



CONTEMPLATION ON THE EXPERIENCES OF OUR LADY MARY MEDIATRIX OF ALL GRACE DEVOTEES: A SYNODAL PRAXIS ON SENSUS FIDELIUM

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*The controversial Catholic devotions in the country that received greater attention these days is the devotion to Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace that originated from an apparition in Lipa, province of Batangas. It is a controversial Marian devotion because of several issues. Despite of controversies the devotion still existed and spread like wildfire here and abroad. This impelled the researcher to conduct a study that explained the devotion's enticement on people from different walks of life through the years. This endeavor is an essential expression of synodal praxis of contemplation on **sensus fidelium** about the devotion. The research has a descriptive and qualitative design using a content analysis method and process that entails subjective interpretation of the data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns. Using the digital data collection method, the researcher immersed in the online digital world, purposely looked for literature, articles, journals, books, blogs, and videos about testimonies, reflections, and written experiences of the devotees. The analysis presented that the devotees remained vigorous in their Marian devotion due to the profound spiritual experiences they ascribed to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace. It also included divine guidance, healing, and the transformative power of faith and prayer. The devotees had a deep-seated belief in Mary's intercessory role between Jesus and humanity, and the devotees' desire to share the blessings received through personal testimony and community involvement. The devotees saw that the messages and prophecies of Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace are true and relevant.*

Keywords: Mary Mediatrix of All Grace, Lipa Apparition, Sensus Fidelium, Contemplation

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INTRODUCTION

Among the many cultural attributes of the Filipinos, their religiosity is something fascinating to behold. The Philippines, an archipelagic nation with 7,641 islands (Lasco, 2017) is inhabited by an estimated 118 million people (United Nations, 2023). Most of them are Christians who are predominantly Catholic, some are Muslims, and others belong to other faith traditions like Hinduism, Buddhism, traditional or indigenous, and other local religious groups or movements. Being a largely Catholic Christian nation very observable are the varied ways the people expressed their religiosity. They are usually in the form of a procession commonly seen during *Semana Santa* and the *Santa Cruzan*, a catechetical drama that is watched during pre-easter as in the case of *Senakulo* and easter *Salubong*, religious chanting in the form of *Pabasa ng Pasyon*, festive dances like *Ati-atihan*, *Sinulog*, *Dinagyang*, *Sayaw sa Obando*, *Karakol*, sacrificial pilgrimage which is usually observed as *Alay lakad sa Antipolo*, *Visita Iglesia*, *Via Crucis*, and the ardent devotion which is commonly directed towards Jesus as in the case of the *Santo Nino*, the Black Nazarene and the sacred heart of Jesus, Mary with her different titles, and the saints (Santander, 2023). With those cited popular expressions of Filipino religiosity, devotion is perceived to be a more popularly observed form. Devotion is commonly cognized as an outward manifestation of ardent affection, zealous attachment, piety, dedication, reverence, faithfulness, respect, awe, attentiveness, loyalty, fidelity, or love for, or to God and a person deemed sacred, holy, or venerable (Encyclopedia.com, 2023). Devotion observed by Filipino Catholics is popularly expressed either through a private or communal recitation of novenas, holy rosary, and some prayers, and with the use of religious icons being approved by the universal Church. Devotion may also be expressed by doing other

things like joining a procession, street drama, dancing, and singing.

One of the controversial Catholic devotions in the country that received greater attention these days is the Marian devotion that originated in Lipa, province of Batangas. This devotion is focused on the Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace. It is a controversial Marian devotion because of several issues. The basis of the said Marian devotion, which is the apparition that happened in 1948 at Carmelite monastery, is being questioned on its authenticity as Marian apparition. The statue of Mary Mediatrix of All Grace is accused as demonically infested by some church's exorcists and ordained people in the domestic Church's hierarchy. The devotion for some time was suppressed by some religious authorities in the context of the veracity of its origin, the apparition. All these issues somehow confused the devotees but never affected the devotion that continued to spread and become more popular till the present time. It has reached far and wide, and although it all started in the old Lipa city, the devotion can be found in other parts of the country and even abroad. It is intriguing that despite some attempts to discourage the devotion it still existed and spread like wildfire. From this scenario, the researcher is impelled to conduct a study that will explain the devotion's enticement on people from different walks of life through the years. It is with the hope the researcher will be able to identify from the experiences of the devotees several essential elements that brought well-being and helped fortify their catholic faith. All these are expected to be achieved through contemplation on the written narratives of the devotees which are digitally available on the web. This endeavor is perceived as an essential expression of synodal praxis of contemplation on *sensus fidelium*.





STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The researcher aims to answer the relevant question, “*how the devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace remains alive, continue to spread, contribute to the well-being, and help strengthen the Catholic faith of the devotees and the unity of the Church?*”

To help answer the research problem stated above, the researcher has the following specific objectives:

1. Understand the devotional realities and challenges from the rich spiritual experiences of the devotees of Mary Mediatrix of All Grace.
2. Assess the salient reasons that may have steered the devotees to remain active with their Marian devotion from their narratives.
3. Contemplate the theological lessons of the devotees that help strengthen their Catholic faith.
4. Point out the essential *sensus fidelium* on devotion.

CONCEPTUAL/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In pursuing the research problem and the specific objectives mentioned above, several principles are found very relevant to this study.

Catholic Devotion

In the Catholic tradition, devotions are the various external practices like prayers, hymns, observances attached to times or places, insignia, medals, habits, or customs. Devotions are animated by an attitude of faith, they manifest the particular relationship of the faithful with the Divine Persons like in the devotional practice of adoration of the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, or veneration of the

Blessed Virgin Mary in her privileges of grace and those of her titles which express them, or expressing confidence with the Saints in their role as spiritual companions and guides (Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of Sacraments, 2001). Devotions are to be regarded as supplementary to the official prayer and public worship of the Christian community, they may originate from the local cultures or from a particular religious community or order which after some time were eventually authorized by the Church. Therefore, devotions cannot be equal to liturgy, they cannot become substitutes for the Liturgy of the Eucharist or be incorporated into Liturgical celebrations. In the encyclical letter *Mediator Dei (On the Sacred Liturgy)* mentioned that the purpose of devotions is to attract and direct the souls to God, cleanse them from their sins, encourage them to be virtuous, and, finally, stimulate them to advance along the path of sincere piety by accustoming them to meditate on the eternal truths and disposing them better to contemplate the mysteries of the human and divine natures of Christ (Pius XII, 1947). Pope Paul VI in his *Apostolic exhortation On Evangelization in the Modern World or Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) warns the faithful about the limitation of devotion as an expression of religious piety. If it is not guided by the Church’s authorities, well oriented by a pedagogy of evangelization, it may even lead to the creation of sects and endanger the true ecclesial community because of the possible penetration of many distortions of religion and even superstitions. But if it is guided, devotion might lead to a sincere conversion of the faithful and a practical exercise of charity. Also, it may lead to a deeper sense of the faithful’s membership of the Church, increasing the fervor of their attachment and thus offering an effective response to the challenges of today’s secularization (John Paul II, 1988).





Mary Mediatrix of All Grace

Mary Mediatrix of All Grace is one title accorded to the Blessed Virgin Mary that brings confusion to some faithful. It seems to be a violation of 1 Timothy 2:5–6 (New American Bible), which says, “*For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.*” Being a mediator means someone who is go between. The concept of “one mediator” does not denote something exclusive only to Jesus as a mediator. As members of the Mystical Body of Christ, we all share in Christ’s role as mediator, our efforts at being go-betweens “work” only because of what Jesus has done (Prye, 2023). It is most true in the case of the Blessed Virgin Mary when she had a visitation by the angel Gabriel, and she said to him “May it be done to me according to your word.” Luke 1:26–38 provides the full context,

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, “Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. “But Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?” And the angel said to her in reply, “The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.” Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

Mary became the bearer of God (*Theotokos*). Had there been no “yes” from Mary, there would have been no mediator between humanity and Jesus, all grace, the Son of God, and the second person in the Holy Trinity. The graces that come through Jesus may be said to come to us, secondarily, via Mary, not as the origin of the graces, but as a conduit. Jesus gives his mother Mary the privilege of being a participant in the distribution of grace. This is well depicted in the wedding at Cana, John 2:1–8 and it says,

On the third day, there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” And Jesus said to her, “Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servers, “Do whatever he tells you.” Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told them, “Fill the jars with water.” So, they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, “Draw some out now and take it to the head waiter.” So, they took it.

Truly, Mary as Mediatrix of All Grace does not in any way diminish the role of Christ as mediator. It emphasizes more that only in Jesus the salvation and graces are obtained. Mary, on her part, simply had taken naturally with all humility and obedience what God had destined her to become in His salvific plan for all His creation, especially humanity. In this case, it is right to say that the teaching about Mary as Mediatrix of All Grace has been enshrined and founded in the Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scriptures of the early Christian communities. It is not only alluded to in the New Testament but even in the Old Testament prophecies, as provided by Isaiah 7:14, “*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign; the young woman, pregnant and about to bear a son, shall name him Emmanuel*” (New American Bible, Revised Edition).





In the early part of the twentieth century, the teaching about Mary as the Mediatrix of All Grace had its global attention. Cardinal Desire Joseph Mercier of the Archdiocese of Malines in Belgium, a noted Church scholar, initiated a movement for the Church to dogmatically declare that Mary is Mediatrix of all graces upon the prodding of Mother Magdalen of Jesus, a Carmelite prioress in Belgium. The movement failed in its objective but was eventually consoled by the inclusion of the Holy See, Pope Benedict XV in January 1921, of the feast of Mary, Mediatrix of All Graces in the Roman calendar for the Diocese of Belgium, on May 31 of each year. And then in 1948, there was an apparition of Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace that happened in Lipa, Batangas, a province in the Philippines witnessed by thousands of Filipinos (Bagaforo, 2014).

Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace Apparition and Devotion Controversy

In 1948 the Blessed Virgin Mary was said to have appeared in a vision to Sister Teresita “Teresing” Castillo, a postulant in the Carmelite monastery in Lipa, Batangas. Teresing was the youngest of six children of Modesto Q. Castillo and Amanda Lat Castillo of Tanauan and Malvar province of Batangas (Castillo, 2008). There were a total of fifteen consecutive days of reported apparitions from September 12, 1948, to September 26 of the same year. Although Sr. Teresing admitted she had several occasions of private meetings with Our Lady. Accordingly, Mary appeared in white robes and held a golden rosary. Hovering on a cloud, hands folded or outstretched, she introduced herself to Sr. Teresing as Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace” (University of Dayton, 2024). The apparitions sometimes were accompanied by the heavenly scent of flowers and even a shower of rose petals from nowhere. Among the important messages

of Our Lady were about loving one another, simplicity, humility, obedience, penance and sacrifices, prayers for the priests and religious, and praying the Rosary every day with devotion. She also reminded them that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, pointing all to return to Jesus (ourladymarymediatrixofallgrace.com, 2023). On October 17, 1949, a prophetic message was given by Our Lady to Sr. Teresing that concerned China and the Philippines, she said, “*Pray hard for China’s dream to invade the whole world, the Philippines is one of its favorites. Money is the evil force that will lead the people of the world to destruction*” (Bagaforo, 2014).

The Marian apparition of 1948 ignited a devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace that has lasted for more than 75 years now. The local bishop, Alfredo Verzosa y Florentin, had approved the veneration of Our Lady, and the devotion easily became popular with many Filipino faithful. On March 28, 1951, the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith (CDF) issued a verdict that the apparition was not of supernatural origin. This was subsequently confirmed by Pope Pius XII on March 29, 1951 (an official decree copy duly following “*justa stylum curiae*” was nowhere to be found and not published in “*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*”). On April 11, 1951, a committee of the Church hierarchy in the country declared that “there was no supernatural intervention in the reported extraordinary happenings in Lipa apparition (Galace, 2021) (after several years some of the members of the committee confessed that they signed the declaration under threat of excommunication). The commission ordered the destruction of pamphlets, prayer cards, petals, the statue, and the diaries of Sister Teresing and her Prioress Mother Cecilia of Jesus, OCD. The sisters could not destroy the statue that they kept inside the cloisters and devised means to disguise the image (Pintakasi, 2024). Despite this, the Mary





Mediatrix devotion continued, but it has always been under a cloud of mystery and scandal. Then in 1990, upon the dying wish of Sister Alphonse, one of the last of the nuns who lived during the reported events, Archbishop Mariano Gaviola ordered the public exposition of the statue, and pilgrims once again flocked the monastery. In 1992, the late Bishop Gaviola pronounced that he believed in the authenticity of the events after witnessing the miracle of the dancing sun and a shower of petals once again (Pintakasi, 2024). Lipa Archbishop Ramon Arguelles launched a campaign to further spread devotion to the Mary Mediatrix of All Grace in 2005 (Malasig, 2023). It was not until 2009 when Lipa Archbishop Arguelles lifted the ban on public veneration of the image of the Lady of Lipa. Then in 2015, Archbishop Arguelles, despite the Vatican's official stand, declared that the Marian apparitions in Lipa as "worthy of belief." In response to the September 12, 2015, decree of Archbishop Ramon C. Arguelles, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) issued a decree dated December 11, 2015, on the website of the Diocese of Pasig. The said 2015 CDF Decree nullifies the statement of approval from Archbishop Arguelles. The Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Lipa released a decree dated May 31, 2016. It communicated to all the concluding lines of the CDF decree Prot. N. 226/1949 Presumed Apparitions of the BVM at the Carmelite Convent in Lipa, Philippines. It also sought to advocate all to never doubt the love of God and the Blessed Mother and to remain steadfast in bringing hope. On July 9, 2016, the CBCP issued Pastoral Guidelines for Bishops on Private Devotions to Our Blessed Mother Mary, Mediatrix of All Graces which states that the belief in and private devotion to our Mother Mary, Mediatrix of All Graces is centuries old and should be fostered as a private devotion. The devotees were saddened with the passing of Sr. Teresing on Nov 16, 2016. She

died after a lengthy illness at the age of 89. She was buried on November 18, 2016, outside the enclosure grounds of the Carmelite monastery (Pintakasi, 2024). In 2017, Fr. Jose Francisco Syquia published in "Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas", Vol XCIII, NOS 927 and 928 his interpretation of the Prot. N. 226/1949 (July-October 2017 issue) particularly the clause: "The phenomenon in Lipa was declared to lack supernatural origin. His commentaries in "Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas", which were known more by people over the radio and through his speaking engagements and conferences have somehow troubled and confused many of the devotees. Then demonic accusations against Lipa apparition, the visionary Teresita Castillo, and the image of Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace by some exorcist priests in Manila Archdiocese surfaced. Out of confusion, the devotees complained and inquired about an explanation from the Church hierarchy in the country. As a result, Cardinal Orlando B. Quevedo of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) issued a pastoral decree on July 7, 2018. This CBCP decree somehow called the attention of the exorcist priests in giving out their statements on the matters of Lipa Apparition and interpreting Prot. N. 226/1949. However, although the said decree helped halt the demonic accusations, it somehow admonished the devotees to separate their devotion to the Mediatrix of All Grace from the Lipa apparition phenomenon, that is, to separate their devotion from the very source of their devotion. A sound, factual, and theological reflection on the messages of the Blessed Virgin Mary to the visionary Sr. Teresita Castillo, and on the accounts of the Lipa Apparition as written by the visionary herself was released in 2010 by Fr. Timoner, a distinguished Dominican Friar who served as the 88th Master of the Order of Preachers since 2019 (Epistlesph.com, 2023). The discovery of the Journal Report of Fr. Angel de Blas, O.P. regarding the Lipa phenomenon





had helped erase the confusion created by the exorcist priests. Fr. de Blas was the primary investigator of the Lipa phenomenon who extensively interviewed the visionary Sr. Teresita Castillo and the Prioress Mother Mary Cecilia of Jesus. The journal conveyed the conclusion: *“To finish we will say two words about the extraordinary events at Lipa and how these could be classified (considered). If we were to take the events in general, it is evident that Teresita must be classified under the group called visionaries or seers.”* The article of Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo, D. D. on Mary Mediatrix of All Grace provided a glimpse of the truth about the acceptance and faith of Philippine Bishops in Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace, or the Lipa Apparition. Here the good Bishop had shown the connection between the messages at Fatima and Lipa apparitions, and the connection to Belgium’s movement for the dogmatization of the universal Mediation of Mary (Ourladymarymediatrixofallgrace.com, 2023). In October 2023, CBCP received a copy of the Vatican decree which confirmed the apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Lipa, Batangas, back in 1948 were not supernatural, and a copy of the letter of Mother Mary Cecilia de Jesus, the prioress of the Carmelite monastery where the events occurred, who “confessed guiltily to having deceived the faithful about the alleged apparitions in Lipa and consequently asked for forgiveness” (She recanted it in 1982 when the Prioress, Sr. Mary Aimee of Jesus, at that time asked her if there is truth regarding the Lipa apparition and the shower of petals, she said, “Yes Mother, I will vouch for it.”). The letter of Mother Prioress was claimed as the basis of the Vatican decision. March of 2024, Lipa Archbishop Gilbert Garcera released to the public for the first time the controversial 1951 Vatican decree (a mere handwritten one, and with erasures, without accompanying expressed formal approval of Pope Pius XII) (Cabalza, 2024). The recent development of the

Lipa phenomenon led to the noncelebration of the feast day of Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace every September 12. The Vatican had expressed its negative judgment on the apparitions but allowed the local devotion to continue. Despite all the controversies the devotion to Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace lives on.

Contemplation as a Synodal Praxis

Contemplation is usually understood as a prayer that requires no action from a person but an action from the Holy Spirit. A person needs only to dispose oneself to receive the graces God is giving a person (Colombiere, 2013). It may be described as simply resting in God’s presence, a way of ‘looking’ at God and listening with the heart. It is an attentive waiting for God to meet us and be with us (Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst, 2023). In some spiritual traditions like the Ignatian tradition, contemplation is a highly active way of praying that engages the mind and heart and stirs up thoughts and emotions. God in this case can speak to us as surely through our imagination as through our thoughts and memories. It requires one to visualize the event (a biblical narrative) as if one is making a movie. There is a need to pay attention to the details: sights, sounds, tastes, smells, and feelings of the event. Then, lose oneself in the narrative or just place oneself in the event. The most essential thing, let the Holy Spirit present a mystery of Jesus’ life in a way that is meaningful for oneself. Use imagination to dig deeper into the narrative so that God may communicate in a personal and evocative way (O’Brien, 2023). Contemplation in the synodal process may pertain to the act of attentively waiting for God’s revelation through the Holy Spirit on certain issues needed to make a discernment by the People of God, with listening heart, openness, humility, and compassion.



Sensus Fidelium

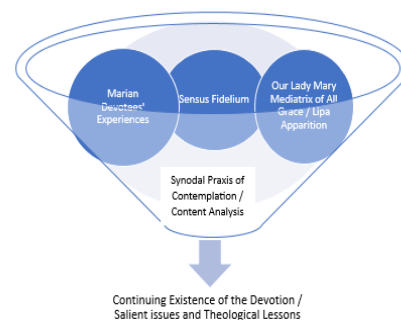
Sensus Fidelium or, the “sense of the faithful,” is an important concept in Catholic theology that emphasizes the faith’s nature as a communal activity. *Sensus fidelium* is defined by documents of the Roman Catholic Church to mean spiritual discernment and concord of all believers taken as a whole. This notion is emphasized in The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) which says, “the whole body of the faithful...cannot err in matters of belief” (CCC 92). This underscores that collectively guided by the Holy Spirit, divine knowledge, and spiritual insight from within the people contribute to its Christian teachings and morals.

Additionally, the Second Vatican Council document *Lumen Gentium* (LG) explains the importance of the sense of the faithful in the teachings of the Church. LG 12 speaks of the faithful having an instinct of faith as well as a supernatural sense of faith that allows them to recognize and confirm genuine teachings of the Church. This realization underscores that among those who have been baptized, there is an active participation in recognizing and preserving the truths of the faith.” Moreover, the importance of *sensus fidelium* in the Church’s mission of evangelization and proclamation of the Gospel is underlined by Pope Francis in a document he titled “*Evangelii Gaudium*” (EG). He clarifies that members are not mere recipients of Church teachings; rather they are expected to take part in passing them on through different ways of interpreting their meanings. It is the faithful that are described by the following words: “The God’s people is holy since it is anointed and infallible regarding its understanding” (EG 119). This affirmation acknowledges the vital role of the faithful in embodying and proclaiming the Gospel message, thereby fostering a deeper communion and shared responsibility within the Church.

The *sensus fidelium* helps prevent individualism and arbitrary interpretations in the church which is easily forgotten by Christians since they believe it is only about them and God. Sometimes the Church will have to remind the faithful that they are not alone in their pilgrimage of faith, but part of a larger group hence need to think of other people’s views too (CCC). The pope said this while presenting his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* on Nov. 26, 2013, at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome; he observed that “We must listen carefully and thoughtfully to the questions raised by people about their faith; Nobody should be excluded from responding” (EG, 129). This emphasis on dialogue and communal discernment fosters a sense of belonging and participation among the faithful.

Furthermore, the *sensus fidelium* highlights the Catholic Church’s comprehensive nature, which signifies universality. It also recognizes that different cultures, languages, and traditions shape the church, thus manifesting the spirit in various ways. This fact is confirmed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church which declares that “she is catholic, she professes the integrity of the faith,” (CCC, 830). Thus, the *sensus fidelium* affirms that all the baptized, regardless of their background or status, have a valuable contribution to make to the Church’s mission.

OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK





The research began with the online gathering of data about the Lipa apparition and the experiences of the devotees of Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace that could be expressions of the sense of faith of the faithful. These narratives were subjected to a conventional content thematic analysis. The analysis yielded salient issues and theological lessons that explained the continuing and growing existence of the Marian devotion.

METHODOLOGY

This research has a descriptive and qualitative design using a content analysis method and process employed in the collected data of the devotees. Qualitative content analysis is a research method for the subjective interpretation of the data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (Santander and Prudente 2022). The author had chosen the conventional model of content analysis where coding categories are derived directly from the text data. This model is suitable when existing theories and principles or research literature on a phenomenon is relatively limited, in this case, devotional narratives of Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace. This research used the digital data collection (DDC) method. The researcher immersed himself in the online digital world. He explored different data servers and social media applications such as Google, Facebook, and YouTube. He purposely spent much time looking for literature, articles, journals, books, blogs, and videos about testimonies, reflections, and written experiences of the devotees of Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace to meet the intended data for analysis. The gathered data were subjected to a condensation process where the texts were divided into small meaning units while ensuring the core meaning was still retained. The meaning units were then labeled with codes and

grouped into categories. And then, themes were created based on the categories made. In the end, the researcher performed a reflective synopsis based on the themes created as part of the discussion of the content analysis.

RESULTS

This research was conducted to better appreciate the local devotion to Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace that began with the supposed Lipa apparition. Guided by its specific objectives, the researcher, after exploring online sources was led to different significant revelations about the devotion and the experiences of the devotees. These revelations are presented in the following themes: devotional realities and challenges; reasons for the devotees to remain; theological lessons that strengthen their Catholic faith; and the essentiality of devotees' *sensus fidelium* within Catholic communities.

On devotional realities and challenges

The data gathered from digital sources revealed the devotion's complicated and scandalous situation. Despite these realities, the devotees remained steadfast in continuing and propagating the devotion amidst present challenges.

Ecclesiastical pronouncement and movement.

Regardless of the negative verdict of the Church's hierarchy given on the Lipa apparition, what remains truly clear is the permission received by the devotees doing devotion to the Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace from the Church. On July 9, 2016, The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines issued Pastoral Guidelines for Bishops on Private Devotions to Our Blessed Mother Mary, Mediatrix of All Graces which states that the belief in and private devotion to Our Mother Mary, Mediatrix of All





Graces is centuries old and should be fostered as a private devotion. As per CBCP decree of July 7, 2018, Pastoral Instruction on the Devotion to Our Lady Mary, Mediatrix of Grace, on Lipa and Local Interpretations, through the Episcopal Commission of the Doctrine of Faith chaired by Orlando B. Cardinal Quevedo, O.M.I., had suggested to local bishops several pastoral actions: “that bishop instruct priests who have been removing lipa statues or even destroying them to desist from doing so; that bishops instruct their priests on how to treat the statue (not scandalizing people especially the Marian devotees: and that bishops publicly foster devotion to Our Lady Mediatrix of Grace as a devotion blessed by centuries of pious usage, independent of unrelated to Lipa” (CBCP, 2018). This pronouncement was perceived by many devotees as toleration or approval by the Church of the Mediatrix of All Grace devotion inside and outside Lipa, or locally and abroad.

ishop-led Movement for a Dogmatic Definition of Mary’s Universal Mediation of Grace on August 22, 2015, was perceived by the devotees as an inspiration and supportive of the devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace. The said movement was convened by Bishop Guillermo Afable (Bishop of Digos) as chairman of the movement, along with Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, Archbishop Jose Palma (archbishop of Cebu), Bishop Camilo Gregorio (Prelate of Batanes), Bishop Guillermo Afable (Bishop of Digos), Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo (Auxiliary Bishop of Cotabato), and Bishop Antonio Rañola (Auxiliary Bishop-Emeritus of Cebu). It was also supported by Bishop George Rimando (Auxiliary Bishop of Davao); Bishop Antonieto Cabahug (Bishop of Surigao del Norte); Bishop Romulo Valles (Metropolitan Archbishop of Davao). The two main goals of the movement are: spreading the Crusade of Prayer and Consecration and

encouraging the world’s bishops to sign the petition for the dogmatic definition of the Mediatrix (CBCP News, 2015).

Other causes that somehow contributed to the beginning and spread of the devotions were the personal witnesses themselves, previous local ordinary of the Archdiocese of Lipa, other Bishops, and religious personalities with their declarations of beliefs, and simple acts of support to the devotion. Some of them are as follows: Venerable Alfredo Obviar (Auxiliary Bishop of Lipa, Chaplain of Lipa Carmel, 1948), Servant of God Alfredo Versoza (Bishop of Lipa 1916-1950), Sr. Teresing, Mother Cecilia and the Carmelite nuns; Fr. Angel Blas, OP (Rector of UST, Primary investigator of the Lipa apparitions, 1951), Monsignor Clovis Thibault, PME (Prelate of Davao, 1951), Ricardo Jamin Cardinal Vidal (Archbishop of Lipa, 1973-1981), Bishop Generoso Camina, Archbishop Mariano Gaviola (Archbishop of Lipa, 1981-1992) Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales (Archbishop of Lipa, 1992-2003), Bishop Guillermo D. Afable (Bishop of Digos, 2003). Archbishop Ramon Arguelles (Archbishop of Lipa, 2004-2017), Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo (Convenor, National Movement for Mary Mediatrix of All Grace, 2014), Rev. Fr. Gerard Francisco P. Timoner III, O.P. (88th Master of the Order of Preachers), Bishop Jesse Mercado (Bishop of Paranaque), Bishop Marcelino Antonio Maralit, (Diocese of Boac), Bishop Ruperto Santos (Diocese of Balanga, 1997), Bishop Teodoro Bacani. and many other bishops, priests, and religious.

A growing community of devotees. From the time the supposed Lipa apparition became publicly known and initially recognized by the local ordinary then, the devotion to Our Lady, Mary, Mediatrix of all Grace started and slowly spread out to different places locally and abroad.





The devotion could be more than a million by this time, as they manifest themselves in various places or institutions (See table 1.) (Ourladymarymediatrixofallgrace.com, 2024).

Table 1.
Archdiocese/Diocese/ Trans-Diocese Community of Devotees

	Communities	Archdiocese/ Diocese	Address
Local Cathedral	Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Kidapawan	Quezon Boulevard, Kidapawan City, Cotabato, Philippines
	Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace	Digos	Rizal Avenue, Digos City, Digos, Philippines
Local Parish	Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Lipa	Antipolo del Norte, Lipa City, Lipa, Philippines
	Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Maasin	Ichon, Macrohon, Maasin, Philippines
	Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Malaybalay	P3 Barangay, Zamboanguita, Malaybalay, Bukidnon, Philippines
	Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Tagum	Purok 18 New Visayas St., Panabo, Davao del Norte, Philippines
	Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Tagum	Pagakpak, Pantukan, Davao de Oro
Local Monastery	Carmel of Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Lipa	P. Torres, Barangay Antonio del Norte, Lipa City, Batangas, Philippines
Local Chapel/ Shrine	Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Dipolog	Sindangan, Zamboanga del Norte, Philippines
	Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Antipolo	Pagakpak, Pantukan, Davao de Oro, Philippines
	Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Lipa	Lucsuhin, Ibaan, Batangas City, Philippines
	Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Malolos	Turo, Hanggang, Bulacan, Philippines
	Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace GUV	Lipa	San Pascual, Batangas, Philippines

	Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace Enshrined in San Roque Church	Catarman	St. Roch the Healer Mission Center, Cawayan, Catarman, Northern Samar, Philippine
	Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Jaro	Petalsville Subdivision, Tabuc Suba, Iloilo City, Philippines
Local Private Chapel	Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Lipa	San Jose, Batangas, Philippines
Local Hermitage	Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace	Palo	Ave Maria Hills Eco Village, San Joaquin, Palampon, Leyte, Philippines
International Parish	Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace		No. 16 Futian 1 st St., Guangfu Township, Hualien Country 976, Taiwan
	Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace		Nanjing, China
International Chapel/ Shrine	Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace		Bethlehem, Israel
	Holy Family		Cahokia, Illinois
	Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace		San Jose de Rio, Brazil

The Mary Mediatrix of All Grace community of devotees also manifested themselves in the form of a confraternity being approved by CBCP under the Episcopal Commission on the Laity (ECL) chaired by Bishop Jesse Mercado (now Bishop of Paranaque), the Confraternity of Mary Mediatrix of All-Grace. It was also a member organization of the Council of the Laity of the Philippines). The confraternity was headed by Brenda Padilla during its recognition on March 5, 2014, by the local Church's hierarchy. Aside from promoting total consecration to the Blessed Virgin as prescribed by St. Louis de Montfort, the Confraternity also aims to spread devotion to Our Lady under the title Mary Mediatrix of All-Grace (CBCP News Podcast, 2023). The devotees manifested themselves as well through online communities (Facebook group) like the "Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace" with 682 thousand followers, created on February





13, 2010, “Deboto ng Mama Mary Mediatrix of All Grace” established on June 1, 2017 (with 19.8 thousand members), “Mama Mary Mediatrix’ Cause: The Lay Devotees Initiative” created on May 11, 2014 (with 19.4 thousand members), and “Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace Prayer Group” formed on December 29, 2011 (with 13 thousand members). All these communities of devotees had aimed to propagate the devotion to our Blessed Mother, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace, and her messages, and encouraged people to do total consecration to Jesus through Mary. To this date, there are more than twenty big communities of devotees spread out in the Philippines.

Devotional expressions. The usual expressions of devotion taken by the devotees to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace were in the form of prayers and novenas. For the devotees, these prayers and novenas do many wonders and little miracles. They were convinced that Our Lady never turns a deaf ear to her children who call upon her to seek her intercessions and maternal help and protection. The devotees may use any of the prayer guides and novenas approved by the Church hierarchy. There is a “Novena to Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace” with an imprimatur by former Archbishop of Lipa, Ramon Arguelles, dated July 16, 2006. It involves a recitation of five decades of the Holy Rosary, Memorare, and a prayer petition. There is also “Prayer to the Father for Healing” that can be used by the devotees with imprimatur given on November 12, 2009, also by Archbishop Ramon Arguelles of Lipa. A prayer formula seeking queenly protection and motherly help to the Philippines amidst the crisis brought about by the territorial claims of China, “Prayer to Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace for the Pueblo Amante De Maria.” This prayer was given imprimatur by the late Archbishop Emeritus of Cebu, Ricardo J. Cardinal Vidal on June 19, 2014.

Aside from the three prayers the devotees have three other available prayers: “Prayer to the Mediatrix for the Philippines,” a united prayer of the devotees of Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace for the Philippines, and for the ecclesiastical church approval of the 1948 Lipa Apparition; “Consecration of the Philippines to Jesus through Mary Mediatrix of All Grace;” and a 33-day guidebook “Preparation for Total Consecration According to St. Louis Marie de Monfort (ourladymarymediatrixofallgrace.com, 2024). Being part of the Mary Mediatrix of All Grace parishes, the devotees participated also in the many activities or programs initiated by their parishes, sacramental, religious, as well social actions in nature. The devotees as well were doing pilgrimages, bringing the image of Our Lady to different places, dioceses, and even abroad, aside from simple house visitation of the devotees with her image. The technology of today, social media was used by the devotees in propagating the Lipa apparitions and the devotion attached to it. Most importantly, the devotees were being challenged to give witness to the ordinariness of the lives the Our Lady Mary Mediatrix message to prayer, offer sacrifices, self-denial, devoutly pray the Holy Rosary daily, pray for the priests and nuns, love and have faith in God, and pray for China.

Devotional torments. The devotion to Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace seemed to have started with little difficulty in the early stage. This is most true for those who lived in Lipa and neighboring places, thousands of them had personally witnessed the apparition. But upon approving to have devotion to Mary Mediatrix of all Grace by the local ordinary of Lipa, Bishop Alfredo Versoza, who was an unbeliever at the start, the devotion spread out like wildfire. Bishop Versoza released a prayer guide to Our Lady with his imprimatur. The devotional persecution began after the verdict





of the episcopal commission was made known and signed by some local bishops headed by Bishop Rufino Santos. It led to the destruction of pamphlets, prayer cards, petals, the statue, and the diaries of Sister Teresing and her Prioress Mother Cecilia of Jesus, OCD. The worst part was the silencing of the Carmelite nuns, especially Sr. Teresing and Mother Prioress, including the Venerable Bishop Alfredo Obviar and the servant of God Bishop Alfredo Versoza, who made an early resignation (allegedly forced resignation?) from their positions and were transferred to other dioceses. The devotion was discouraged. All these events harmed the devotees but were not sufficient for them to discontinue their devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace in private. The case of lifting the ban and imposing a ban on public devotion to Our Lady took place several times. The banning of the devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace by some members of the Church hierarchy in the Philippines seemed to become part of the life of the devotees. The more the devotees were discouraged from stopping their devotion, the more the devotion became popular and embraced by the people, regardless the people related it to the Lipa apparition or not. Just recently, devotees were dictated to abandon their love for the Mediatrix of All Grace and devote themselves to other devotions without considering that it takes time, sometimes even a lifetime, to form and practice a devotion (Epistlesph, 2024). The most recent devotional torment was through the black propaganda initiated by a certain Facebook account named "Sicut Cervus." The said account maliciously and heretically matched up Mary Mediatrix of All Grace with *Nuestra Senora del Santisimo Rosario-La Naval de Manila* in the context of the West Philippine Sea tension, as if there are two different Mary, recognized as blessed among women, the bearer of God, and whom people can turn to for intercession. It stated, "*Doon*

tayo sa subok na kung paano gusto makilala ng Diyos ang Kanyang lingkod na si Maria, at hind isa mga hindi aprubadong aparisyon na layunin lamang ay ilayo tayo sa Diyos at sumuway sa Kanya at sa Simbahan." People have come to a ridiculous level of persecuting Mary Mediatrix of All Grace and the attached devotion to her by competing her with her other title and devotion. The black propaganda against Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace seems to continue until the people who are against it finally eradicate it from the spiritual make-up of the Filipinos. But things are happening far from reality. The devotion to Our Lady is devoutly accepted and participated in by more Catholics locally and abroad.

Mary Mediatrix of All Grace is a Marian teaching that has been embedded in the Sacred Scriptures and supported by the Tradition as mentioned in the early part of this research. It is not yet a dogma but could be the fifth Marian dogma in God's perfect time. The devotion attached to it must be welcomed by all with guidance from the Church hierarchy, whether it is related to the Lipa apparition or not. Although disconnecting the devotion to the apparition is seemingly difficult to do because of the sense of the faithful as far as the beginning of the said devotion in the Philippines is concerned, the apparition of Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace in Lipa Batangas, being witnessed by thousands of people. As a devotion, Pope Francis himself answered when he was asked by Filipino Bishops during their *Ad limina* visit in Rome, sometime in June of 2019, about what the bishops would do with the devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace, "*Do not stop the people; accompany them, guide them and let them understand that their devotion to Mary will lead them to Jesus*" (Debotong Mama Mary Mediatrix of All Grace, 2019).





On Reasons Devotees Continue the Devotion

The different narratives of the devotees reveal several salient reasons that steer devotees to remain active with their Marian devotion. Here are the key reasons that appeared:

Divine Guidance and Intervention: Many Devotees' testimonies emphasized experiences of divine guidance and intervention attributed to Mary, particularly as Mediatrix of All Grace ("I believed by the guidance of the Holy Spirit I felt to see the bishop, not knowing him, where I can find him..."). Devotees perceived Mary's active role in their lives through miraculous events, healing experiences, and moments of spiritual consolation ("I believed in Her divine intercession on the recovery of my husband. I continued to pray that She would give us a miracle and yes for only a month he was back to work", "Our Lady, keep on helping me in my hopelessness..."). This reinforced their belief in Mary's intercessory power and strengthened their devotion ("She interceded in my prayers throughout my journey," "Every year I'm in lipa to ask for her help, being the powerful mediatrix to Our God...," "I believed it is Mama Mary directing me towards Jesus...").

Faith and Prayer: Prayer, especially through the recitation of the Rosary and other devotions, is central to maintaining Marian devotion ("I fasted and prayed to the Holy Rosary and the Divine Mercy chaplet, it was the only thing I know"). Devotees consistently turned to prayer for guidance, healing, and spiritual growth ("She teach me to do the Will of God, and the total abandonment to the Will of God..."). This pious practice cultivated a deep spiritual connection and reinforced their faith in Mary's ability to intercede on their behalf.

Miracles and Healing: The devotees' narratives frequently mentioned a lot of miraculous healings and spiritual experiences attributed to Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace ("She gradually improved from regaining of her appetite to full recovery...," "I suddenly realized that I did not feel any itchiness at all. I felt excited and I told my husband about it and both of us praised and thanked God...," "I am very happy for the progress of my wounded foot and of my health...," "We asked Mama Mary to take away these lumps (from thymus cancer). I had children now and I pleaded that I again be spared. When I went to take the tests and mammogram a week later, the results that came out were clear as day...," "Her cough (tuberculosis) has stopped, her body started to recover, Mama Elma's health was restored; her body supernaturally and spontaneously healed...," "Mama Mary Mediatrix of all Grace is not limited through the healing of the sick. She mends in all kinds. I was once emotionally unwell but miraculously cured by Mama Mary..."). These experiences served as tangible manifestations of Mary's presence and intercession, reinforcing devotees' faith, and inspiring them to continue their devotion.

Suffering and Hope: Through times of suffering, illness, or personal challenges, devotees found hope and strength in their devotion to Mary ("In our trials, pains and sorrows, She inspires us, and teaches us that God gave us our cross to grow in virtues, to understand the Will of God and may these bring us to holiness...," "Si Mama Mary Mediatrix ang aking pag-asa, siya ng pag-asa ng aking ordination, sya ang pag-asa ng aking bokasyon!..."). Their narratives often highlighted how Mary's intercession brought comfort, and resilience in the face of adversity ("And yes through Her, God gave me more than what I asked for. Inspiring me so much in a life of prayer and love of soul,"). It thus encouraged devotees to persevere in their faith journey.





Gratitude and Witness: The devotees had expressed profound gratitude towards Mary for her intercession and the blessings received (“*We were very thankful to Mama Mary Mediatrix of all grace, and all who have helped her regain her healthy aura...*,” “*Thank Lord, thank you Mama Mary for all the blessings. Amen...*”). They often share their testimonies to inspire others and spread devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace (“*I was healed completely of my infections and I’m glad I can share and shout to the world that Mama Mary heard my prayers and always she is there for us and with us...*”). They have believed in the power of their own experiences to encourage others in their faith.

Community and Support: Lots of devotees are part of communities or families where Marian devotion is shared and celebrated (“*We also gave her the prayer she needs to pray before the image of Mama Mary Mediatrix...*,” “*Thank you very much for extending to us that precious prayer brother...*”). This communal aspect fostered a sense of belonging and reinforced the importance of Mary’s role in the Catholic faith (“*My husband and I became devotees of Mary Mediatrix of All Grace some ten years ago. We also brought along with us family and friends who wish to see her at Carmel...*,” “*The doctor proved to be a Godsend, introducing me back to Jesus Christ through her witness of Our Lady, Mama Mary Mediatrix of All Grace...*,” “*She continuously fulfills her commitment to MMOAG by sharing Mama Mary’s image with anyone she knew who is suffering from difficulties...*,” “*Apart from sharing Mama Mary’s image and prayers, she shared resources and goods with her relatives and people in need. Her effort extends by reaching out to evacuation centers to deliver relief...*”). Thus, encouraging ongoing devotion and participation in church activities.

Personal Transformation: Personal stories of transformation and redemption through Mary’s

intercession were prevalent. Devotees recounted how their devotion to Mary has helped them overcome personal struggles, make positive life changes, or rediscover their vocation (“*Araw-araw kong dinasal ang Santo Rosaryo at dahil doo’y unti- unti akong nagbago hanggang sa nanumbalik ang kagustuhan kong maging pari...*,” “*It also made me understand that my purpose is simply not to live for myself but to touch the lives of others and spread the message of faith, hope, and love...*”). Therefore, reinforcing their commitment to the devotion.

Relevant and True Messages. From the many reflections or personal comments of the devotees in only social media, very glaring are affirmations and prayers about the prophecies made by the Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace involving China and the Philippines, as well as the problems now encountered by the Church among the members of the hierarchy and the common believers. The devotees took the Mediatrix’s prophecies relevant and so they include them in their regular devotion (*I have been posting for weeks already that all Parishes nationwide should organize a rosary brigade for peace in our country and the world, for the conversion of Russia and atheist China...*) “*Let us pray to Our Beloved Mother, that she may continue to bless our people and continue to give us peace.*”)

In a nutshell, devotees remained vigorous in their Marian devotion due to the profound spiritual experiences they ascribed to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace. It also included divine guidance, healing, and the transformative power of faith and prayer. These reasons collectively prove a deep-seated belief in Mary’s intercessory role. They also show the devotees’ desire to share the blessings received through personal testimony and community involvement. It impresses the acceptance of the devotees as well that the messages and prophecies of Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace are true and relevant.





On Theological Lessons Learned by the Devotees

The testimonies shared by the devotees upon further scrutiny reveal several profound theological lessons reflecting the fundamental teachings of the Catholic faith. They are as follows:

Divine Providence. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (302-303) explains that Divine Providence is “the dispositions by which God guides his creation toward this perfection.” It says, “God protects and governs all things which he has made and cares for all, from the least things to the great events of the world and its history.” The testimonies of the devotees emphasize their belief in divine guidance and providence. They attributed their significant life experiences and decisions to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and through the intercession of Mary Mediatrix of All Grace (MMOAG). This highlights the Catholic belief in God’s active presence in everyday life, guiding individuals through challenges and uncertainties.

Power of Prayer and Intercession. From the testimonies of the devotees’ prayer was emphasized as a central practice in strengthening faith. Whether through the recitation of the Rosary, or other forms of prayer, devotees find solace and strength in communing with God and seeking Mary’s intercession. This reflects the Catholic teaching on the efficacy of prayer and the communion of saints, where Mary acts as a powerful intercessor before God. God listens to all prayers because he loves humanity, but “the prayers of a virtuous person are more efficacious than those of an obdurate sinner.” (James 5:16)

Suffering and Redemptive Grace. The written experiences of the devotees often touch upon themes of suffering and its redemptive nature.

Through expressed personal ordeals such as illness, family struggles, or vocational challenges, individuals find value in uniting their sufferings with Christ’s sacrifice. This aligns with Catholic theology which views suffering as a path to spiritual growth and union with Christ’s passion. The Apostolic Letter *Salvifici Doloris* of Pope John Paul II clarifies that suffering “*is deeply human because in it the person discovers himself, his humanity, his dignity, his mission. It is supernatural because it is rooted in the divine mystery of the Redemption of the world*” (#31).

Miracles and Signs of Faith. Numerous accounts described experiences of miracles or divine signs attributed to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace. These experiences affirm the belief in supernatural intervention and reinforce faith in Mary’s role as a conduit of God’s grace. Such accounts often lead to deepened devotion and a strengthened belief in the power of intercessory prayer. The glossary of the Catechism of the Catholic Church defines a miracle as “a sign or wonder, such as a healing or the control of nature, which can only be attributed to divine power.

Surrender to God’s Will. Across the testimonies, there is a recurring theme of surrendering to God’s will, even in moments of adversity or uncertainty. This surrender is seen as a pathway to peace and spiritual clarity, echoing Christ’s prayer of surrender in the Garden of Gethsemane. It demonstrates trust in God’s providence and acceptance of His plan for one’s life which is a wonderful life. St. Faustina once said, “Oh, how great is the reward for one act of loving submission to the will of God!”

Gratitude and Evangelization. Expressing gratitude towards God and Mary, as well as a desire to share one’s faith journey with others, permeates the devotees’ written testimonies.





Devotees express gratitude for blessings received, whether through healing, spiritual consolation, or personal growth. This gesture is in obedience to the essence of First Thessalonians where Christians were exhorted, *“Rejoice always pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you”* (5:17-18). Their written testimonies were considered a form of evangelization, inspiring others to deepen their faith and trust in God’s mercy and love.

These testimonies from various individuals illustrate how devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace and commitment to Catholic teachings enrich their spiritual lives. They reveal a profound reliance on prayer, a deep understanding of suffering’s transformative power, and an unwavering trust in God’s providence through Mary’s intercession. These theological lessons not only strengthen personal faith but also serve to inspire others in their spiritual journeys within the Catholic faith.

On Sensus Fidelium on the Devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace

Based on the various testimonies provided about devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace (MMOAG), the sense of the faithful is expressed by the following principles:

Devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace (MMOAG) is deeply rooted in personal experiences of divine guidance and intervention. Devotees attribute moments of guidance, spiritual transformation, and healing to Mary’s intercessory power. Their testimonies consistently highlight the role of prayer, particularly through the Rosary and other devotions, as essential in seeking Mary’s intercession in times of illness, suffering, and decision-making.

Miracles and spiritual experiences are frequently reported, such as healings, the scent of lilies or flowers, and other signs perceived as Mary’s presence and intervention. These experiences reinforce faith in Mary’s maternal care and her role as Mediatrix of All Grace, emphasizing her ability to intercede effectively in challenging situations.

Suffering, sacrifice, and acceptance of God’s will are essential for the devotees. Written testimonies often recount devotees’ struggles, both physical and spiritual, which are met with faith, surrender, and trust in divine providence. The acceptance of suffering as a means of spiritual growth and the belief that Mary accompanies devotees through these trials are central to the devotion.

Gratitude and devotion are expressed through acts of prayer, pilgrimage, and spreading devotion to MMOAG. Devotees often share their experiences to inspire others and encourage a deeper connection with Mary as a source of hope, healing, and spiritual strength.

Overall, the sense of faith in the devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace reflects a profound belief in Mary’s intercessory power, her maternal presence in times of need, and the transformative impact of faith and prayer in everyday life.

CONCLUSION

This research highlights the enduring and evolving devotion to Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace, which has continued despite ecclesiastical challenges and theological debates. The written narratives of devotees demonstrate a profound connection to Mary as a source of divine guidance, intercession, and spiritual transformation. Despite the Church’s cautionary attitude towards the Lipa apparitions, devotion



has flourished in communities both locally and internationally, supported by pastoral guidelines and the personal testimony of the devotees. Through prayers, novenas, and communal practices, devotees find solace and strength, experiencing miracles and healing that deepen their faith and reinforce Mary's role as Mediatrix of All Grace. This study also highlights the resilience of the faithful in sustaining their devotion despite adversities and misunderstandings, highlighting the importance of communal support and personal witness to sustaining a vibrant Marian spirituality. Moreover, the theological insights gleaned from devotees' experiences underscore fundamental Catholic teachings on prayer, suffering, and divine providence. These insights demonstrate the transformation of faith and the significance of Mary's intercessory role in the spiritual lives of devotees. Through prayerful devotion to Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace, Catholics find a pathway to deeper communion with God, guided by Mary's example of faith and surrender to His will. The testimonies shared in this research illuminate a living faith tradition shaped by personal encounters with Mary's grace, fostering a sense of unity among believers and a steadfast commitment to promoting our Lady's devotion in the world.

Depriving the people of devotion to Our Lady, Mary as Mediatrix of All Grace is to deny the people of the very essence of the important role played by Our Lady in the salvific plan of God. However to deprive Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace the recognition that she lovingly and personally visited the Filipinos 75 years ago is ignoring what Jesus said two thousand years ago while hanging on the cross, "When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple

took her into his home (John 19:26-27). The action taken by the beloved disciple John was so amiable. He welcomed and took home the woman, Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace. Should Juan (the Philippines) welcome and take home as well the woman at this time? It is so tragic that some were so caught up in the rules and forgot to see the truth. Besides, the Philippines is the Pueblo Amante De Maria.

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