



November 6, 2025

A Commentary

Mater Populi Fidelis

(Mother of the Faithful People of God)

Doctrinal Note on Some Marian Titles Regarding Mary's Cooperation in the Work of Salvation

This week, November 4th, the Church's doctrinal office published a letter on *Marian Titles*. The document was confirmed and approved by Pope Leo XIV back in October. There is little doubt that such a letter has raised questions concerning changes to Marian devotion and teaching. It should be noted that a similar process took place in 1854 and 1950, with defining the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of Mary.

The **prudent approach is to look at the letter and see what it actually says**. Mater Populi Fidelis can be found, in English, on the Vatican website here (https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_dof_doc_20251104_mater-populi-fidelis_en.html)

Why was the letter written?

The "Doctrinal Note" begins with a presentation, that spells out what questions are being addressed and what led to the note being published. *The following statements are taken from the Doctrinal Note, Mater Populi Fidelis (MPF).* The document is quoted in italics.

➤ **What led the Church to publish MDF?**

"Numerous requests and proposals.....regarding questions about Marian devotion and certain titles. These questions have been addressed and studies over the last 30 years."

"... there are some Marian reflection groups and even requests for Marian dogmas that do not share the same characteristics as popular devotion....often sowing confusion among

the faithful. Sometimes these initiatives involve reinterpretations of expressions that were used in the past with a variety of meanings

So no, this was not an issue that appeared recently. There has been a long process of study and discussion on how certain Marian titles have been used and understood. The note is also responding to efforts by some groups that misuse certain titles and presenting them as “proposed Marian dogmas”.

- **What is the purpose or theme of the note or letter?** In the presentation or beginning of the note, we see the following statements. (*paraphrased*).

“Clarifying in what sense certain Marian titles are correctly or incorrectly used.....also to deepen the foundation of Marian devotion in her relationship to believers, in light of the mystery of Christ.”

“A central theme in these pages is Mary’s motherhood with respect to believers.”

“This document considershow some respond to a genuine Marian devotion inspired by the Gospel, and how others should be avoided since they do not foster a proper contemplation of the harmony of the Christian message as a whole.”

- **Is Mary or Marian devotion being demoted in any way?**

“Note offer a broad biblical development to show how authentic Marian devotion is found not only in the Church’s rich Tradition but also in Sacred Scripture.”

“...rather than proposing limits, the present Note seeks to accompany and sustain the love of Mary and trust in her maternal intercession.

“Marian devotion.... is a treasure of the Church. The piety of the faithful... is contemplated here to correct it but, above all, to appreciate, admire, and encourage it.... In her, they see reflected the essential Gospel message.”

The above statements should provide us with the proper mind set and approach to the doctrinal note on Marian titles and piety. More commentary will follow as the document is read.

In Christ Our Lord,
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