

The Holy Spirit, Mary, and the Church

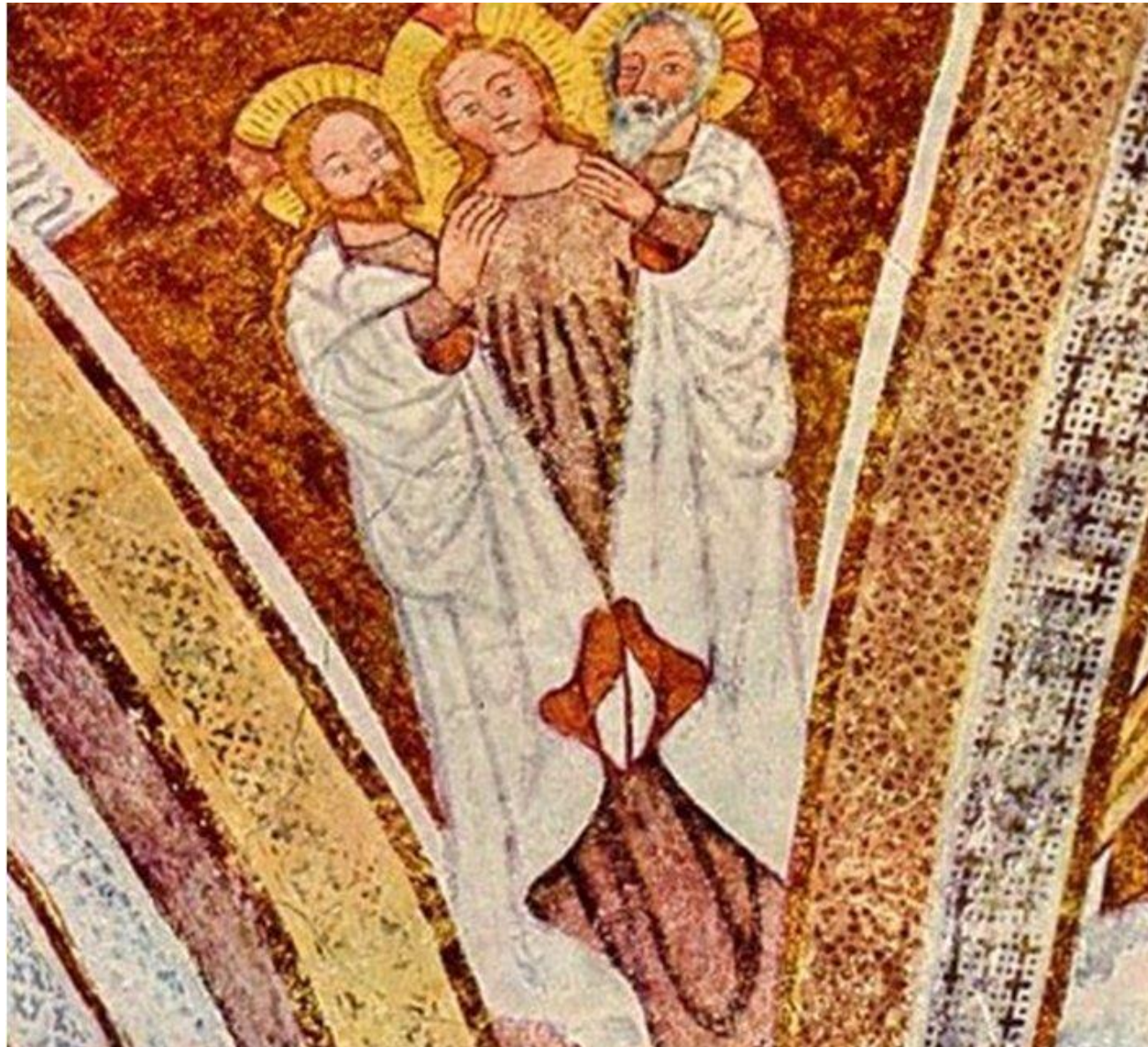
- Aims of this module
- Show that the church is a particular locus for reflections upon Mary and on the Holy Spirit
- Look at how the church has reflected upon these two persons. What this says about them, and us.
- How to think with the 'mind of the church'

- Mary = dogmas, the role they play, how to think about Mariology, and the limits of Marian devotion
- The Holy Spirit = history of the growing theological appreciation of the Spirit, discussion of the Spirit in relation to the sensus fidei, and the Spirit in relation to the charisms
- New Movements in the church = how these relate to the sensus fidei and the charisms, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement, other notable movements, other Christians.

- Start us off slowly this evening
- Relationship between Holy Spirit and Mary (and both with the Church)
- Both also seem to fulfil a similar place, in some ways, in theological reflections

- Maternal - overlap is an interesting way to begin to explore the themes of this module.
- Mary has an obvious material role in scripture
- Reading of John's Gospel sees this as taking on symbolic significance
- Link with the woman in Revelation – certainly has Marian elements

- Maternity of the Spirit – does not mean the Spirit is a woman
- Although, feminine language is often used.
- Not a modern culture wars invention, but an ancient tradition



Church of Urschalling in Bavaria (ninth century)

- Syriac expression the Holy Spirit is 'Mother of the Holy'
- St Justin Martyr, St Irenaeus, Origen, and the (once often considered authoritative) Gospel of the Hebrews refer to the Spirit as 'Mother of Jesus'.
- Gregory Nazianzen typological maps the sending of the Spirit by Jesus on the cross with Genesis:

Father linked with Adam

The Son with Seth (who was begotten)

The Spirit with Eve (who proceeds but was not begotten)

- Aphraates 'the man who does not marry respects God his father and the Holy Spirit his mother, and he has no other love'
- There is a mirroring, a similarity in role and function.
- The Spirit birthes Christ and Mary birthed Christ.

- The link is notable:

‘The Spirit... exercised and continues to exercise this motherhood with regard to Christ, our Head, in the first place and then with regard to the Church as Christ’s body and members. For the Church, Pentecost was what the Annunciation was for Christ’ (Yves Congar)

- Fascinating mirroring of roles, some even go so far as to say:

‘Mary is the sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit. She is Her (the Holy Spirit’s) human manifestation in space and time. In Eastern liturgy Mary is referred to as the Ark of the Covenant, Church, and Garden of Eden.’ (Istvan Cselenyi)

- Spouse of the Spirit? (St. Francis) – still alludes to the Spirit's paternal role.
- 'Mother of the Son of God, by which account she is also the beloved daughter of the Father and the temple of the Holy Spirit.' LG53
- Mary as an image and icon of the Spirit?
- Parallel in iconography



- Does not mean Mary is a quasi-incarnation of the Holy Spirit
- The semi-Marian figure in Revelation is still distinguished from the Spirit – and both are non-identical with the church
- But again, the images are presented together, as we see in final page of the Bible:

‘The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come”.’ (Revelation 22:17)

- So the work of the Spirit, the life of Mary, both symbolise something for us and for all Christians
- It relates to what the Christian life is about
- Receptivity to the Spirit, conceiving Christ within us, bringing Christ forth to the world.
- Mary, overshadowed by the Spirit at the Annunciation is present also at Pentecost.
- Come Holy Spirit the key cry of the Church





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- Read a text by Yves Congar OP on the Holy Spirit and the life of the Church
- As you read it think about:
 - Your own life
 - The life of the local church (the parish community, diocese)
 - The wider church
 - How ministry is understood
 - How the Christian life is understood
- Introduce Congar - one of the great theologians of the twentieth century

- Probably the most influential theologian on Vatican II
- Particularly in ecclesiology and Pneumatology (also wrote a book on Mary) – well suited for this module.
- Three volume 'I Believe in the Holy Spirit'
- Made a Cardinal by John Paul II



Reading

'The Life of the Church as One Long Eucharist'

Yves Congar