

THE TWELFTH CENTURY: EARLY SCHOLASTICISM: ST. BERNARD AND THE GOLDEN AGE OF MARIOLOGY

EARLY SCHOLASTICISM

ANSELM OF CANTERBURY

Anselm of Canterbury (d. 1109), the author of the so-called ontological argument for the existence of God, is generally regarded as the father of scholasticism. A native of Aosta, he entered the Benedictine monastery of Bec in Normandy, whose abbot he became in 1078. In 1093 he succeeded Lanfranc as Archbishop of Canterbury. Though quantitatively Mary holds only a very small place in Anselm's work (most of the Marian writings printed under his name are spurious), his teaching on her nevertheless had an enormous influence on medieval Mariology. It is contained in three of his works, the famous *Cur Deus Homo* (on the reason for the Incarnation), his treatise on "The Virginal Conception and on Original Sin," and his *Orationes*.¹ Though a passage from Anselm which will be quoted presently was inserted in the bull *Ineffabilis*, which defined the Immaculate Conception, he himself did not teach this doctrine. In *Cur Deus Homo* Anselm says explicitly that "the Virgin . . . was born with original sin, because she, too, sinned in Adam"; she was purified only before the birth of Christ, who was assumed from "the sinning mass [*de massa peccatrice*]" which he had purified, for "his Mother's purity, by which he is pure, was only from him,

whereas he was pure through and from himself."² In his treatise on the Virginal Conception Anselm proves that Christ could be without sin even if Mary was not, because original sin was transmitted by natural propagation, whereas Christ was born virginally.³ Nevertheless, just this treatise contains the passage that exercised a decisive influence on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and was quoted in the bull defining it. It reads: "It was fitting [*deebat*] that this Virgin should shine with a degree of purity than which no greater can be imagined apart from God."⁴ The logical conclusion from this principle would indeed be the Immaculate Conception; but the Augustinian tradition was too strong for Anselm to affirm it. His view of original sin, too, contributed to the later belief of Mary's exemption from it; for whereas the general opinion of theologians at that time was that concupiscence plays a decisive part in the transmission of it, tainting all persons generated in the normal way, Anselm saw in it nothing else but the "absence . . . due to Adam's disobedience, of the state of justice which they ought to possess."⁵ If Mary was the purest of all creatures, and if original sin was but the absence of original justice, then no more was needed than the anticipation of the effects of Christ's passion to make the Immaculate Conception theologically acceptable.

Though Anselm did not draw this consequence from his own teaching, his Marian doctrine, as it emerges from his three great Marian prayers,⁶ was exalted indeed.⁷ These prayers, which became extremely popular, are written in a highly polished rhetorical style. Mary is addressed as the Virgin of admirable virginity and "amiable" fecundity, excelling all others not only in dignity but also in power; she is the mother of salvation and temple of mercy before whom his miserable soul presents itself to be healed by her merits and prayers. Despite his assertion that she was born in original sin, he calls her purer than the angels and asks her to heal the wounds of his sins, for she is "mercifully powerful and powerfully merciful."⁸ Mary's purity is contrasted with the sinner's impurity, and the latter's misery is emphasized in a way characteristic of medieval man: "Queen of angels, mistress of the world, mother of him who purifies the world, I confess that my heart is exceedingly impure, so that it is rightly ashamed to turn to so pure a one"; for he is a captive, he is lost, conscious only of his sins and misery,⁹ and his dying spirit

yearns for the sight of her goodness, while at the same time shying away from her surpassing splendour. Nevertheless, he makes bold to ask her to heal the wounds and ulcers of his sins.¹⁰

Even though Anselm is careful to distinguish between the office of Christ, who can spare, whereas Mary intercedes, he also calls him the “judge of the world” and her the “reconciler [*reconciliatrix*] of the world”; her merits, which he frequently emphasizes, are not only useful but necessary for us.¹¹ Indeed, as he says in the third prayer,¹² “I am sure that what I have been able to receive through the grace of the Son I can also receive through the merits of the Mother.” And so she is the gate of life and the door of salvation, the way of reconciliation, whose power extends to Hades as well as to heaven, the admirable woman “through whom the elements are renewed, the netherworld is healed, the demons are trodden under foot, men are saved and angels are restored; O woman, filled with grace to overflowing, through whose abundant plenitude every creature is rejuvenated! O blessed and more than blessed Virgin, through whose blessing every creature is blessed, not only the creature by the Creator, but also the Creator by the creature! . . . O you, beautiful to behold, lovable to contemplate, delightful to love, how far you exceed the capacity of my heart! Wait, Lady, for the weak soul is following you!”¹³ Here again, as has been noted before, divine activities are attributed to Mary on account of her divine motherhood, followed by personal effusions reflecting the spirit of courtly love in a religious setting. The great Theotokos, who is also the tender Mother suckling her Child, now becomes the beautiful Lady, delightful to behold and to love, the spiritual counterpart of the worldly mistress of the knight.

But after the knight of Mary has had his say, the father of scholasticism reasserts himself and establishes the greatness of Mary by logical argument. “Nothing,” Anselm writes in the same prayer, “is equal to Mary, nothing but God is greater than Mary.” And he goes on to argue: “Every nature is created by God, and God is born from Mary. God has created all things, and Mary has given birth to God. God, who has made all things has made himself from Mary, and thus he has re-created all he created. . . . Therefore God is the Father of all created things, and Mary is the Mother of all re-created things. God is the Father of the constitution of all things, and Mary is the

Mother of the restitution of all things. . . . For God generated him through whom all things were made, and Mary gave birth to him through whom all things were saved." So Mary's position in the divine dispensation is deduced by a logical process from her divine motherhood, indeed, her motherhood is paralleled by the fatherhood of God. If God is the Being than which nothing greater can be conceived (the basis of the ontological argument), Mary is that than which nothing is greater except God. God is the Father of all created things, Mary the Mother of all re-created things. As the ontological argument has been criticized for jumping from mental conception to real existence, so Anselm's "Mariological argument"—if we may be allowed to call it thus—may also be criticized for jumping from the divine to the human plane. For the fatherhood of God is something radically different from the motherhood of Mary, and she can hardly be called the mother of the restitution of all things, that is to say, of the Redemption, in the same way as God is the Father of the constitution of all things, that is to say, of Creation; for God is this directly, in his own right, but Mary only indirectly, through her Son. This Anselm, indeed, says himself, a few lines below; but his language is misleading at times and has influenced later exaggerations.

After these theoretical considerations Anselm once more addresses Mary herself: "As therefore, O most blessed one, everyone who turns away from you and is despised by you must perish, so also whoever turns to, and is regarded by you, cannot possibly be lost." "O blessed confidence, O safe refuge! The Mother of God is our mother. The mother of him, in whom alone we hope . . . is our mother." And he goes on to argue that, because she is the Mother of Christ and of us, we are also his brothers: "Our God has become our brother through Mary." While Athanasius, for example, had said that Christ became our Brother "through the coming down of the Logos to his creatures,"¹⁴ taking account only of the divine action and leaving out the human instrument, Anselm mentions only the latter, that is to say, Mary, while leaving out the first cause, the divine Word—a very suggestive difference between the patristic and medieval mentalities. And so in his prayer he places Christ and Mary on the same level: "Both salvation and damnation depend on the will of the good Brother and the merciful Mother."¹⁵ Therefore

“let him who is guilty before the just God flee to the tender Mother of the merciful God,”¹⁶ whom he addresses in the opening of his great prayer: “Mary, you great Mary, you who are greater than the [other] blessed Maries, you, the greatest of women; my heart wants to love you, surpassingly great Lady . . . because with my whole substance I commend myself to your protection.”¹⁷

In Anselm some of the principal trends of medieval Marian doctrine and devotion are already united: a scholastic argumentation working out the consequences of Mary’s divine motherhood in a strict parallelism between it and the fatherhood of God, which leads necessarily to her share in Christ’s work of redemption (“both salvation and damnation depend on the will of the good Brother and the merciful Mother”), and so to her being also the mother of men, whose prayers are as necessary to our salvation as the Incarnation itself. Besides, Mary appears not only as the Mother of God, but also as the beloved, beautiful Lady of her spiritual knight who places himself under her protection, because “it is incredible that you should not have mercy on the miserable men who implore you.”¹⁸

EADMER AND THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Anselm’s influence was tremendous, both on the Continent and in England. The most famous of his English disciples was Eadmer (d. 1124), a Saxon by birth—a nationality which, as we shall see presently, was not without influence on his doctrinal beliefs. He was brought up at the Benedictine monastery of Christ Church, Canterbury, where he became a monk, and later, precentor. He wrote two important works on our subject, the *Book on the Excellence of the Virgin Mary*¹⁹ and a *tractatus* on her conception.²⁰ The former work, obviously strongly influenced by Anselm, is remarkable for its often naïve views, which show clearly the trends of popular devotion which we have noticed before. Mary reigns over the whole world, for the Holy Spirit who reposed in her made her queen and empress of heaven, earth and all that is in them;²¹ sun, stars, earth and all other creatures were made to serve just men, not sinners; when Mary appeared, through whom came redemption, the creatures were no longer subject to sinful men but regained the freedom of their original creation.²² For every creature was created for the use of men, and through Mary they were all restored to their original

state.²³ The medieval picture of the world with the earth in the centre and sun, moon and stars revolving around it made it easier than it is today to see Mary as the mistress of the whole universe. But Eadmer goes still further than that. In his opinion, as in that of Fulbert of Chartres, it may be even more useful to call on her than on Christ when one is in danger, for: "Sometimes salvation is quicker if we remember Mary's name than if we invoke the name of the Lord Jesus."²⁴ He then asks why this should be so, seeing that she is not more powerful than he, and he is not powerful through her, but she through him. "I will say what I feel," he answers: "Her Son is the Lord and Judge of all men, discerning the merits of the individuals, hence he does not at once answer anyone who invokes him, but does it only after just judgement. But if the name of his Mother be invoked, her merits intercede so that he is answered even if the merits of him who invokes her do not deserve it."²⁵ So we have here the naïve idea that it takes Christ some time to weigh the pros and cons of a case, whereas if we turn to his mother he no longer judges but only considers her merits and grants a man's prayer at once—a view which became quite common and explains why, in the Middle Ages and after, prayer to Mary so often almost superseded prayer to Christ in popular devotion.

Mary's reign, says Eadmer, began at the Ascension, when she knew she was going to rule over every creature, second only to her Son. Then he asks himself how Christ could bear to go to heaven first and to leave his mother behind; perhaps, he thinks, because the heavenly court would not have known whom to greet first.²⁶ At her assumption all heaven is made to give her a wonderful welcome and she is placed on a throne to reign over the whole world, "by motherly right presiding with her Son over heaven and earth."²⁷ Eadmer closely follows his master Anselm in drawing parallels between God's work and hers: "As God, through creating everything by his power, is the Father and Lord of all, so blessed Mary, re-creating all things by her merits, is the mother and mistress of things; for God is the Lord of all, constituting the individual things in their nature by his own command; and Mary is the mistress of things, restoring the individual things to their congenital dignity through the grace she merited. And inasmuch as God from his own substance generated him through whom all things originated, thus

Mary from her flesh gave birth to him who restored all things to the beauty of their first creation."²⁸ The passage is an interesting example of the mixture of first and second causes: though in the second part of the quotation Eadmer says that it is Christ who restored all things, in the first half he praises Mary as doing this "through the grace she merited"; and this power of Mary is stressed more and more, especially with regard to the forgiveness of sins. For Christ will give whatever his mother wants, and so Eadmer, convinced that we cannot be saved without her, implores her: "If you, who are the Mother of God, and therefore the true Mother of Mercy, deny us the effect of the mercy of him whose mother you have been made so marvellously, what shall we do when your Son comes to judge all men with a just judgement?"²⁹ This view that Mary can provide salvation where Christ alone would condemn became increasingly popular; Eadmer argues naïvely with her that her exaltation would be of no profit if she did not help us, for this is her proper office: "Why do you not help us sinners, since for our sakes you have been raised to such heights that every creature has and venerates you as mistress?"³⁰ "For as we have your Son as the Saviour of the whole world, so we have you truly as his reconciler"³¹—Anselm's expression. Christ saves through his passion and death, but this salvation must be made effective through Mary, without whom we could not be reconciled to him: "Do you [Mary], see to it that we may not perish."³²

Theologically more important is Eadmer's treatise on "The Conception of the Blessed Virgin," the first detailed exposition of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. As Bruder³³ points out, "Eadmer's defence of the Immaculate Conception may well have been written to justify the reintroduction of the feast of our Lady in the Abbey of Saint Edmund's, Bury, by its newly appointed abbot, Anselm, the nephew of our saint." He further draws attention to Anselm of Bury's links with the Greek monks of St. Sabas, near Jerusalem, who had fled to Rome when Palestine was invaded by the Saracens. St. Sabas, the monastery of John of Damascus, had celebrated the feast of Mary's conception for centuries, and its monks continued to do so when they came to Rome. There Anselm had been abbot before he was transferred to Bury, and as such he carried on the Greek tradition, which he then reintroduced in England,

where the feast had been celebrated by the Saxons but had been abolished after the Norman invasion of England. Eadmer says that the poor and simple people rejoiced in it, whereas some learned men were against it;³⁴ he admits that Scripture says nothing about Mary being conceived without original sin, nevertheless, he does not think that it would be against faith to consider it.³⁵ He is, however, very careful in proposing his view, asserting that he does not want to dissent from Catholic truth in any way—a caution probably due to the fact that his master, St. Anselm, had held a different opinion. Eadmer bases his belief on the fact that Christ came to save sinners and on Mary's co-operation in this: "She, who was created to be the palace of the Redeemer of sinners, was therefore free from the servitude of all sin";³⁶ if Jeremiah and John the Baptist were sanctified in their mother's womb, "Who dares to say that the unique propitiation of the whole world and the resting-place of the only Son of God was deprived of the grace and illumination of the Holy Spirit in the beginning of her conception?"³⁷ To show how this could be done though she was not born from a virgin, he compares her with a chestnut: "If God gives the chestnut the possibility of being conceived, nourished and formed under thorns, but remote from them, could he not grant to the human body which he was preparing for himself to be a temple in which he would dwell bodily . . . that although she was conceived among the thorns of sin, she might be rendered completely immune from their pricks? He certainly could do it; if, therefore, he willed it, he did it."³⁸ So Eadmer solved the difficulty which had prevented the Latins from acknowledging the Immaculate Conception by teaching what came to be known as the "passive conception," which he could do because his teacher Anselm had paved the way by regarding original sin as no more than the absence of original justice. And he based himself on the famous adage *potuit, voluit, fecit*, arguing from power to will, from will to deed, in a way that had been unknown in the age of the Fathers but was characteristic of medieval Western theology.

He uses this argument again when linking the Immaculate Conception to Mary's dominion over the world: "For [God] willed you to become his mother, and because he willed it, he made you so. . . . He made you his unique mother and so at the same time constituted you mistress and empress of all things. Therefore you

are the mistress and empress of heaven and earth, of the sea and all the elements with all that is in them, and so that you might be this, you were created in your mother's womb from the beginning of your conception with the co-operation of the Holy Spirit."³⁹ For nothing is equal or comparable to Mary; only God is above her, and whatever is not God is beneath her.⁴⁰ Because of this surpassing excellence, she could not be conceived like other human beings, but, "by an extraordinary divine operation inaccessible to the human intellect, most free from any admixture of sin."⁴¹ So Mary's freedom from original sin is linked not only to her dignity as the Mother of the Redeemer but also to her position as mistress and empress of the entire universe. As such she "presides over angels and archangels and disposes of everything as queen together with her Son."⁴²

The relation between Mary and her Son in heaven is not, however, worked out quite consistently. The treatise ends with demands for her intercession. Here Eadmer argues, with the naïvety which has been noticed before, that she cannot fail us, because Christ has died for us; for this reason she must have pity on us and intercede for us. Then she is told that she ought not to love God's justice too much, because she herself is wholly human; if she were to act according to God's justice, she would deprive sinners of all hope. After that he tells her that her Son desires our salvation, therefore she must want it, too. But a little further on, having bemoaned his sins in the exaggerated terms characteristic of the Middle Ages, he asks her to free him from hell, if her Son should condemn him to it.⁴³ So it is never quite clear whether Mary always acts in accordance with the will of God or whether she is capable of bending it to her own; on the one hand her Son desires our salvation, which, apparently, cannot be achieved without her; on the other, he may condemn us to hell while she could free us from it.

Thus the West continued the line that had begun with the Greek prayer *Sub tuum praesidium* in the third or fourth century—which, incidentally, Eadmer echoes several times (e.g., in *Tractatus XL*; where Mary is called the "singulare praesidium omnium ad te confugientium," the "unique help of all who fly to you"), but in a way which presents the Mother of God more and more as an all-but-independent power ruling the whole world by the side of her Son, on whom she continues to exercise her maternal authority.

OPPOSITION TO THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Despite Eadmer, the feast of the conception of Mary met with some opposition even in England, and even more did the idea that she was conceived without original sin. This is shown by the letters of Osbert of Clare,⁴⁴ especially the seventh, addressed to Anselm of Bury, the nephew of Anselm of Canterbury, and the thirteenth, addressed to Warin, Dean of Worcester. In the former Osbert complains that some "followers of Satan" oppose the feast on the grounds that until then nothing had been heard about it and that bishops Roger of Salisbury and Bernard of St. David's tried to prevent its celebration. Nevertheless, Osbert himself kept it with great solemnity,⁴⁵ but was attacked vehemently by some who objected that it was not authorized by Rome. He then gives his reasons for keeping it, which reflect Eadmer's views: if John the Baptist and Jeremiah were sanctified in their mother's womb, how much more Mary; just as it was possible for God to create the first mother without sin from the side of Adam, "so we do not think it was impossible for him to sanctify the blessed Virgin Mary without the contagion of sin in her very conception."⁴⁶ He is determined to defend this truth against its opponents. Nevertheless, in his sermon "On the Conception of Holy Mary"⁴⁷ he does not discuss this matter, no doubt because, as he writes to Warin, "I do not dare to say what I think in my heart of this holy generation, because it is not lawful to cast the heavenly pearls before the multitude."⁴⁸

PSEUDO-AUGUSTINE AND THE ASSUMPTION

Until the beginning of the twelfth century the Pseudo-Jerome's authority had prevented belief in the bodily assumption of Mary from gaining ground in the West. Now another treatise on the same subject, taking a different view, appeared, which came to be attributed to St. Augustine, and under his name gradually ousted the influence of Pseudo-Jerome (Paschasius Radbert).⁴⁹ Its date is uncertain; Laurentin⁵⁰ dates it towards the end of the eleventh century or the beginning of the twelfth, and places it in the milieu of St. Anselm. In the opinion of the present author it shows some remarkable affinities with Cosmas Vestitor (who was translated into Latin in the tenth century), especially in its insistence that the flesh

of Jesus is the flesh of Mary and that therefore where his body is Mary's must be, too. On the other hand, the anonymous treatise shows that it belongs to the age of incipient scholasticism in that it completely disregards the apocrypha and instead relies on logical reasoning. It begins by stating that after the Crucifixion Scripture says nothing more about Mary except mentioning her presence with the Apostles at Pentecost.⁵¹ Nevertheless, "There are truths on which Scripture is silent, but not reason. Of these is the assumption of Blessed Mary."⁵² Thus reason is placed beside Scripture as a means of discovering religious truth—a principle which is valid within limits but which, as we shall see later, may also at times lead to undesirable consequences.

The author then quotes Genesis 3:19, according to which man is dust and must return to dust. "If this," he explains, "refers to death, its application is general. If, however, it is said of dissolving into dust, the flesh of Christ, which is taken from the flesh of Mary, has escaped it, because it has not suffered corruption."⁵³ He goes on to argue that Mary herself was exempt from the curse pronounced on women, because her conceptions were not multiplied and she was not under the authority of man.⁵⁴ Further, it is certain that Christ preserved his mother's virginity intact; if so, why should he not have willed to preserve her also from the corruption of death? The Law commanded men to honour their mothers: "Since he honoured her in her life before others by the grace of his conception, it is fitting to believe [*pium est credere*] that by a unique dispensation he honoured her also in death by a special grace," since his own glorified flesh remains the flesh of Mary.⁵⁵ It would not be fitting for this flesh to be eaten by worms—a thought repeated several times, anticipating the later medieval preoccupation with the macabre.⁵⁶ If Christ said, "Where I am, there also shall my minister be" (Jn 12:26), how much more will his Mother be where he is?⁵⁷ It is obvious that he *could* save her body from corruption, so why should it be doubted that he also *would* do so? Christ wills all things that are fitting; now, it is fitting that she who suffered no corruption in giving birth to her Son should suffer none in death either. Here again we have the same argumentation of *potuit, voluit, fecit* as in Eadmer's treatise on the Immaculate Conception—another pointer towards the close relation between the two doctrines, which both depend on the fittingness of

these Marian prerogatives, and perhaps also to the possibility that the unknown author was a countryman of Eadmer.

MINOR BENEDICTINES

Bruno of Asti, Bishop of Segni (d. 1123), another Benedictine and an ardent supporter of Gregory VII's reforms, was one of the most famous medieval exegetes, and for this reason is worthy of mention, even though he adds little that is new to twelfth-century Mariology. Though he is generally more sober than many of his contemporaries, he calls Mary "the head of the whole Church after her Son,"⁵⁸ and again "the queen and mistress of the Church" in his exegesis of Psalm 44:10ff, which he applies to Mary, though he admits that it is also applicable to the Church. It is all the more noteworthy that his explanation of the Canticle refers only to the Church and that his treatise in praise of Mary⁵⁹ is quite free from exaggerations—a fact due probably to his being above all an exegete and respecting the reticence of Scripture more than most other authors of the time.

His sobriety stands out all the more if his work be compared with the treatise on the same subject by his contemporary Guibert of Nogent (d. 1124), a Benedictine abbot and disciple of St. Anselm whom his mother had vowed to the blessed Virgin before his birth, and who later consecrated himself to her.⁶⁰ Though he follows his master in denying Mary's immaculate conception,⁶¹ he attributes quasi-divine properties to her. Because she bore the omniscient God, she would have been omniscient, too, had not this gift been clouded by humility.⁶² This statement harmonizes with Guibert's view that Mary enjoyed the Beatific Vision even on earth. His argument: "As she possessed more than an angel on earth [scil., while bearing Christ], she ought not to have been less than an angel after the bliss of such a birth."⁶³ We see already here, as we shall notice even more frequently later, to what strange ideas such abstract reasoning could lead. As such prerogatives were hers on earth, Guibert naturally stresses her sovereignty over the universe: "She it is who through her Son presides over heaven, commands on earth and afflicts hell,"⁶⁴ suggesting almost a "power behind the throne." She also avenges injuries done to her by heretics⁶⁵ and, being "the author of the creature of the Son of God" (i.e., of his humanity), she

is not only honoured like the other saints, "but, as more than equal [*superpar*] to Christ's humanity, adored" (556D). She is the mediatrix between men and God, who is almost compelled to listen to her by his own law (the Fourth Commandment) (557A): "And as a good son in this world so respects his mother's authority that she commands rather than asks, so he [Christ], who undoubtedly was once subject to her, cannot, I am sure, refuse her anything; and what (I speak humanly) she demands, not by asking but by commanding, will surely come to pass" (9 [564A]); for it behooves her not to ask but to command (14 [577A]). And so Guibert even calls her "saviour" (*salvatricem* [577B]), for she is our only hope and salvation: "Exclude Mary from the Church, and what will the Church be except misery? For without her childbirth there would have been no Redemption" (4 [543C]). Though Guibert denied the Immaculate Conception, he was favourable to the idea of the bodily Assumption, probably under the influence of the pseudo-Augustine, because he uses his argument that it seems reasonable to believe that she whose flesh is the same as that of her Son did not share the common lot of mankind. Nevertheless, though we are allowed to believe this, we must not definitely assert it, by reason of lack of evidence.⁶⁶

Geoffrey of Vendôme (d. 1132), another Benedictine supporter of the Gregorian reforms, who later became a cardinal, also emphasizes Mary's power of intercession, the biblical basis for which he finds in the miracle of Cana,⁶⁷ and in evidence of which he quotes the Theophilus legend.⁶⁸ Indeed, so great is this power, "that she will obtain from her most merciful Son that none of those is lost for whom she has prayed even once. And this is not surprising, for she can save the whole world by her prayers, if she wills it. And she would certainly be most ready to pray for the whole world, and the whole world would be saved, if it rendered itself worthy of her prayers." For through her "mother's command" she can obtain from Christ whatever she desires, and she will never be defrauded of her maternal rights.⁶⁹ Though God is, indeed, omnipotent, he has never been able to refuse her anything.⁷⁰ For this reason Christ will also revenge an injury done to his mother more severely than one done to himself, and would never leave it unpunished unless she first prayed for the offender; more, he would rather that men

doubted his own origin than her virginity.⁷¹ Christ is both her Son and her Spouse “because he is united to her in love,”⁷² and in him she has also given birth to us; therefore Geoffrey asks his monks to take her for their mother,⁷³ for she is merciful like a mother.⁷⁴

THE MARIAN INTERPRETATION OF THE CANTICLE: RUPERT OF DEUTZ AND HONORIUS OF AUTUN

Rupert, the abbot of the Benedictines at Deutz (d. ca. 1135), seems to have been the first to have interpreted the Canticle entirely with reference to Mary. Individual verses of it had, of course, been applied to her from early times; but the Marian exegesis of the whole poem was something new.⁷⁵ In his article on the Marian interpretation of the Canticle in early scholasticism J. Beumer⁷⁶ gives as the reason for this the fact that between the ninth and eleventh centuries the feast of the Assumption had lessons from the Canticle, and that even before the twelfth century these lessons, formerly continued throughout August, were interrupted after the octave of the feast, to be resumed for the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin in September. Thus the liturgical readings brought her into close connection with the Canticle, hence the Marian exegesis. The contents of Rupert’s work, however, reflect the traditional Mariology of the time. Though the blessed Virgin was not without the stain of original sin, this was wiped out through the Incarnation.⁷⁷ She was both a faithful prophetess⁷⁸ and the teacher of the Apostles, whose voice supplemented the instruction of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁹ Being a prophetess, she knew not only where Jesus was when his parents had lost him in Jerusalem—her ignorance recorded in the Gospel being only assumed, according to the divine dispensation—she also foreknew the Passion even when she was still suckling him in her arms.⁸⁰ She was chosen before the beginning of the world, according to the text from Proverbs 8,⁸¹ and now she is queen of the saints in heaven as well as of the kingdoms of the earth, “possessing by right the whole kingdom of her Son,” according to the medieval legal idea, for she is the Mother of the Church, being Christ’s sister by faith and his spouse by love.⁸² Like many of his contemporaries, Rupert had a keen sense of the continuity between the Old and the New Dispensations, which are linked in Mary, the “true Jerusalem” and the

daughter of the Church of the Old Testament.⁸³ We owe it to Mary that Christ is our Brother, and so she is the mother of us all.⁸⁴

Mary's connection with Israel is worked out in greater detail in Rupert's work on the Trinity, where he says that Mary is the spouse of the Father, for whose sake he was said in the Old Testament to have espoused the Church of his first people; she was "the best part of the first Church, who merited to be the spouse of God the Father so as to be also the type [*exemplar*] of the younger Church, the spouse of the Son of God and her own Son."⁸⁵ In his commentary on the Fourth Gospel Rupert emphasizes that Mary became our mother under the Cross, like many modern theologians connecting her "birth pangs" on Golgotha with John 16:21: "A woman, when she is in labour, hath sorrow because her hour is come"; if Christ said this to the Apostles, Rupert comments, how much more applicable are these words to the woman who stood beside his cross: "For she is truly a mother, and in that hour she had true birth pangs." "Because there were truly 'pains as of a woman in labour' [Ps 47:7] and in the Passion of the only begotten Son the blessed Virgin brought forth the salvation of us all, she is obviously the Mother of us all."⁸⁶

If Rupert was the first to have interpreted the Canticle exclusively of Mary, he must have been followed in this very soon by one of the most influential early schoolmen, Hönorius of Autun (d. 1136). He, too, was a Benedictine, first at Regensburg, later at Canterbury, where he studied Anselm, whom he followed in his denial of the Immaculate Conception⁸⁷: "She, too, is believed to have been born [*nata*, not only conceived!] in sins." On the other hand, he teaches her bodily assumption; the pseudo-Augustine was making his influence increasingly felt.⁸⁸ According to Honorius, Mary was left on earth for two years after the Ascension as an example to the faithful and in order to be herself tried like gold in the fire through her sorrow for his absence.⁸⁹ It is characteristic of him no less than of most medieval scholars that, though he wrote learned treatises on free will and grace and other theological questions, on the other hand he readily believed and transmitted the most extravagant miracle stories. In his various Marian sermons he not only repeated the stories of Theophilus and of the Jewish boy who consumed the Host, but also a great number of other legends, however fanciful,

which fed both the devotion and the imagination of the common people.

LITURGICAL AND POPULAR DEVOTION

At the same time new hymns to the Mother of God, especially the so-called Marian antiphons, exercised a strong influence both in religious and lay circles. The most famous of them is the *Salve Regina*, the date and authorship of which are still disputed. It has frequently been attributed to Bernard of Clairvaux,⁹⁰ but most modern scholars believe it to have been composed earlier, towards the end of the eleventh century or the beginning of the twelfth. It was introduced into the liturgical services of Cluny about 1135 and soon taken over by the Cistercians, later also by the Dominicans, who recite it daily after Compline. The *Salve Regina* expresses to perfection medieval men's attitude to Mary; their complete confidence in her, the Mother of Mercy, to whom the exiled sons of Eve recommend themselves and whose life, sweetness and hope she is; her power as their advocate with God and her mediation between themselves and Christ, whom she will show them after the exile of this earth is over.

The *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, the Advent antiphon, often attributed to Hermannus Contractus, a monk of Reichenau (d. 1054),⁹¹ is probably of a later date (late eleventh or early twelfth century) as it appears only in twelfth-century manuscripts. It is obviously inspired by the *Ave Maris Stella*, and itself is a prayer to the Gate of Heaven and Star of the Sea to help those about to fall, and to have mercy on sinners.

The most popular of all Marian prayers also made its appearance about this time. This, of course, is the *Hail Mary*, the greeting of the angel (Lk 1:28) which was combined with that of Elizabeth (Lk 1:42) as early as the sixth century in the East; since it is quoted on a potsherd dated about 600⁹² in the following form: "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, because thou didst conceive [Christ, the Son of God] the Redeemer of our souls." The twofold greeting, with the shorter addition, appears also in the Eastern liturgies⁹³ and in the Latin Offertory of the Mass for the Fourth Sunday of

Advent. But it became popular only through the Little Office of our Lady. This is a shorter Office than the "Divine Office"; it consists of psalms and Marian hymns and antiphons, in which the *Ave Maria* is frequently used. It appeared first as a private devotion in the tenth century and is attested in the Life of Bishop Ulrich of Augsburg (d. 973) written by his contemporary, Gerard, Provost of Augsburg Cathedral.⁹⁴ Peter Damian recommended its universal recitation.⁹⁵ He reinforced his recommendation by various miracle stories—for example, one about a monastery which, after the recitation had been stopped, was afflicted by many calamities which ceased only when it had been resumed.⁹⁶ Its use on Saturday was ordered by Pope Urban II at the Synod of Clermont in 1095⁹⁷ for both the regular and secular clergy in order to obtain Mary's help for the First Crusade. The Office, which soon was also said by many devout laymen, was further recommended by many legends attributing graces and miracles to its recitation. These Marian legends were collected from the beginning of the twelfth century and frequently translated into the vernacular and propagated in sermons.⁹⁸ In the first collection, containing seventeen miracles, four are connected with the recitation of the Little Office. From there, then, the *Hail Mary* spread far and wide through Western Christendom, still in its short, biblical form, without the later petition prayer, so that Abbot Franco of Afligam, writing before 1125, could say: "Of good right does every condition, every age, every degree honour Mary with the angelic salutation."⁹⁹ The *Hail Mary* was often accompanied by genuflections or prostrations; a hermit, Aybert (d. ca. 1140), for example, said daily one hundred and fifty *Hail Maries*,¹⁰⁰ with as many genuflections; and in the canons of the Synod of Paris (ca. 1210) the knowledge of the *Hail Mary* was enjoined upon all the faithful in addition to the *Our Father* and the Apostles' Creed.

From the beginning of the twelfth century rhythmic Marian greeting hymns (*Grushymnen*) also became very popular. According to Meersseman¹⁰¹ they owe their origin to the *Akathistos*—we see how strong the Greek influence still was in the West—the salutations of which had been used in a *Salutatio Sanctae Mariae* which originated in Paris between 1050 and 1075. Under its influence these hymns became so numerous in our period that they are considered as forming a species of their own. It is, however, noteworthy that

in the West their character differs from similar poems in the East in that they are far more prayers for help and protection—reflecting the insecurity of the times and the more naïve approach of the young, more recently converted nations.

Marian litanies came into being at the same time, developing from the All Saints' Litany, in the various versions of which Mary was often invoked under more than one appellation. When these began to multiply they threatened to upset the balance of the All Saints' Litany, and so independent Marian litanies were being composed. The two most famous ones are the Litany of Loreto, which is still in use, and the Litany of Venice, so called because it was for a long time used in the Cathedral of St. Mark. These litanies, too, were influenced by the *Akathistos*; they were constantly enlarged, abridged and otherwise changed; the first extant manuscript of the Litany of Loreto, which dates from the end of the twelfth century, contains no fewer than seventy-three invocations.¹⁰²

Yet another devotion that came into use about the same time (ca. 1130) was the so-called "greeting psalters" (*Gruss-psalter*). They originated from the paraliturgical recitation of the Psalms, in which the antiphons were replaced by strophes applying some verse of the relevant psalms to the blessed Virgin. The one hundred and fifty verse antiphons all began with the angelic greeting after the example of the Latin *Akathistos*. This strophic psalter was assigned to the seven days of the week, and later the psalms themselves were replaced by *Hail Marys* (in the short form, of course) and new antiphons, which had no connection with the Psalms, substituted for the original ones. Finally the antiphons, which would have to be known by heart or be read in a book, were left out and simply one hundred and fifty *Hail Marys* were recited, interspersed with *Glorias* and divided into groups of fifty which were called *rosarium* after the Marian title of *Rosa Mystica*. They were counted on beads, which had also come into use at the latest in the first half of the twelfth century,¹⁰³ originally for counting the *Our Fathers* frequently given as penances. These were the origins of the Rosary.¹⁰⁴

ABELARD AND HERMANN OF TOURNAI

The age that followed the early twelfth-century authors so far discussed is generally called in the history of the Church the age of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, the counsellor of popes and kings, the preacher of the Second Crusade, the great opponent of the new scholasticism represented by Abelard. Abelard (d. 1142), the highly critical author of *Sic et Non*, a collection of apparently contradictory statements of Scripture and the Fathers, more popularly known as the lover of Heloise, was also a defender of the bodily Assumption, on which he preached a sermon.¹⁰⁵ Though, as he says himself, he well knew St. Jerome's contrary opinion—that is to say, Radbert's—he holds that what was unknown in Jerome's time may well have been revealed to later generations; and he quotes Gregory of Tours in evidence, though not Pseudo-Augustine.¹⁰⁶ For it was only fitting that Christ should have glorified both Mary's soul and body, as he had taken his own soul and body from her.¹⁰⁷ He accepts without question the apocryphal story of the Apostles' assembly at her death—but here we must take into account that this was a sermon preached before nuns, where critical remarks would have been out of place. He further asserts that Christ honoured his mother's body even more than his own, because he did not leave it in the tomb for three days—though this was the time given by many apocryphal accounts—but at once placed it in paradise and resurrected it from there.¹⁰⁸ In the same sermon he calls Mary our mediatrix with the Son, as the Son is our Mediator with the Father,¹⁰⁹ giving as examples of her mediation the wedding at Cana as well as the popular legend of Theophilus.¹¹⁰ He expresses the same faith in her mediation in his Matins hymn for her feasts, almost in the words of Peter Damian: "Through you God has descended to us, through you we must also ascend to him."¹¹¹ Though Mary is as full of graces as any human nature could be, Abelard does not teach the Immaculate Conception but assumes that by his descent into her Christ cleansed her from all contagion of human weakness.¹¹² Nevertheless, all the gifts of the Church are concentrated in her.¹¹³

Before approaching Abelard's great adversary we must just mention one other theologian, Hermann of Tournai (d. after 1147), because he seems to have been the first to apply to Mary the

metaphor of the neck, which was to play an important part in subsequent Mariology. In his treatise on the Incarnation of Christ,¹¹⁴ he writes that, "Our Lady is rightly understood to be the neck of the Church, because she is the mediatrix between God and men." The metaphor is obviously derived from St. Paul's image of Christ as the head and the Church as his body—Mary being the connecting link between the two, the neck. He also gave a new turn to the old Mary-Eve parallel, by applying to Mary the words of Genesis 2:18, "a helper like unto himself." This, Hermann says, though literally said of Eve, is yet more truly applied to Mary, who is both "spouse and mother of God," because (repeating Anselm) as God is the Father of all creation, so Mary is the mother of all re-created things.¹¹⁵ But Hermann goes much further than Anselm when he says not, like Anselm, that through Mary God has become our Brother, but: "Through Mary God the Creator has been made our Father, because through her the Son of God has been made our Brother."¹¹⁶ Since the fatherhood of God does not depend on the Incarnation (after all, God was already called "Father" in the Old Testament—for example, in Isaiah 63:16 and elsewhere), it cannot be said even in the widest possible sense that God became our Father through Mary. To such exaggerations one might fittingly apply the words of St. Bernard, which he, mistakenly, used with regard to her immaculate conception: "The royal Virgin does not need a false honour."¹¹⁷

ST. BERNARD

St. Bernard, who has sometimes been called the last of the Fathers, did not like novelties but wanted to remain true to the teaching of the Bible and the Fathers. Nevertheless, his outlook is in many ways authentically medieval, as we shall see when analyzing his Marian doctrine. Compared with their influence, his writings on the subject are extraordinarily few, though very soon after his death a large quantity of works began to circulate under his name. His authentic Marian writings—3½ percent of his whole literary output, it has been calculated—comprise homilies "In Praise of the Virgin Mother,"¹¹⁸ three homilies on the Purification (383–98), four on the Assumption (415–30), one on the Twelve Stars for the Sunday in the octave of the Assumption or, more probably, for the

Annunciation in Lent (429–38), the famous sermon on the “Aque-duct” for the feast of her nativity, and the above-mentioned letter to the canons of Lyons, rejecting the Immaculate Conception.

Bernard opposed it precisely because he did not want to go beyond the data of the Bible and the Fathers—he obviously did not know about St. John of Damascus—and because he subscribed to Augustine’s view of original sin: “Could sanctity,” he asks, “by any chance have mingled with the conception in the marital embrace, so that she was conceived and sanctified at the same time? Reason does not admit this. For how could there have been sanctity without the sanctifying Spirit, or how could the Holy Spirit be in any way associated with sin? Or how could sin not have been present where concupiscence was not absent?”¹¹⁹ Therefore he blames the canons of Lyons for introducing the feast of Mary’s conception, which, according to him, is neither approved by reason nor recommended by ancient tradition,¹²⁰ though he believes that she was sanctified in the womb, as witnessed by the Church’s celebration of her birth, and that she never committed any sin in her life.¹²¹ Bernard knows, indeed, that the feast of her conception has been celebrated before, but only, he says, by simple people—referring probably to Bee in Normandy, where it had penetrated from England—so he had said nothing about it then. But now, discovering this “superstition” in a famous and noble Church whose special son he was, he felt that he must speak out.¹²²

In the matter of the bodily Assumption the saint’s attitude was less outspoken; he seems deliberately to have left it in the dark. Though we have four sermons on this feast from him, he never affirmed that he believed Mary to be in heaven with her body. St. Bernard’s teaching and devotion centred in Mary’s mediation between her Son and his faithful, and his tremendous influence is due not to any originality of thought, which he himself repudiated, but to the force and beauty with which he, the “Mellifluous Doctor,” expressed his love of Mary. These are already apparent in the homilies on the Gospel of the Annunciation,¹²³ with the famous passage *respice stellam, voca Mariam*, the beauty of which cannot be reproduced in translation, on the universal efficacy of her intercession: “If you will not be submerged by tempests, do not turn away your eyes from the splendour of this star! If the storms of temptations

arise, if you crash against the rocks of tribulation, look to the star, call upon Mary. If you are tossed about on the waves of pride, of ambition, of slander, of hostility, look to the star, call upon Mary. If wrath or avarice or the enticements of the flesh upset the boat of your mind, look to Mary. If you are disturbed by the immensity of your crimes . . . if you begin to be swallowed up by the abyss of depression and despair, think of Mary! In dangers, in anxiety, in doubt, think of Mary, call upon Mary. Let her name not leave your lips nor your heart, and that you may receive the help of her prayer, do not cease to follow the example of her conduct. . . . If she holds you, you will not fall, if she protects you, you need not fear."¹²⁴ This impassioned plea to trust in Mary probably did as much to confirm medieval Christians in their faith in her all-powerful intercession as the legend of Theophilus, which recurs again and again in the sermons of this period.

The Annunciation itself is described in the anthropomorphic terms also characteristic of the age; they are inspired by the words of the psalm, "The king shall greatly desire thy beauty" (Ps 44:12). Though "the King's going out is from the highest heaven, yet, his great desire giving him wings, he arrived before his messenger at the Virgin he had loved, whom he had elected, whose beauty he desired" (3, 2), a naïve description of God as the impatient bridegroom desiring his chosen spouse, such as would hardly have been possible in an earlier age.

The *Sermon on the Aqueduct*, preached on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, treats *ex professo* of her mediation between her Son and his faithful. St. Bernard compares this mediation not to the neck of the Mystical Body, but, as the title says, to an aqueduct which leads the divine waters to earth. If, Bernard says, the floods of grace did not reach earth for so long, the reason was that an aqueduct was lacking; he evidently did not take the graces of the Old Testament into account when suggesting this. But how, he asks, could the aqueduct reach so sublime a source? He answers: Through the vehemence of her desire, the fervour of her devotion and the purity of her prayer.¹²⁵ Thus Eve is justified in her daughter, and God wants us to honour Mary with the most affectionate devotion, because, "He has placed the fullness of all good things in Mary, so that we should know that all there is of hope, grace and salvation

in us flows from her. . . . Take away Mary, this star of the sea, of a sea so large and wide, what else is left but surrounding gloom, the shadow of death and densest darkness?"¹²⁶ God himself wants us to honour her, "who willed us to have everything through Mary"—a saying frequently quoted by later popes, for example Pius IX,¹²⁷ Leo XIII and Pius XII, which has become a principle of Mariology. Therefore Mary is the most efficacious advocate. True, God has given us Christ as our advocate, yet sinners might be afraid of him, "because, even though he was made Man, he yet remained God. Do you want to have an advocate even with him? Have recourse to Mary!" For in her human nature is pure—not only of sin, but also of all admixture of another, divine nature. She will certainly be heard by her Son, and the Son by the Father. "My children," he pleads, "this is the ladder of sinners, this is my greatest assurance, this is the whole reason for my hope." She will surely be heard, because she has found grace with God. Therefore "let us seek grace, and let us seek it through Mary, for she finds what she seeks."¹²⁸ Hence Bernard exhorts his hearers: "Whatever you are about to offer, remember to commend it to Mary, so that through the same channel whence it flowed, grace may flow back to the Giver of grace." The saint knows quite well that God could have given us grace also without this "aqueduct," but in actual fact he did provide it. Therefore men should offer everything through Mary's most acceptable hands, if they do not want to risk being repelled. If they do this, their gifts will be made as white as lilies.¹²⁹

Bernard reiterates his teaching in the *Sermon on the Twelve Stars*.¹³⁰ He applies to Mary the Apocalyptic picture of the Woman clothed with the Sun and surrounded by twelve stars, though he is careful to point out that it refers in the first place to the Church. He goes on to say that the words of Genesis, that it is not good for man to be alone, are also relevant in the context of the Redemption: "It is more fitting that, since both sexes were involved in our corruption, so both should also be present at our reparation." And he stresses again the necessity of a purely human mediator because of men's fear of Christ's divinity, which had come to play such an important part in the medieval mentality (Ch. 1). So he can affirm categorically that "Man needs a mediator with that Mediator, and there is no one more efficacious than Mary." Of her no one need be afraid,

because she is “wholly sweet and gentle” (*tota suavis*). He asks his readers to search the New Testament to see whether they can find anything hard in Mary. No, she is only full of mercy and mildness, therefore “give thanks to him, who in his mercy has provided such a mediatrix.”¹³¹ Naturally such language from the most famous teacher of the twelfth century made an enormous impact. Nevertheless, G. Miegge¹³² is right when he points out that “we should be rendering a poor service to St. Bernard if we wanted to give to those devout paradoxes a greater importance than they really have in his complete thought. It is evident that the reason for the mediation of Mary is turned mainly towards the timid and the weak in faith. . . . St. Bernard speaking to adults does not offer spiritual Marian milk but the hard food of the Christ-centred mysticism, of which his eighty-six sermons on the Song of Songs offer an incomparable text.”

The complete trust in her mediation is most strikingly expressed in the well-known prayer *Memorare*, often attributed to St. Bernard, probably through a confusion of names, since it was popularized by a seventeenth-century priest, Claude Bernard; but its central idea is certainly expressed in the saint’s fourth sermon on the Assumption, where he writes: “May he be silent about your mercy, Blessed Virgin, if there should exist one who has called on you in his necessities and remembers that you have failed him.”¹³³ In these four sermons on the Assumption Bernard says nothing directly about the bodily Assumption; but all the more about Mary’s glorious reception and her powerful intercession in heaven. The sermons are obviously influenced by the ideals of medieval knight-hood. “Our queen,” he exclaims, “has preceded us, and has been so gloriously received that her pages [*servuli*] can trustingly follow their Lady.”¹³⁴ Bernard does not hesitate to adapt the psalm of the Ascension (67) to the Assumption and to refer to Mary the words applied by the Church to Christ—“Ascending to heaven, you have given gifts to men”¹³⁵—just as, in his fourth sermon, he accommodates to her words St. Paul uses of her Son: “Who could search out the length and the breadth, the height and the depth of your mercy?”¹³⁶ This tendency to assimilate Mary increasingly to the transcendence of God himself becomes even more pronounced in later writers. It results from the fact that she has the same Son as the

Father.¹³⁷ It is offset, however, by Bernard's very human description of the meeting between Christ and Mary in heaven: "Blessed the kisses given by the Child whom the Mother pressed to her virginal breast; but now shall we not think even more blessed those which she receives today from the lips of him who sits on the right hand of the Father?"¹³⁸—which, incidentally, might imply belief in the bodily Assumption.

FRIENDS AND DISCIPLES OF ST. BERNARD

PETER THE VENERABLE

Peter the Venerable (d. 1156), Abbot of Cluny, was a friend of St. Bernard, though this friendship was sometimes clouded by the rivalry that existed between the Benedictine and the Cistercian orders, and it is significant that Peter gave refuge to Bernard's opponent Abelard. The Abbot of Cluny was perhaps the most important man of the twelfth century after St. Bernard, but his influence and popularity were considerably less than those of the Cistercian saint. He did much to foster devotion to Mary in his order. In his *Statutes of the Congregation of Cluny* he ordered a daily Mass of the blessed Virgin to be celebrated at the altar dedicated to her,¹³⁹ the Little Office of Mary to be recited daily in the chapel of the sick which was dedicated to her¹⁴⁰ and the *Salve Regina* to be chanted¹⁴¹ on the feast of the Assumption during the procession.¹⁴¹ All this was to be done, as is explained in the same statutes, so that she might be honoured above all other creatures, because she was the Mother of the Author of the universe.

His devotion, however, did not prevent him from criticizing some of the exaggerated ideas that had become current at the time, with which he deals in one of his epistles.¹⁴² He doubts whether any special apostolic graces were added to Mary's fullness of grace at Pentecost, because it was not her office to preach the Faith; Peter will not, however, assert anything definite about it, as Scripture is silent on the subject. Even if she did not receive these special graces, she is nevertheless superior to the Apostles, who did.¹⁴³ He strongly opposes the idea that Mary was omniscient;¹⁴⁴ for it was thought

that as she was so exalted she must even on earth have had more knowledge than the angels. Peter replies that the New Testament makes it quite clear that she had no such knowledge, since, for example, an angel had to instruct Joseph to take the Child into Egypt and Mary did not know that the twelve-year-old Jesus had stayed behind in the Temple.¹⁴⁵ Peter's correspondent, the monk Gregory, further applied to Mary St. Paul's words about Christ, that in him "are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col 2:3) on the grounds that Christ had been in Mary's womb. Peter replies that even though this was true, it does not mean that the treasures belonging to him were given to her; omniscience, Peter says, "belongs to God alone and is not given to any mortal in this life."¹⁴⁶ In their devotion to Mary men "must not go beyond the rule of faith."¹⁴⁷ The angels in heaven, enjoying the Beatific Vision, knew immeasurably more than Mary did on earth: ". . . to attribute to her angelic knowledge without beatitude is . . . not a little silly."¹⁴⁸ This letter shows clearly to what excesses devotion unrestrained by biblical and theological knowledge could go.

ARNOLD OF BONNEVAL

Another friend of St. Bernard, the Benedictine abbot Arnold of Bonneval (d. after 1156), in the diocese of Chartres, was much bolder in his statements about Mary than Peter the Venerable. Though he did not actually teach the bodily Assumption, which he called "a most thorny question,"¹⁴⁹ he considered the glory of the Son and the Mother indivisible.¹⁵⁰ Both divide the offices of mercy between them, Christ showing the Father his wounds, Mary her breast:¹⁵¹ "Mary immolates herself to Christ in spirit and prays for the salvation of the world; the Son obtains it, the Father forgives." So Mary also shares in the redemptive work on the Cross, for Christ "was moved by the affection of his mother; then there was one single will of Christ and Mary, both together offered one holocaust to God: she in the blood of her heart, he in the blood of his flesh."¹⁵² "Christ is the Lord, Mary the Mistress. . . . For she is set over every creature, and whoever bends his knee to Jesus also bows in supplication to his Mother. . . . Nor can the Mother be separated from the dominion and power of the Son. One is the flesh of Mary and Christ, one the spirit, one the charity. . . . This unity allows no division, nor is