

New Series

Volume 2

No. 2

July 2022

Pages 1- 2



Maria

A Journal of Marian Studies

Published by the Centre for Marian Studies

Author: Sarah Jane Boss and Chris Maunder

Title: Editorial

From the editors of *Maria*, Sarah Jane Boss and Chris Maunder

Clearly, someone did read the last editorial in *Maria* 2.1 when we asked for papers on Mary and the environment! The recent very hot weather in the U.K. and Europe has reminded us that climate change is not just a theory, it's a reality that demands our attention, and our response. In an interesting and thought-provoking article, James Raj Nepolean, an Indian priest based in Belgium, shows that, while Mary and Hindu goddesses may be seen as representing the Earth, in India festivals in their honour often include practices which pollute the environment. He suggests that homilies, which are still highly influential in Indian Catholicism, might connect Mary with care for the Earth and thereby transform popular devotion.

Sr Theresa Marie Chau Nguyen, an American Dominican of Vietnamese origin who has published in *Maria* before, investigates the place of Mary in the thought of the French Jesuit theologian Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a paper originally presented at the CMS conference in July 2021. While Teilhard, who died in 1955, predates much of the modern debate on the environment, his work on Christ as the end-point of the evolution of the cosmos remains ever more relevant to Christianity as it develops in the world of climate change and global warming. Sr Theresa shows that, for Teilhard, Mary is a principle of cosmic unity indispensable to the process by which Creation reaches its culmination in Christ. This is a fluent and informative paper which summarises the Marian contribution of an important Catholic theologian.

Another thinker who has been highly influential in recent Catholicism is Chiara Lubich, the foundress of the worldwide *Focolare* movement in Italy in 1943. Four years before her death in 2008, she visited St Mary's University in Twickenham, now the home of the CMS. Brian Reynolds, a friend of the CMS and member of *Maria's* editorial board based in Taiwan, has very helpfully provided the text of Lubich's talk with an introduction. The *Focolare* are also known as the 'Work of Mary', and so it is not surprising that the presentation is on the Marian profile of the Church and its relationship to ecclesial movements.

Sarah Jane Boss has contributed an enlightening discussion on the relationship of Mary to the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist. She concludes by focussing on the essential integrity of Creation, Annunciation, and Crucifixion which is realised in the Eucharistic liturgy.



Sarah has also concluded her translation of that most important and seminal treatise on the Conception of Mary, by the eleventh to twelfth century English historian and theologian Eadmer of Canterbury. The first part is in Issue 1, and the second appears here.

The papers in this issue centre on the relationships between Mary and Creation, and Mary and the Church. The way in which Creation and the Church have been imaged by Mary as a feminine figure can raise critical questions about gender representations, and so we hope that some of the papers at the forthcoming CMS study day on Mary and Gender (September 10th at St Mary's University, see <https://www.marianstudies.ac.uk/post/alone-of-all-her-sex-a-marian-study-day-on-mary-and-gender-on-10th-september-2022>) might be written up and submitted to *Maria*!

We have included just one book review, Annemarie Weyl Carr's insightful and positive analysis of Mary Cunningham's recent publication *The Virgin Mary in Byzantium, c.400-1000*. Carr says that, 'There exists no cleaner, richer avenue of access to Byzantium's literary legacy on Mary than this.' One expert appreciating the work of another. This is a review which invites you to obtain the text for your library!

We are very grateful to all our contributors. They come from across the world and send their material freely and generously. Their expertise makes *Maria* what it is: a leading English language, academic peer-reviewed Marian Studies journal.