entire and total consecration to God.

In the Fourth Gospel, it is not sure that the mother of Jesus is aware or not of the plan of Jesus unlike Isaac’s ignorance to the plan of Abraham. However, Mary was obedient to Jesus as Isaac was to Abraham. The mother of Jesus might know Jesus’ destination on the cross because he mentioned his leaving and glorification several times (John 13:31-33; 14:1-5). However, even though the mother of Jesus knew the death of her son, she could not imagine what suffering and dreadful pain would be hers while livings through her Son’s passion and death. In this sense, we can say she actively participated through her obedience to God’s plan by standing near her Son under the Cross.\(^\text{249}\) It was painful for her to be the mother of her Son and as a disciple of Jesus. Her standing at the foot of the Cross means her firm willingness to be with Jesus and her faithfulness to the mission to be a mother of the disciples beneath the Cross.\(^\text{250}\) Mary and Isaac were faithful to Jesus and Abraham at the most painful moment in their life. However, Mary’s association with Jesus and his work of

\(^{249}\) *LG 58.*  
\(^{250}\) *LG 58.*
salvation is beyond that of the role of Isaac because it is beyond one generation and reaches to all generations (Luke 1:48-50). While Isaac has a generative role in the work of salvation, Mary undertakes her mission in a universal dimension in the history of salvation. Her mission is unique in her privilege as the mother of God, in blessings and graces by God, and in virtues she accomplished. Her union with Christ and the Church makes her mission unique and extraordinary. She is a mother and a model for all Christians.\textsuperscript{251} Mary as a model in the faith, obedience, love, and her discipleship compared to the role of Isaac is important in the history of salvation.

As Isaac is a type of Jesus in the entire sacrifice to God and Abraham is a type of Mary in faith, Isaac is a type of Mary in his active involvement for the will of Abraham and God. His active participation is distinguished in three aspects; faith, obedience, and love. First, Isaac’s active involvement is revealed in his faith to his father and his father’s God. He walked with his father to the sacrifice without any other question about the plan of his father and God except only one question. He asked just one question of Abraham, namely where the sacrificial victim is and was silent nonetheless at the lack of answer from his father. Even when he knew the fact that he is the sacrifice for God, he did not flee from the binding by Abraham.

Considering Mary, she walked with Jesus on her journey of faith. At Cana and Calvary, she is manifested as a model of faith. She received the Word of God in faith,\textsuperscript{252} faithfully believed him in his all actions,\textsuperscript{253} and finally achieved the eternal life given from God.\textsuperscript{254} Now she stands out as a model of her faithful faith and lives it up to completion. The Church states her strong faith as the role of a virgin in the Church. As a virgin, she is faithful

\textsuperscript{251}LG 53, 61.  
\textsuperscript{252}LG 62.  
\textsuperscript{253}LG 65.  
\textsuperscript{254}LG 62.
to Christ, the bridegroom. In this sense, Mary is a model of the Church as a virgin and mother.\textsuperscript{255} At Cana, she asked Jesus to help the needy in faith, and brought about the first sign of Messiah, and led disciples to faith in Jesus. At Calvary, she was with Jesus on the way of the cross of her Son with the invisible God the Father as a mother. She stood at the foot of the Cross with her Son and “sustained without wavering”\textsuperscript{256} near her Son in extreme suffering. The Church teaches her faith made her stand at the foot of the Cross.\textsuperscript{257} Her faith made her have a new mission given by Jesus at the Cross. When Christ accomplished his mission on the Cross, he gave a new mission to his faithful disciple Mary to be the mother of his disciples. John Paul II states that “This ‘new motherhood of Mary’ is generated by faith, is the fruit of the ‘new’ love which came to definitive maturity in her at the foot of the Cross, through her sharing in the redemptive love of her Son.”\textsuperscript{258} She is a model to take a new mission in faith.

Secondly, both Isaac and Mary were actively involved in the work of God’s salvation in the way of obedience and submissiveness to the will of God. Isaac actively was obedient to his father. It looks submissive, but his action was active. He walked with his father on Mount Moriah without any knowledge of the plan of his father and God. In his obedience, it is found an expression of love for his father and father’s God. His active involvement is from love. He offered himself entirely to God by giving his life as a sacrifice on Mount Moriah.\textsuperscript{259} Isaac is understood as a figure of voluntary and active self-offering in Jewish tradition. Jewish tradition highlights Isaac’s active decision rather than the accomplishment of the blessings

\textsuperscript{255} LG 63-65. Mary is a type of the Church as a virgin and mother. Mary and the Church brings forth the children of God, raise them with love, and be faithful to God in faith, hope and charity. Both lead the members of the Body of Christ to God and eternal life.
\textsuperscript{256} LG 62.
\textsuperscript{257} LG 58.
\textsuperscript{258} John Paul II, \textit{Mother of the Redeemer (Redemptoris Mater)}, no. 23.
\textsuperscript{259} The \textit{Akedah} (Binding of Isaac) is important in the Jewish literature such as \textit{Haggadah, Genesis Rabba} and \textit{Pseudo-Philo} stressing the effectiveness of sacrifices resulted by the virtue of Isaac’s fully voluntary offering of himself. “The principal weaknesses of the sacrificial system: the passive character of the victim or offering” is obviated by Isaac; Robert J. Daly, \textit{S. J.}, “Soteriological Significance,” \textit{The Catholic Biblical Quarterly} 39, no. 1 (January 1977), 46.
resulted by Abraham’s faith and obedience. Midrash Rabba, on Genesis in Jewish tradition states: “‘Father, I am a young man and am afraid that my body may tremble through fear of the knife and I will grieve thee, whereby the slaughter may be rendered unfit and this will not count as a real sacrifice; therefore, bind me very firmly.’ Forthwith HE BOUND ISAAC; can one bind a man thirty-seven years old? (another version: twenty-six years old) without his consent? It presents Isaac’s voluntary obedience and sacrifice to his father and God. This thought about Isaac influences the Christian typology about Isaac in the early Christian Church.

   Compared to Isaac’s active obedience, the mother of Jesus is an excellent model of active involvement in the work of salvation. She actively responded to the Word of God and became the mother of God. She did what she believed in Jesus and his words. We can see two aspects in her active involvement in her mission in the mystery of salvation and in the mystery of the Church as mentioned in Lumen Gentium. The Church teaches Mary’s active cooperation with Christ in the work of salvation. Mary cooperated with Jesus through her submissive obedience to Jesus. With her obedience, she recovered what Eve’s disobedience in the Old Testament and brought life for people of God. She worked with the Trinity in Incarnation, worked with Jesus at Cana, and with Him at Calvary to receive a mission for the new community of Jesus. Her active involvement is manifested in the mystery of the Church. At Calvary, she received her mission from Jesus to be the mother of His community. She silently responded to the word of God as she did in the Incarnation. Her active submissiveness shows her humble response to the word of God. The Church teachings say, “In this singular way she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in


261 This is the title on Marian teaching in chapter eight of LG. The Church stresses Mary’s mission in Christ and the Church.

262 LG 56.
the work of the Savior in giving back supernatural life to souls." Her maternal mission continues today in all Christians through her intercession for the eternal salvation and her maternal care for Jesus’ disciples on the journey of faith. Contemplating and imitating Mary’s active involvement through her obedience to God in the mystery of Christ and the Church is recommended by the Church on its journey to eternal salvation.

Both Isaac and Mary’s active involvement is combined with the love for God. The voluntary aspect of Isaac’s sacrifice is mentioned as a type for Christian love. The entire self-offering is perfect love in the insight of the Fourth Gospel. Isaac’s active involvement to reveal his faith, obedience, and love for God is his submission to God in the plan of God. As was mentioned in the first chapter, it is true that the achievement of Abraham on Moriah was impossible without the silent consent of Isaac associated with his father in the way of his active passiveness. Both Isaac’s love for his father and his love for God who his father believes in and Mary’s love for her son and for God whom her Son reveals to his disciples as an act of consecration are similar. The consecration is the entire self-offering to God. Compared to Isaac, the mother of Jesus has the same role in her mission in the work of salvation of his son at Cana and Calvary.

Mary’s active involvement is combined with her love for Jesus and his people. In the Gospel of John, there is no greater love than to devote one’s life to a friend (John 15:13). Jesus loved his disciples to the end (John 13: 1) and the mother of Jesus stood by Jesus dying on the cross united with his love and mission (John 19: 25-30). It is a courageous and missionary love to be united with Jesus as well as a filial-maternal love. It was the mother's willingness to suffer with her Son, and theologically it was the starting point of her spiritual motherhood for those who believed in the Son. The mother of Jesus was entirely devoted to

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263 LG 61.
264 LG 64.
God the Father with the total offerings of Christ on the Cross. These united offerings were a full and thorough consecration to God. Mary is a model for consecration to all Christians who hear the Word of God and believe in him. She extends her love from the love for Jesus to the love for all. It means her love became universal as Jesus’ love is universal.

Consecration is another expression of total love. To live as Christians today requires a fundamental commitment to faith. Consecration is a way of love that helps Christians practice love and keep the commandments. To devote oneself to the Lord is another name for love for the Lord, including giving one’s life for the neighbor. In this mission, she is an example of the exercise of faith and love among the poor and a teacher of the spiritual life for a good Christian. She can help Christians serve in love while being holy in Christ and sharing in all his virtues. The Church teaches that this is the mission that all Christians need to be united with the mother of Jesus.

Thirdly, Mary is a model for the discipleship of all Christians. The nature of discipleship in the Fourth Gospel is to listen to the word of God, believe it, and live it in life. Mary is the perfectly received the Word of God in her womb by her faith. She believed the word of God (John 1: 13-14; 2:1-11) and united with him (John 19:25-27), and lived and influenced her faith to other disciples (John 2:11; 19:27). She is the model and foremost of the disciples in faith, hope, and love. Isaac can be mentioned as a disciple in that he kept the word of God to walk the way of justice and faithfulness conveyed by Abraham, lived and transferred to Israel. As it is seen regarding the New Covenant, Isaac is a model of discipleship.

265 Pope Paul VI, Apostolic exhortation Marialis Cultus, no. 20.
267 Pope Paul VI, Apostolic exhortation Marialis Cultus, no. 21.
268 Pope Paul VI, Apostolic exhortation Marialis Cultus, no. 22.
As a member of the Church in the mystery of salvation, the mother of Jesus is an excellent and pre-eminent member of the Church.\footnote{LG 53.} She is a model in her individual life as a woman of Israel and as a disciple of Jesus. She received the Word of God and acted on it. She practiced her faith in her life and led disciples to that faith. The Church states that she is still leading humankind to Jesus Christ in the Church by her presence.\footnote{Cf. LG 65.} In addition, it recommends imitating her virtues and discipleship formed in faith, hope, and love.\footnote{Cf. LG 67.}

Her discipleship is beyond that of Isaac of her virtues. While Isaac listened to the will of God and was obedient to it, and kept it to transfer to his descendants, Mary did what Isaac exercised for all generations. She praised God working in the poor, the oppressed, and the alienated from the society. Pope Paul VI states Mary is “the disciple who works for that justice which sets free the oppressed and for that charity which assists the needy; but above all, the disciple who is the active witness of that love which builds up Christ in people’s hearts.”\footnote{Pope Paul VI, Apostolic exhortation Marialis Cultus, 37.}
Conclusion

In summary, in the first chapter, the climax in the narrative about Abraham is the sacrifice of Isaac on Mount Moriah. Isaac has a major role in the entire story of Abraham. He is a precious son of Abraham and Sarah, a son given by God and his promise. Isaac was the continued dedicated life for individual Abraham and simultaneously the promised offspring of Israel, the people of God. The Covenant between God and Abraham is concentrated and continued in Isaac. He is an instrument in the history of Israel and salvation. His historical existence is important, but his role between God and Abraham is also necessary. First, Genesis 22:1-19 manifests his role as a witness between God and Abraham in discovering the close relationship of both. God comes to trust Abraham through the event of Moriah because he dedicated his beloved son Isaac to God. Abraham showed his belief in God and obedience to God through this event. God is manifested as the righteous and merciful one through whose power saves Isaac from death. Isaac bears witness to both Abraham and God. Secondly, Isaac plays a link for salvation in Abraham’s narrative. He was chosen from his birth and raised as the heir of Abraham, the servant of God, in the history of Israel. He should convey Abraham’s heritage involving the Covenant with God; to be God’s people, to live according to the will of God and to teach the Covenant to his descendants. He is a link within the Old Covenant between Abraham and his descendants. The Covenant begins to be achieved by Isaac after the event of Moriah. Lastly, Isaac is a model for his faith and obedience from his love for Abraham and his God. He seems to be passive in his attitude, but in fact, his passivity was an active involvement in his sacrifice of love. He voluntarily dedicated his life on Mount Moriah without any complaint. He was submissive to his father, even though he did not know the plan of God and Abraham. His attitude for the will of God is to be seen in his descendants in the history of Israel. Therefore, his descendants imitate his action to God.
in their distress by asking his intercession. Isaac’s role in the narrative of Abraham serves for a deeper understanding of the Old Covenant made between God and Abraham, and helps us better understand who God is and how Abraham did the will of God.

In the second chapter, through the analysis of John 19:25-28a, this thesis pursues a better understanding of the mission of Mary in the work of salvation. The mother of Jesus is present in the Johannine passion narrative of Jesus. Mary appears in a few scenes, but at crucial moments for manifesting the messianic sign of Jesus. She was at the moment that the Word becomes flesh (John 1:14), at the first sign of Jesus (John 2:1-11), and at the time of his death on earth (John 19:25-27). Her role at the foot of the Cross has Christological, ecclesiological, and anthropological perspectives. In Christological perspective, she was with Jesus as a witness to the Trinity; in ecclesiological perspective, she is the mother of Jesus and his disciple, and also a helper of Jesus in the work of salvation; finally, in an anthropological viewpoint, she is a model for disciples and all believers. She was a witness of Jesus as God and human by her special and unique closeness at the moment of the Incarnation, at Cana and Calvary. She believed Jesus’ messianic nature, so could lead his disciples to faith. She had a mission to be the mother of Jesus and to be the mother of disciples in the order of grace.273 Her spiritual motherhood is proclaimed and confirmed by Jesus at the foot of the Cross. Her constant motherly intercession for the people of God brings them special graces to obtain eternal life in Jesus. She is a model because of her faith and obedience to the word of God. The mother of Jesus has a mission for Jesus’ disciples as a spiritual mother and a model in her faith, hope, and charity.274 Her discipleship is important for all Christians.

In the third chapter, the typological comparison between Isaac and the mother of Jesus is presented. Isaac is a type of Mary in his role in the history of salvation. Three similarities

273 LG 62.
274 LG 62.
were presented in this chapter; they are a witness, a link, and a model. Compared to Isaac, Mary is a witness. She was a witness to the nature of Jesus just as Isaac is a witness to God and Abraham. It is natural to mention that she is beyond Isaac by her different dimension for bearing witness to God and in the meaning of God’s unique calling. Next, both Isaac and Mary are a link in the Old and New Covenant. Just as Isaac was a link for Israel, Mary is tied to Jesus and his disciples at the foot of the Cross by listening to Jesus’ last words on earth. He gives Mary to his disciple as a mother. It is a new mission for Mary from being the mother of Jesus into becoming the mother of disciples. She needed to be there for Jesus’ disciples as a special gift. She related to all about Jesus to his disciples from his birth to his death on earth.

Thirdly, the mother of Jesus is a model for Jesus’ disciples by her faith, obedience, and love. Isaac was a model for Israel in the history of salvation; Mary is also a model for Jesus’ disciples in faith, obedience, and love. Mary believed in Jesus and his messianic mission in his plan and led his disciples to faith in Jesus. She was obedient to Jesus as Isaac was obedient to Abraham. She entirely dedicated herself to God from the birth of Jesus up to his death at Calvary as Isaac dedicated himself to the will of God on Mount Moriah. Both Mary and Isaac are models of discipleship in responding to the word of God. They listened to God’s word and lived it in their life.

Mary is beyond Isaac’s role in the history of salvation. Her motherhood extends to the universal motherhood for all humankind. Her motherly care and intercession for the children of God were repeatedly proclaimed through the Church. She is still interceding for those in need over the entire world. All Christians are recommended to imitate her life as a witness and model in the journey of faith to eternal life. She achieved her purpose in life on earth. The Church continues to do her mission with her in Jesus.
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