



## Translation Dutch letter nr. 13

Kampen, July 2nd 1998.

Dear brothers, sisters, pastors and elders,

For those of you who haven't read our last letter or haven't as yet understood why we are writing about Roman Catholic doctrine, we'll begin with this explanation. We are concerned to see amongst evangelicals an increasing interest in working together with Roman Catholics. Charismatic Protestants, especially Americans, are the initiators in this. This is now also happening in the Netherlands. In our last letter we gave you a few examples. We'll mention a few more in this letter.

### **Follow-up on previous letter.**

During the priest's prayer of consecration of the bread and wine, transubstantiation takes place. He then offers the body of Christ on the altar of God, the Father, where the term the sacrificed Christ is used. Finally, the priest and the RC believers consume the body of Christ [communicate]. The consuming of the body of Christ is seen as synonymous to the manna in the Old Testament and the feeding of the five thousand in the New Testament. This is just a short summary of what we covered about the eucharist in our previous letter. We also noted that although the eucharist is celebrated so often, the RC believer has no assurance of eternal life. Roman Catholics have to try, during their whole lives, to earn their salvation by doing good works and taking part in the sacraments of the church.

This is quite different from what we as Protestants believe is in keeping with the bible. We believe that celebrating the eucharist is detrimental to the finished work of Christ on the cross of Calvary. The Roman Catholic Church has weakened the reality of the gospel by establishing their own sacrifices with priests, altars and a sacrificial lamb. It's not the High Priest Jesus Christ who brings the offer for sin, but a human priest who does it. It's not the true sacrificial Lamb, Jesus Christ, who died on the cross, who carries our sin, but the humanly provided wafer and wine that takes His place. It's not the unique sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, as the Son of God that brings salvation to the world, but the thousands of times repeated sacrifice of the RC priests which is meant to bring salvation. In spite however, of his frequent participation, the RC believer has no assurance in this life. Maybe, because of this the Roman Catholic has turned to Mary for help. This is however, more our supposition, than the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. One thing is very clear the RC Church has given Mary a very important place in her doctrine. The present pope John Paul II has called Mary: "God's yes to Man".

He wrote this in his papal newsletter [encyclical 1987] with the title: "Redemptoris Mater" which means: "Mother who saves".

### **History of the devotion of Mary.**

Down through the centuries Mary has increasingly received a more and more important place in the life of the RC faith. In 1854 pope Pius IX declared in a dogma that Mary was conceived without sin. In the catechism of 1995 we read the following:

*"Down through the centuries the church has been aware of the fact that Mary is "favoured" by God [Luke 1:28], from her conception. The dogma about the immaculate conception, by pope Pius IX in 1854 declares:*

*The blessed virgin Mary is from the very first moment of her conception blessed and privileged by the Almighty God and set free from every blemish in regards to original sin with the view to Christ Jesus, the Saviour of mankind. [cat. par.491]*

Not only does the RC Church state that Mary was free from original sin but also makes

*EUCHARIST*

*ALTARS  
PRIESTS  
SACRIFICES*

*NO  
ORIGINAL  
SIN*

*STNT FCC*

a statement about her daily life on earth, with the following:

*"By God's grace Mary was free from all personal sin throughout her whole life. [cat. par.493]*

Pope Pius declared in 1950 in a dogma that Mary was taken up into heaven. The catechism of 1995 says the following:

*"Finally when the course of her earthly life was finished the immaculate Mary, free from every blemish from original sin, was taken up in body and soul into the heavenly glory and there exalted to queen of the universe and so became more conformed to her Son, the Lord of Lords and the Victor over sin and death". The heavenly assumption of the holy Virgin has a very special significance as she shares in the resurrection of her Son and is also the forerunner for the resurrection of other Christians. [cat. par.966]*

Mary did die at the end of her life but she wasn't buried for she was received directly up into heaven. In this way she was the first human to receive a resurrected body. The second Vatican council of 1962-1965 [Vatican II] confirmed the Marian devotion. The consequence of this being the new catechism of 1995. The pope refers to the catechism as the authority for Roman Catholic doctrine. The present pope has written three encyclicals about the importance of Mary, founded on the statements in Vatican II. In the last encyclical of 1987: "Mother, who saves" [mentioned earlier] the pope tries to give a biblical foundation for the doctrine of Mary. We'll consider this for a moment.

**ASSUMPTION**

**ENCYCLICALIS**

### **Doctrine of Mary biblically sound?**

According to the encyclical, Mary was announced in Gen.3:15:

*"And I will put enmity between thee and the women, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." [A.V.]*

This verse is seen by Protestants as the first proclamation of the gospel [Proto-gospel]. The pope shares this view, but he reads the second part of the verse in accordance with the Latin version of the bible [the Vulgate of the church father Hieronymus in 385, authorised by the RC council of Trente in 1546].

The part of the sentence: "it shall bruise thy head" is read: "she shall bruise thy head". The pope writes that a woman is meant by the use of the word "she". The pope's conclusion is that no other woman could be meant but Mary.

### **Comment workgroup.**

If we look at the original we see that it's not justified to translate the word "it" in Gen.3:15b as "she". In the well-known RC Peter Canisius translation the word "it" is also used and not the word "she". Most bible commentaries agree that the word "it" is used in a plural form referring to the before mentioned seed. Calvin explained the word "it" as being the Church with Christ as head. Gen.3:15b can than be read in the following manner: "the Church with Jesus Christ as head shall bruise thy head". As workgroup we agree with this explanation and believe the pope to be wrong in interpreting it as the woman Mary.

Another very important bible passage for the Roman Catholic doctrine about Mary is Hebrews 10:5-7:

*"Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo I come [in the volume of the book it is written of me,] to do Thy will , O God." [A.V.]*

The pope writes that the passage "a body hast Thou prepared for me" is speaking about Mary who made herself available in order that Jesus Christ could be born. [Encyclical page 68] No matter how attractive this sounds it doesn't fit in with the context in which it is written. The writer of Hebrews clearly states in the first ten chapters of this letter that a new order has come on earth with Jesus Christ as high priest and the perfect sacrifice. This bible passage cannot therefore be read as the pope would like it to be, as follows: "but mother Mary hast Thou prepared me". This passage has to be read thus:

**WRONG  
CONTEXT**

"but the body of Jesus Christ, the Son of God hast Thou prepared me".

**Comment workgroup.**

Nearly all bible commentaries agree that Heb.10:5-7 is referring to Jesus Christ, who gave His body as a sacrifice. They don't mention that it is the body of Mary. We agree with this interpretation.

— The pope makes a very decisive statement about the passage in Revelation 12:1-6 and 13-18, which says:

*"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a women clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; And she being with child cried travailling in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days....."*

*And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the women which brought forth the man child, And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*

*And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.*

*And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.*

*And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." [A.V.]*

**QUEEN  
OF  
HEAVEN**

The pope writes in his encyclical [page 27] that the woman who is clothed with the sun, and has the moon under her feet and has a crown of twelve stars upon her head is Mary. Because of this train of thought Mary has been given in the RC Church the title, " the queen of heaven". Throughout the whole world there are images of Mary crowned with twelve stars.

**Comment workgroup.**

The pope and the Roman Catholic Church are the only ones who hold this view. Most bible commentaries mention the RC view but reject it because of the context. The book of Revelation was written by John. He wrote down the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass [Rev.1:1]. Nearly the whole of Revelation points to the future from the moment that John began to write down the revelation. Mary, who gave birth to the baby Jesus doesn't fit into the picture. It was Jesus Christ Himself that gave the command to write the revelation down, surely He would have made it plain if He was speaking here about His own birth. Most bible commentaries interpret this passage as referring to the Church or Israel, resisting the devil. Even the RC bible commentary "The Jerome Biblical Commentary" believes this. As workgroup we prefer this explanation to that of the pope, which to our way of thinking is not at all feasible. The use of a woman as metaphor for the Church or Israel was often used in that time.

**PROFECY  
IS NOT  
HISTORY**

— The pope, in his encyclical, warmly praises Mary for her example in grace and faith. He bases this largely on the words of Gabriel and the greetings of Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, to Mary. In Luke 1:28,42 and 45 we read the following:

*"And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee."*

*"Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." [Words of*

**IMMACULATE  
CONCEPTION?**

*Elizabeth.]*

*"And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord." [Words of Elizabeth]*

The pope in his euphoria about Mary states that the bible teaches that Mary is full of grace [encyclical page 56] and that she is blessed because of her faith. He compares this faith to that of Abraham [encyclical page 69]. And just as the faith of Abraham was counted unto him as righteousness this is even more so for Mary. The pope reasons that because Mary was full of grace before the conception of Jesus, she must also have been so, from her own birth. In this way the pope bases the dogma of her immaculate conception [mentioned previously in this letter].

**Comment workgroup.**

Although Mary is special in being the mother of Jesus it does not excuse the pope in making such extreme claims about her. His interpretation on the grounds of scripture to claim that Mary is blessed and that her birth was free from original sin is not only weak but is actually very weak.

**WEAK  
ARGUMENT**

**Mary, the feminine line in God's plan of salvation?**

The pope writes in his encyclical about Mary, the subject of this letter, that there are two lines in God's plan of salvation. There is firstly the masculine line from Adam to Jesus Christ, the first and the last Adam. Parallel to this is the feminine line from Eve to Mary, the first Eve and the last Eve. These two lines intertwine at the historical moment when the Son of God was "born" in Mary's womb. From of that moment Jesus Christ and mother Mary are inseparable and up until the present day the two lines run parallel but very close together. If you follow this train of thought, then it's logical to accept the fact that Mary wasn't buried but was taken up into heaven with a resurrected body and has taken her place in heaven at the right hand of Jesus Christ. In such a heavenly position she works in very close co-operation with her Son, in God's plan of salvation. The title "Queen of Heaven" is then very appropriate, seeing that Jesus Christ is the King of Heaven.

**HUMAN HELP  
WITH GOD'S  
PLAN OF  
SALVATION**

There are a number of consequences because of this close co-operation in God's plan of salvation. Seeing that it is Christ's task to save men from sin and eternal judgement, then Mary has also a share in this. Because she assists her Son in this she has been given the title by the RC Church of "co-redemptrix". The title in the encyclical is: "Mother who saves". The pope does emphasise that the work of Mary is subordinate to the redeeming work of Jesus Christ. He bases this on the verse in 1 Tim.2:5:

*"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."*

Mary's task is therefore one of assisting her Son in His redeeming work.

Concerning her position in the spiritual hierarchy the catechism has the following to say:

*"Mary proceeds us all in holiness, she is the mystery of the church being the bride "not having spot, or wrinkle" [Eph.5:27]. That is why the Marian dimension of the church exceeds the Peterian dimension". [cat. page 773]*

**MARY  
SUPERIOR  
TO PETER**

This means in other words, that what Mary says and does in the church is superior to what Peter says and does in the church. By Peter, is meant Peter the head of the apostles and also all his successors; the popes of the church of Rome. Pope John Paul II biblically supports this by pointing out the presence of Mary at the crucifixion and also at the gathering of the 120 disciples with the apostles in the upper room, for prayer, at Pentecost. She was present at the birth of the church. Her presence at these events was because of her immaculate conception by her mother and because she carried and gave birth to the child Jesus, the Head of the future Church. This justifies Mary's special position in the spiritual hierarchy.

**Comment workgroup.**

We, as Protestants can't agree with the pope in his claim that there is a masculine and a

**DECIMAL  
TO CALVARY**

feminine line in God's plan of salvation. The biblical argument for this view is very weak and leaves us unconvinced. The pope's claim is based largely on the teachings of the RC Church over the centuries [tradition]. Seeing that, we only recognise the bible as our source of truth, we must reject the teaching of a feminine line in God's plan of salvation. It is very clearly detrimental to the redeeming work of Christ on the cross at Calvary. Only He can save us and that is what He did without the help of mother Mary. [See the apparitions of Mary in Amsterdam.]

### **What does Mary do for the Roman Catholic?**

The catechism of 1995 says the following:

*"Whilst the church has already reached perfection through the all-holy Virgin and is without spot or wrinkle, the believer still struggles to be victorious over sin and to grow in holiness: that's why they lift up their eyes to Mary: in her the church is already the perfect saint. [cat. par. 829]*

**MODEL**

The church is therefore already perfect in Mary, the all-holy virgin, and because of this, believers should lift up their eyes to Mary for their growth in holiness. Already earlier in the catechism it is mentioned that Mary was without personal sin during her whole life [cat.par. 493]. This fits in with the above claim.

Mary is our mother, she is the new Eve, mother of the living [cat. par.511]. She is inseparably joined to her Son and so she is the mother of the living. The pope attempts to prove, in his encyclical, the validity of the title, mother of the living, by referring to the words of Jesus on the cross to His mother and the apostle John:

**NEW EVE**

*"When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." (John 19:26,27-A.V.)*

Mary's motherhood was not only an earthly motherhood for the duration of her life on earth. No, it continued uninterrupted after her assumption.

*"Mary's motherhood is now the order of grace which continues uninterrupted, from the moment at the cross when she accepted without hesitating, the message, in faith, until the eternal crowning of all the elected. Since her assumption she has never ceased to fulfil her redeeming task and through her frequent mediation she continues to acquire for us the gift of eternal salvation (...). That's why in the church the holy virgin Mary is called upon with the titles: advocate, helper, succour and mediatrix". (cat. par.969)*

**MOTHER  
OF  
BELIEVERS**

She is situated in heaven as the queen of the universe, seated at the right-hand of her Son Jesus Christ and functions there as advocate, helper, succour and mediatrix. The pope believes that Jesus introduced a new period by saying: "Women, behold thy son". In using the word son, Jesus in fact means all sons and daughters, who will become children of God because of His crucifixion. Ultimately, all these children of God have been born out of Mary, her being the mother of Jesus, the Son of God, where our salvation is found. And so she has the title "mother of the living", which refers to all those born again and have become children of God. In the Roman Catholic train of thought these are those who through baptism are members of the RC Church (cat. par. 1277,1279). (letter workgroup no 12) Consequently, Mary is also the mother of the church.

That John listened to the words of the dying Jesus and from of that moment he took mother Mary into his house is for the pope proof that Jesus made Mary, the mother of all living and mother of the church (encyclical page 90). John didn't protest but submitted to Mary as his new mother by receiving her into his house.

### **Comment workgroup.**

The claims of the catechism and what is written by pope Paul John II about the position and work of Mary are all based on church tradition and not on the bible and so for this reason we reject it. The pope's attempt to prove from the bible that Mary is the mother

**TRADITION  
NOT  
THE BIBLE**

of all living using John 19:26,27 is very weak indeed. It looks as if the pope is trying to defend the view about the feminine line in God's plan of salvation, which we mentioned earlier. Gen. 3:20 calls Eve, the mother of all living. By calling Mary, the new Eve, the pope very easily can also give her the title in a spiritual sense of "mother of all living".

### **What is Mary to the Protestants?**

The word protestant is used in this letter in a restricted way. We are only speaking about those protestants who believe in an universal christian church, who confess that the Son of God came as man to earth and that through His suffering and death at Calvary, God's plan of salvation was fulfilled.

The Roman Catholic teaching and practice of the worship of Mary is a very strange conception for Protestants. There is no spiritual hierarchy amongst those in the bible who are noted for their great faith. Maybe there is a slight difference of opinion amongst Protestants about those persons but it's not one that biblically stands out. The same applies to Mary. In Hebrews chapter 11 a great number of people are mentioned who are part of the "cloud of witnesses". These are the faith heroes, both men and women, from out the Old Testament. We are sure that if there was a list of people from the New Testament that Mary would be found in the list. She would however, be on the same standing as the others. Next to Lydia, the seller of purple (Acts 16:14), next to the apostles, next to Timothy, etc.. We do not see in the New Testament any reason to give Mary a higher status than the other faith heroes. After her death nearly 2000 years ago her soul found its place in Christ, just like all other believers. As in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, it wasn't possible to send a messenger to earth, so it's impossible for Mary to come from heaven and speak to mankind. (Luke 16:19-31)

*FAITH  
HEROES*

### **The apparitions of Mary to the Roman Catholic believer.**

The Mary apparitions are a very important part of the worship of Mary in the RC church. During the last 800 years these apparitions have been taking place throughout the world. In the Netherlands she appeared in the period 1945 to 1959 in Amsterdam with a new title: "Lady of all Nations" (see separate article). The pope, in his encyclical (page 23) uses the term "the geographical presence of faith" when talking about the appearances of the apparitions throughout the world.

*MARY  
WORLDWIDE*

Usually in the places where Mary has appeared a Mary sanctuary is later erected. Here pilgrims come to pray to her and look to her for miracles, especially miracles of healing. In the magazine "Elzevier" of 11 April 1998, a whole article was printed about the apparitions in Italy, with the title "Mary doesn't cry for nothing". The writer points to the increasing interest throughout the world in the pilgrim sanctuaries. Whilst the RC churches are becoming emptier, the pilgrim sanctuaries are becoming busier. The following annual figures are quoted in this article: Fatima in Portugal 4 million; Lourdes in France 5 million; Czestochowa in Poland 5 million and Medjugorje in Herzegovina 1 million. What is it that attracts the RC believer to make a pilgrimage and why does Rome approve of it? It is known that the pope himself also makes regular pilgrimages to one or other of the well-known sanctuaries. A book was published in 1993 in America written by a converted Roman Catholic believer Timothy F. Kaufman. In his book "Quite Contrary" with the subheading: "A biblical Reconsideration of the Apparitions of Mary" he witnesses to his conversion from being a devout worshipper of Mary to a born again child of God through faith in the redeeming work of Jesus Christ on the cross at Calvary. The book not only tells the moving story of his conversion but it also gives a good insight into the RC teaching about the apparitions of Mary. We'll now refer to this book in order to give you a better understanding of these matters.

*MANY  
PILGRIMS*

### **What is meant by an apparition of Mary?**

We are not thinking here about the pseudo-apparitions when an image of Mary sheds "real" tears, or in some cases weeps blood. No, we mean the apparitions which the RC

*APPROVAL  
VATICAN  
NECESSARY*

Church has examined and those which have been officially approved of as true, such as: Fatima in Portugal and Lourdes in France. The Vatican makes a very thorough examination, giving a lot of time and attention to it. Sometimes it takes years before an apparition has been recognised. The apparitions in Medjugorje in Herzegovina (1981 till today) and in Amsterdam (1945-1959) are still being processed. The examination can involve a priest throwing holy water onto the apparition. If the figure becomes wet then it isn't an illusion or one's imagination. The Vatican sees the importance of the fruit which it produces in the place of pilgrimage. If miracles take place, such as, healings, then this would count as good fruit. Also the increasing devotion of the visitor after such a visit is counted by the Vatican as good fruit.

**Comment workgroup.**

Should we as Protestants take these apparitions seriously or reject them as false? Just like the writer of the book our answer is yes and no. Yes, because the true apparitions have been tested by representatives of the Vatican and these appearances have been proven valid. No, because we absolutely cannot believe that someone who has died in Christ can appear again on earth to bring a message (see Luke 16:19-31). The solution to this ambiguous answer is, that the apparition is not the Mary of the bible, but a pseudo-Mary. We are aware that this is a serious claim and an explanation is justified.

**Messages at the apparitions of Mary.**

At every apparition Mary imparts one or more messages. Because the apparitions usually take place in the same place with intervals of days, weeks or months the words of Mary can be carefully recorded by those presents. What kind of message does she bring? Here are a few examples:

**MESSAGES  
RECORDED**

— Rue de Bac, Paris, in 1830, apparition seen by Catherina Laboure. (Book page 41)

*"At this moment, where I was or was not I do not know, an oval shape formed around the Blessed Virgin and on it were written these words in letters of gold: "O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."*

*"Then a voice was heard to say: "Have a medal struck after this model. Those who wear it will receive great graces; abundant graces will be given to those who have confidence."...suddenly, the oval seemed to turn. I saw the reverse of the medal: the letter M surmounted by a cross of thorns, and the other pierced by a sword. I seemed to hear a voice, which said to me: "The M and the two hearts say enough."*

Since then Mary has been given a new title, that of " Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal". This medal is produced and worn by many RC believers.

**Comment workgroup.**

Mary is placed in the centre of the oval on the medal. The two hearts, one for Jesus and one for Mary are next to each other with no distinction between them.

**MIRACULOUS  
MEDAL.**

— Fatima, Portugal 1917, appeared to Lucia Abobora, to many children and once to 70,000 spectators, by which the sun fell from heaven to the earth. A message from Mary (book page 29+86):

**VIA  
MARY**

*"I will never forsake you. My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the road that will conduct you to God."*

**Comment workgroup.**

Those present are being redirected away from the only way to God, to go instead via Mary.

— Akita, Japan 1973-1981 to sister Agnes Sasagawa (book page 96).

**MARY  
SAVES**

*"I alone am able to save you from the calamities which approach. Those who place their confidence in me will be saved."*

**Comment workgroup.**

— Mary promises to save those who trust her, instead of directly trusting God.

**THE ARK,  
MARY**

Apparition of Jesus to Gladys Quiroga de Motta, San Nicolas, Argentina 1983-1989. In some cases Jesus appears to point people to Mary (book page 97)

*"In the past, the world was saved by the ark of Noah. Today my mother is the Ark."*

*It is through her, that souls will be saved, because she will lead them to me. He who rejects my mother, rejects me."*

### **Comment workgroup.**

Jesus recommends his mother with the warning of being rejected if the RC believer doesn't take heed.

### **Conclusion about Apparitions of Mary and her messages.**

During the apparitions the messages which are imparted are ones that accentuate Mary's work as mediator. Mary is the central figure in all the messages which we have mentioned. Sometimes Jesus appears to emphasise how important Mary is. If we accept the fact that the apparitions are authentic, then we need to conclude that the Vatican is in this supported in her doctrine regarding Mary through these apparitions and the accompanying messages. The many million pilgrims to the Mary sanctuaries throughout the whole world also confirm the Vatican in her Marian doctrines. If our supposition is true that it's not the Mary of the bible or the Jesus of the bible, but a pseudo-Mary and a pseudo-Jesus, then the Marian doctrine of the RC Church come to stand in a very obscure light.

**SUPPORT  
FOR  
MARIAN  
DOCTRINES**

### **The future of the Marian doctrine -the apparition in Amsterdam.**

In the period from 1945 to 1959 the apparition of Mary appeared several times to the Dutch visionary Ida Peederman in Amsterdam. Although the apparitions have not yet been officially approved by Rome, they have made a very significant influence. The description which she gave of Mary has been approved of for distribution (Imprimatur 1-7-1951). A large celebration was held on 31st May, 1997, in Amsterdam, with 4000 visitors from over the whole world in honour of the apparition. A promotion video has been made of this gathering with a reproduction of an image of the "Lady of all Nations". The description of Mary shown on the video film is very interesting.

**ALSO  
IN THE  
NETHERLAND  
~**

*Mary is portrayed as a beautiful young woman who is standing before the empty cross, and under her feet is a globe of the world. Above the cross is written the words in a half circle: "The Lady of All Nations". A golden light is shining in all directions from the cross and from Mary. Mary is wearing a beautiful long white robe and her long curly hair is covered with a golden coloured headscarf. Around her waist she has a sash of the same colour. The globe of the world upon which she is standing is floating above countless flocks of sheep. The sheep are, for the most, gazing up at the golden light of the cross and Mary.*

The accompanying messages of Mary, which the visionary heard and recorded, and also the following explanation about the meaning of the image have been compiled in a book. It tells us the following: Mary is standing in front of the cross, which shows her close affiliation with the work of her Son. The sash around her waist is the loincloth, which Jesus wore on the cross. The stigmas on her hands are the pierced hands of Jesus. The rays of light that shine from her pierced hands towards the sheep below her shows her mediating work for her Son.

**JESUS  
NOT  
PRESENT**

What comes to our notice is, that Jesus isn't seen at all in this vision. In the before mentioned miraculous medal at the apparition in 1830 in Rue de Bac in Paris, Mary is also the central figure but there is also a heart with a crown of thorns next to the sword pierced heart of Mary. Jesus Christ isn't present at all in the apparition in Amsterdam. The message only refers to Mary and follows the same lines as the one of the 31st May, 1955:

*"Know for certain, that the Holy Spirit is nearer than you think: If you pray for Him the Holy Spirit will come, He was from the beginning. The time however has now arrived. The world doesn't know how or where? Well then nations trust in your Mother who has never deserted her children. she is coming with these new titles: Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix, Advocate. Ask then your H.Father to proclaim this dogma which the Lady so desires. When this dogma is proclaimed then the Lady of*

**MESSAGE:  
DOGMA  
ETABLISHED**

*all Nations will give her blessing....then the Lady of all Nations will give peace. She will help you when this dogma is proclaimed." (Book Amsterdam page 134)*

Mary requests that this message should be delivered to the pope and that he should make a dogma of this. Up until now the Vatican hasn't done it. The apparition has not yet been approved. According to the speaker at the gathering in Amsterdam on 31-5-1997 there are about four million RC believers who support the apparition and already bishops and cardinals support it. (\*Video) A second gathering took place on the 31st May 1998, with an attendance of more than 10,000 people. It was shown on the Dutch news.

— Bishop Hnilica, a travelling priest whose home base is Rome is also a strong supporter of proclaiming the doctrine of Mary. He writes in 1994:

*"I hope that 1994 introduces us....into the age of the Triumph of Mary. It is in this light that we should work so that the final dogma of Mary, Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix of All Graces, and Advocate, may be proclaimed as soon as possible.... innumerable faithful, priests, and many bishops sense the need to honour Our Lady fully, recognising the role that Her Son has given Her for all the Church Universal: Mother, Co-Redemptrix, and Mediatrix of all Graces." (Book page 150)*

**AGAIN:  
DOGMA  
ESTABLISHED**

— The doctrine of Mary regarding the proclamation of her position is a topic of present interest. This was seen in a television debate in London on 8th February 1998 in the programme: Crossfire. A Baptist pastor and a Jesuit priest discussed with a neutral presenter for 25 minutes the subject with the title: "Should Mary be declared Co-Redemptrix?"

**DOGMA  
ESTABLISHED  
BEFORE 2000?**

The Baptist pastor gave a heart-warming argument against the honouring of Mary. He supported, clearly and quietly, his believes by using the scriptures which he had open in front of him. The Jesuit priest didn't have a bible with him but backed the Marian devotion purely from out the tradition of the RC Church. When questioned, when he thought the papal approval for the dogma could be expected, the priest answered: maybe at Pentecost. This didn't happen. Earlier on in the programme the priest expressed the hope that it would be established before the year 2000. (Video TV-Channel V)

### **Commotion about participation Protestants at eucharist.**

The wedding between Prince Maurits and Marilene on the 30th May this year caused great commotion in the religious life of the Netherlands. Prince Maurits, the nephew of the queen and a protestant chose with Marilene, a catholic, to have an ecumenical wedding in a Protestant church in Apeldoorn. It was agreed to have a service, which would include the eucharist. They however forgot to settle beforehand who was able and who wasn't able to take part in the eucharist. When the RC priest invited people to take part in communion, the Protestant queen mother and her consort and the Protestant sister of the queen went forward and received the consecrated wafer from the priest. Apart from the question, was it wise to participate - for they do represent the Protestant royal house - their participation raised a lot of RC protests. Cardinal Simonis, archbishop of Utrecht protested publicly after the service. The incident held the attention of the nation and news for 14 days. The whole of the bishopric of the Netherlands supported unanimously Cardinal Simonis' stand. During his 5 yearly visit to the pope on the 15th of June, he spoke about this matter. Pope Paul John agreed with the cardinal that even members of the royal family cannot, as Protestants, take part in the eucharist (\* ND 16-6-1998).

**PRINCELY  
OECUMENICA  
L**

**PARTICIPATION  
PROTESTANTS  
EUCHARIST NO**

This was no new occurrence for the pope. Earlier on this year on the 29th of March Hillary and Bill Clinton participated in the eucharist in South Africa, during an official visit.

Cardinal John O'Connor of the bishopric in New York also protested in the same manner as cardinal Simonis did (\*Berean Call May 1998).

The above mentioned incidents let us see that the Roman Catholic leaders take very

seriously the doctrine of the catechism. Paragraph 838 tells us clearly that Protestants do have a certain amount of fellowship with Roman Catholics but not to the extent of taking part in the eucharist. According to the catechism however the eastern orthodox churches are nearly so far that they can take part.

The Vatican hasn't missed the fact that in practice, especially during ecumenical services quite a number of Protestants have participated. To resist this trend and to bring correction the National Board for Liturgy in the Netherlands has published a book on the 28th of October 1997 titled: "The meeting with Jesus as Lord", and subtitled: "Attitudes and actions by the celebrating of the eucharist". In the chapter "Participating in communion" it says the following:

*" We welcome our fellow Christians as brothers and sisters to join us in the celebration of the eucharist. Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the eucharist is a sign of the true unity between believers, life and worship, the admittance of members from other churches, where we are not as yet fully united, cannot be allowed to participate in holy communion". (\*Page 18)*

### **Comment workgroup.**

If Protestants have the hope that the RC church will adjust her principles to accommodate Protestants then they must see from this that it's simply an illusion. Apart from this we, as workgroup, don't think it is wise to take part in the RC eucharist. By doing so, one conforms to a celebration which is unbiblical, not of God and is detrimental to the unique offer of Jesus Christ at Calvary. We should, as Protestants, centre our attention on Jesus Christ and during the keeping of the Protestant holy communion remember, that He gave His life for us in order that we should have life.

**NO  
ADJUSTMENT  
OF DOCTRINE**

### **Contacts between charismatics and Roman Catholics.**

The RC paper, "Building on the New Earth" (BANA) writes in the January 1998 number the following:

*"Recently John Wimber passed away, he was one of the most influential leaders and writers in the charismatic movement. In 1993, in Zwolle, he spoke to a large crowd and there made a very remarkable statement. He said that the growth chart of the Pentecostal movement in this century shows a bend in the begin of the sixties. From that moment the Pentecostal movement started to grow enormously. According to Wimber this came about because pope John XXIII had called the whole church to pray for a new Pentecost. And God answered that prayer, said Wimber."*

**LATE  
JOHN WIMBER**

In the RC church in Wynnewood in America there is a "revival" going on with the same signs as the "Toronto-Blessing". The head of the parish of 2000 members, monsignor Vincent Walsh has been influenced by Rodney Howard-Browne since 1994. He ministered on the 12th of April 1997, in his church, which is called: "Presentation Blessed Virgin Mary Church".

**RODNEY  
HOWARD-  
BROWNE**

### **Conclusion and subject for next letter.**

The teaching of the eucharist and that of Mary in the Roman Catholic church has to a certain extent taken the believer's eyes away from the cross of Jesus Christ. This we feel is lamentable. In our next letter we want to touch on the faith life of the Roman Catholic in regards to assurance in his daily life, and assurance of life after death and purgatory. At the same time we want to wish you all a blessed holiday and trust you will all return to your church fellowships strengthened in body and soul.

**CONTINU-  
ATION**

### **Consulted books and videos.**

Not recommended:

1. Mary: God's Yes to Man or John Paul's Encyclical Redemptoris Mater with introduction by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger and commentary by Hans Urs von Balthasar. ISBN 0-

89870-219-4

2. The meeting with Jesus the Lord, National Board of Liturgy. ISBN 907045274X
3. Book: "The messages from the Lady of all Nations", Foundation "Lady of all Nations",  
Amsterdam. ISBN 3-87449-194-3
4. Video "Apparition in Amsterdam" from gathering on 31 May 1997; Foundation "Lady of all Nations", Amsterdam. (Written report available from the workgroup).

Recommended

1. "Quite Contrary" a biblical Reconsideration of the Apparitions of Mary, Timothy F.Kaufman. ISBN 0-9637141-3-9
2. "From Spiritual Powers to Liberating Grace" by Torbjorn Swartling. ISBN 1899003228
3. Video of the debate: "Is Mary co-redemptrix? TV Channel V in London between Baptist pastor Cecil Andrews from Belfast and father Jesuit Richard Foley from London.

**As long as the stock lasts!**

The young Swedish surgeon, Torbjorn Swartling spent three years in the Rhema Bible School of Kenneth Hagin in Uppsala. Under the influence of his fellow countryman, Ulf Ekman, he was strongly attracted to the prosperity teaching. In his book: "From Spiritual Powers to Liberating Grace" he describes his experiences. In the end he succeeds in freeing himself from this movement and became a normal Pentecostal Christian. We have a few copies available.

**GOOD  
BOOK**

On behalf of the workgroup,

Pastor Rien v.d.Kraats.

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