

The Virgin Mary anointed her Son the Christ and for burial in Bethany – Coredemptrix

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Abstract

Five peculiar elements of the Gospel pericopes about the anointment of Jesus' head in Bethany show that the woman who performed this anointing was Jesus' immaculate mother Mary. These elements are, besides Jesus' designation "the woman" for her, his designations "a beautiful work", "(she has worked ...) in Me", "what she had, she did", "this Gospel", and "a memorial of her". That this anointment is not the same as the anointment of the feet by Mary of Bethany is confirmed by their different timing relative to Jesus' festive entrance into Jerusalem. Jesus' virgin mother Mary is the bride of the Holy Spirit and had the full knowledge and prophetic right and maternal authority to anoint her Son both the dynastic triumphant Messiah and beforehand for burial and thus give her maternal consent to his high priestly sacrificial death. The very precious ointment she used for the anointment she may have kept as a part of the myrrh that the wise men from the East had given to the new-born King of the Jews and his mother, probably also in Bethany. The memorial of her that Jesus decreed, could be made a reality by the promulgation of the Dogma of Mary Coredemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate.

1. The Messianic anointing of Jesus' head in literature

3 And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head.

4 But there were some who said to themselves indignantly, "Why was the ointment thus wasted?"

5 For this ointment might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and given to the poor." And they reproached her.

6 But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me.

7 For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you will, you can do good to them; but you will not always have me.

8 She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burying.

9 And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her." (Mark 14:3-9 RSV)

Both in Mark 14:3-9 and Matthew 26:6-13, there is the description of an anointing in Bethany which was possibly not only done for burial, as Jesus said, but also for anointing Jesus Messiah – the promised high priest-king –, as it was of Jesus' head. Hebrew kings and high priests were anointed on the head,¹ as were rabbis present at a wedding of a virgin.² Authors have thought about whether this anointing of Jesus' head was a Messianic anointing, but it was rejected by many of them as being not a real royal Messianic anointing. Guijarro and Rodríguez³ rejected it as a real Messianic anointing by supposing the anointing on the head did not really take place at all, historically. They supposed it was only a redaction by the

¹ anointment of the high priest: e.g. Lev 6:20 21:10; of the king: e.g. 1Sa 16:1,12-13.

² John Lightfoot, 1859, Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica, at Mark 14:3. He refers to the Babylon Talmud (Chetub. fol. 17. 2) for the custom of the anointment at a wedding, but specifies that the Jerusalem Talmud (Berac. fol. 11. 2) says "It is indecent for a scholar of the wise to smell of spices."

³ Guijarro and Rodríguez, 2011, The "Messianic" Anointing of Jesus (Mark 14:3-9)

Evangelist Mark, in which he changed the also described anointing of Jesus' feet by Mary of Bethany (Jn 11:2 12:1-8) into an anointing of the head.⁴ However, Guijarro and Rodríguez do see this imaginative head anointment by a woman as a new imaginative rite, invented by Mark to indicate that Jesus is the Messiah, but only in suffering, not the triumphant Messiah (“Mark has modified the traditional *chreia* quite intentionally to demonstrate that Jesus is Messiah, not in power but in suffering”; “Messiah not in a triumphal sense but by means of suffering and death”; “the anointing no longer has to do with glory and power, but rather with the surrender of life itself”).⁵ Dormeyer sees the anointment of the head by a woman as an incomprehensible later addition to the original report that only would have spoken of the handing of a precious ointment to Jesus.⁶ Also Roloff rejects a real Messianic anointing, because to him it is absolutely unthinkable that ‘an anonymous Israelite woman’ (“eine anonyme israelitische Frau”) would have ‘usurped’ (“angemaßt”) the right to perform the royal anointing.⁷ It is unclear to me whether Fander accepts that the anointing on the head really took place historically, but she does see it as a symbolic prophetic sign by a prophetess, who with her action broke with the old tradition of the royal anointing and indicated only a suffering ‘Messiah’, not the real royal Messiah.⁸ Also Lücking’s interpretation is that the woman actually anoints Jesus Messiah, but in a ‘paradoxical’ way: only as a suffering Messiah.⁹ Moltmann-Wendel sees the anointment of Jesus’ head as a Messianic anointing, but also as a ‘double break’ with tradition in that the woman ‘usurps a men’s role’ and the king is a ‘candidate for death’.¹⁰ Hornsby sees the woman who anoints Jesus’ head as recognizing Jesus’ kingly role and tragic fate, but she does not speak of the historical reality or dynastic validity of the anointing.¹¹

The main obstacle to the acceptance of the anointment on the head as a real royal Messianic anointment that actually took place, is that it was done by a woman whose name is not mentioned by the Evangelists Mark and Matthew. Dormeyer says that the anointment to Messianic king cannot have been meant, because here ‘instead of a prophet only a plain woman’ is anointing (“anstalt eines Propheten nur eine schlichte Frau”).¹² Yet, as long as Dormeyer does not say who the woman was, how can he say she was just a plain woman? Guijarro and Rodríguez wrote: “The celebrant of the rite is not a prophet but a woman, enacting a function which, for a woman, would have been all but unthinkable in first-century Judaism.”¹³ Yet, although a woman cannot be a prophet, she can be a prophetess, also in first-

⁴ Guijarro and Rodríguez, 2011, p. 134

⁵ Guijarro and Rodríguez, 2011, p. 139, 141

⁶ Dormeyer, 1974, *Die Passion Jesu als Verhaltensmodell*.

⁶ Guijarro and Rodríguez, 2011, p. 74.

⁷ Roloff, 1970, *Das Kerygma und der irdische Jesus. Historische Motive in den Jesus-Erzählungen der Evangelien*, p. 211

⁸ Fander, 1992, *Frauen in der Nachfolge Jesu. Die Rolle der Frau im Markusevangelium.*, p. 427

⁹ Lücking, 1993, *Mimesis der Verachteten. Eine Studie zur Erzählweise von Mk 14,1-11*, p. 111, “in einer paradoxen Art”, “daß Jesus nur als ein Leidender, Gekreuzigter, Gottverlassener (Mk 15,34) der “Gesalbte”, der Messias ist.”

¹⁰ Moltmann-Wendel, 1991, *Ein eigener Mensch werden. Frauen um Jesus*. “ein doppelter Bruch mit der Vätertradition: Der König ist ein Todeskandidat, .. und eine namenlose Frau übernimmt die Rolle der “Männer Judas” (2. Sam. 2,4)” (p. 101-102); “sie maßt sich eine Männerrolle an” (p. 101). Moltmann-Wendel holds, referring to Julius Schniewind (1949), that the woman is the first proclaimer of ‘this’ Gospel (‘this’, to Moltmann-Wendel, means the change of a denying of a full share in the Kingdom of God to the ‘despised’, meaning women and children and the uneducated) (p. 98). Schniewind (1949) himself says of the anointing woman: “Sie ist dennoch die erste Bote des Messiasleidens.”, p. 182

¹¹ Hornsby, 2009, *Anointing Traditions*, p. 341

¹² Dormeyer, 1974, p. 74

¹³ Guijarro and Rodríguez, 2011, p. 138

century Judaism, for instance like the “prophetess” Anna (Lu 2:36). Would it have been unthinkable in first-century Judaism that a prophetess anointed the royal successor? And to Roloff, and to the readers of Mark’s and Matthew’s Gospels, the woman is indeed an ‘anonymous Israelite woman’, but of course she was not anonymous to herself, so she could have known that she had the right to perform the royal anointing. She needn’t have ‘usurped’ it. Fander considers an anointment on the head by precisely a woman a protest, a rupture with the old tradition.¹⁴ Apparently, with a reference to Moltmann-Wendel, Fander totally rejects the idea that a woman could really anoint a royal successor in the first century, while for Guijarro and Rodríguez, in 2011, it was not totally unthinkable. Unfortunately, in 2013, these last two apparently changed their mind, for in the Spanish version of their article, the predicate “all but” before “unthinkable” was omitted.¹⁵ Lücking qualifies the rejection of a Messianic anointment just because it was done by a woman ‘misleading’¹⁶ and even doubts that the anointing by, possibly, a prophetess was just a symbolic prophetic sign, instead of a real royal anointing, because the woman herself does not explain the sign¹⁷; nevertheless, he says Jesus is only a suffering Messiah,¹⁸ and thus not the dynastic or triumphant Messiah, and says that Jesus as Messiah represents ‘something extraterritorial’ for Mark¹⁹ – note that Jesus confirms He is “the King of the Jews” and announces his resurrection and glorious return on the clouds of heaven also in Mark’s Gospel.²⁰ Grundmann, finally, allows the possibility that the woman meant to anoint Jesus Messianic king (for life), but thinks that Jesus’ answer that it was done for burial probably is an ‘explanatory education of the reporting’.²¹ Apparently, to these authors, it was very hard to accept all circumstances of this anointing as valid historical elements of Jesus’ anointment to dynastic and triumphant Messiah and for burial. The reason may be that they did not think of it, or implicitly ruled out, that the woman could have been Jesus’ virgin mother Mary.

2. Constituents of the Messianic anointing

2.1. Time and Place OK: royal anointing outside a sanctuary before a second royal anointing inside a sanctuary

Solomon, a son of David but not the eldest, was chosen by king David to become his successor: “he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah” (1Ki 1:35). In order to make this clear, David ordered the prophet Nathan to immediately anoint Solomon king and let him sit on David’s throne (1Ki 1:34-35). Therefore, Solomon was first anointed king by the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan in Gihon, i.e. at the spring Gihon (1Ki 1:34.39.45), which is outside the city walls and thus outside the tent for the ark in the city of David (2Sa 6:17) and of course outside the sanctuary of the tabernacle of Moses at Gibeon (1Ch 21:29). Right after this event, Solomon is called “king Solomon” (1Ki 1:39,53). Later, in the presence of “David the king” (1Chr 29,9), Solomon was made “king

¹⁴ Fander, 1992, p. 427

¹⁵ Guijarro and Rodríguez Láiz, 2013, La unción “mesiánica” de Jesús (Mc 14,3-9): “El celebrante del rito no es un profeta sino una mujer, que realiza una función impensable en el Judaísmo del siglo I.” p. 60

¹⁶ “Die beliebte Einwand ist etwas irreführend”, Lücking, 1993, p. 110

¹⁷ “Denn in allen Fällen, die *Fohrer*, ..., nennt, in denen Ausführung *und* Deutung geschildert werden, ist es der Prophet selbst, der die Handlung deutet (vgl. auch *Berger*...)”, Lücking, 1993, p. 111

¹⁸ “daß Jesus nur als ein Leidender, Gekreuzigter, Gottverlassener (Mk 15,34) der “Gesalbte”, der Messias ist.” Lücking, 1993, p. 111

¹⁹ “die Person Jesu, die als “Messias” und “Sohn Gottes” für Markus etwas Exterritoriales darstellt” Lücking, 1993, p. 120

²⁰ Before anointment: Mk 8:31 8:38-9:1 9:30 10:34 13:10,26; after: Mk 14:61-62; “King of the Jews” Mk 15:2

²¹ “erläuternde Bildung der Berichterstattung” Grundmann, 1962, Das Evangelium nach Markus, p. 277

the second time” and anointed “before the LORD” (1Chr 29:21-23), i.e. at the tent of the ark (cf. 1Chr 15:25-16:1), where also the accompanying sacrifices were sacrificed (cf. 1Chr 22:1). Only after this second anointing Solomon sat on “the throne of the LORD as king instead of David”:

21 And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings unto the LORD, on the morrow after that day, even a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their drink offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel:
22 And did eat and drink before the LORD on that day with great gladness. And they made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and anointed him unto the LORD to be the chief governor, and Zadok to be priest. 23 Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him. (1Chr 29:21-23 AV)

Likewise, it is possible that Jesus was anointed king by a prophetess in the house of Simon the Leper in Bethany, outside the temple, and later would be anointed king by God, his Father, on the Holy Mount Zion, in order to be served by “the kings of the earth” and to possess “the uttermost parts of the earth” (Ps 2:6).

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed,

...

6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. (Ps 2:2,6 AV)

6 ‘And I — I have anointed My King, Upon Zion — My holy hill.’ (Ps 2:6 Young’s Literal Translation).

Guijarro and Rodríguez labelled the location of Solomon’s first anointing at Gihon a sanctuary (“Sanctuary of Gihon”²²), and then contrasted it to the house of Simon the Leper, without giving an explanation or reference why Gihon would be a sanctuary. The spring Gihon probably was not a Jewish sanctuary, but at most a spring that had been ‘sacred’ to the pagans, not to the Jews. If David had wanted Solomon to be anointed in the sanctuary, i.e., in/at the tent of the ark in the city (1Ki 8:1,4), he could have said ‘bring him to the tent of the ark’ and ‘anoint him before the Lord’²³. But David said to bring him “down to Gihon” and “there anoint him king over Israel” (1Ki 1:33-34), probably because there, at the spring outside the city wall (cf. 2Chr 32:30), inside the Kedron valley, people would be coming and going for water and news, and the valley would get replenished with the celebration’s festive noise as far as Enrogel, and therefore Solomon’s anointment and subsequent festive entrance up into the city would be the desired immediate public counter proclamation – countering the proclamation of Adonijah at Enrogel (1Ki 1:9-11; En-rogel = traditionally ‘fount of the fuller’) – as described: “all the people went up after him, playing on pipes, and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth was split by their noise. Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they finished feasting” (1Ki 1:40-41). A Jewish tradition even says that Jews “do not anoint a king but at a fountain”.²⁴

King David, a biblical type of Jesus, was first anointed at Bethlehem (1Sa 16:13 Ps 89:20), and yet again at Hebron, first over Judah (2Sa 2:4), then over all Israel (2Sa 5:3); not until the

²² Guijarro and Rodríguez, 2011, table 2

²³ Cf. 2Sam 6:17 1Ki 8:62 1Chr 16:1; Solomon was certainly not anointed inside the tent of the ark, for Zadok took the horn of oil out of the tent in order to anoint Solomon (1Ki 1:39).

²⁴ T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 5. 2., referenced in John Gill’s Expositor on 1Ki 1:38

death of Saul did he enter on his actual kingdom.²⁵ The anointment in Hebron, over Judah, was done by “the men of Judah”, אֲנָשֵׁי יְהוּדָה (2Sa 2:4 RSV, Ben Asher Hebrew text = BHS), literally ‘the mortals of Judah’, possibly simply ‘the people of Judah’, as אֲנָשֵׁי נִינְוֶה is translated “the people of Nineveh”, “The Ninevites” (Jonah 3:5 BHS, RSV, NIV); the anointment over all Israel was done by “all the elders of Israel” (2Sa 5:3 RSV). The first anointing was done by a prophet, Samuel, in Bethlehem (1Sa 16:4-13). None of these anointings was done at the sanctuary of the tabernacle of Moses in Gibeon (1Chr 16:39 21:29 1Ki 3:2-5) or at the sanctuary of the ark in Kiriathjearim (1Sa 6:21-7:2).

2.1.1. The Catechism of the Catholic Church

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) states about Jesus: “the Son is the one anointed by the Father’s Spirit since his Incarnation – Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah” and also “The Son of God was consecrated as Christ (Messiah) by the anointing of the Holy Spirit at his Incarnation (cf Ps 2:6-7).” (CCC 727 and 745); the Catechism also states: “By his Death and Resurrection, Jesus is constituted in glory as Lord and Christ (cf Acts 2:36).” (CCC 746). So, if Jesus could be consecrated/constituted as Christ twice, in an unphysical way, i.e. without a physical oil, He may also have been anointed Christ an additional time. Especially an anointing on the head with a physical oil during his earthly life seems fitting for the incarnated Son of God and royal Son of David, who, according to Hebrews, “had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people” (Heb 2:17 RSV). The author of Hebrews, who in my view is the high priest Joseph Caiphas (called Cephas by Paul),²⁶ cites the verses Ps 45:7-8, in which is spoken about the royal anointment of a king “with the oil of gladness”, and says they are about Jesus. So, according to the author of Hebrews Jesus was anointed king with an oil.

8 But of the Son he says, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, the righteous scepter is the scepter of thy kingdom.

9 Thou hast loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, thy God, has anointed thee with the oil of gladness beyond thy comrades." (Heb 1:8-9 RSV)

2.2. Anointed One OK: Jesus is scriptural Messiah - from everlasting, dynastic, from Bethlehem, like Moses, suffering, triumphant, and forever-lasting

2.2.1. Dynastic Son of David, from everlasting and from Bethlehem

According to the New Testament, Jesus was and is the Son of God and of the Virgin Mary, the wife of the royal “Son of David” (Mt 1:20) – Joseph the son of Jacob, a descendant of all the kings of Judah, and “of the house and lineage of David” (Mt 1:1,6-16.20 Lu 1:32) –, and He was born in Bethlehem (Mt 2:1). Pope Benedict XVI said that Joseph was of the royal line of David and conferred his legal title of “Son of David” to Jesus by virtue of his marriage to Mary:

²⁵ Jamieson, Fausset, Brown Commentary on Heb 1:9

²⁶ Hoeven, 2009 (updated 2011), Paul’s Cephas is Caiphas – Author of 1Peter and Hebrews

“... the Betrothal of Joseph and Mary; it is an episode of great importance. Joseph was of the royal line of David and, by virtue of his marriage to Mary, was to confer upon the Son of the Virgin upon the Son of God the legal title of "Son of David", thus fulfilling the prophecy. The betrothal of Joseph and Mary is thus a human event but is crucial in the history of the humanity's salvation, in the fulfilment of God's promises; And so it has a supernatural connotation, which the two protagonists accept with humility and trust.” (Pope Benedict XVI, Inauguration of the new fountain in the Vatican Gardens dedicated to St. Joseph, 5 July 2010)

So, Jesus met the biblical requirements for the promised Messiah: to be from everlasting and from Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) and to be a royal Son of David (e.g. Isa 9:6-7 Jer 23:5), i.e., a dynastic successor of David, but this was not known to his contemporaries during his adult life. During his adult life, from the beginning of his ministry until his death, He was only known as Jesus of Nazareth, the son “as was supposed” of the not-royal Joseph son of Heli, descending from David’s not-royal son Nathan (Lu 3:23,31). The reason for this lack of essential knowledge probably was that He was also a prophet like Moses, as was also biblically required: that, like Moses, the Child Jesus was exposed at the house of Joseph son of Heli and his wife in Nazareth – probably an Essene settlement – and was adopted by them.²⁷

2.2.2. A prophet like Moses: exposed and adopted and authenticated by signs

Moses had prophesied that after him God would raise up a prophet like himself, to whom all should listen (Dt 18:15.18-19). Moses had been exposed and adopted as a child (Ex 2:3), and later, when he was an adult and his life was sought by his brethren, the Israelites, he fled to the desert of Midian. Later God sent Moses back to his brethren, the Israelites, and said he had to authenticate himself as sent by God, before the elders of his people, by doing certain signs, called “the first sign”, and “the latter sign” (Ex 4:8.17.28-31). The first sign was the changing of a rod into a serpent and back, and the second sign was the changing of his hand into a leprous hand and back, and the third, if necessary, was the changing of water into blood:

- 1 Then Moses answered, "But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, ‘The LORD did not appear to you.’"
- 2 The LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A rod."
- 3 And he said, "Cast it on the ground." So he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from it.
- 4 But the LORD said to Moses, "Put out your hand, and take it by the tail" — so he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand —
- 5 "that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."
- 6 Again, the LORD said to him, "Put your hand into your bosom." And he put his hand into his bosom; and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous, as white as snow.

²⁷ Hoeven, 2009, Jesus and Moses – Mary Magdalene; Cf. Hoeven, 2009, With Child of the Holy Spirit – Joseph willing to give her in marriage to his heir; Hoeven, 2009, The Infancy Gospels – “vehicles of christology” or Revelation of Christ?; On Nazareth and the Essenes: cf. Hoeven, 2009, With Child of the Holy Spirit – Joseph willing to give her in marriage to his heir, appendix “Joseph an Essene”, and Hoeven, 2008 (updated 2010), The Eleven – Jesus appeared risen to the Officers of the Temple Prison, and Capper, 2015, 'Essene Adoptions and the Essene Houses of the Community (CD XIV.12-17 and 4Q266 I 5-13) as the Charitable Educational Institutions of the Villages and Towns of Ancient Judaea'

7 Then God said, "Put your hand back into your bosom." So he put his hand back into his bosom; and when he took it out, behold, it was restored like the rest of his flesh.

8 "If they will not believe you," God said, "or heed the first sign, they may believe the latter sign.

9 If they will not believe even these two signs or heed your voice, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it upon the dry ground; and the water which you shall take from the Nile will become blood upon the dry ground." (Ex 4:1-9 RSV)

17 And you shall take in your hand this rod, with which you shall do the signs." (Ex 4:17 RSV)

28 And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD with which he had sent him, and all the signs which he had charged him to do.

29 Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the people of Israel.

30 And Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken to Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people.

31 And the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had visited the people of Israel and that he had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshiped. (Ex 4:28-31 RSV)

Jesus' signs

During Jesus' public ministry, one wondered if He was the prophet that was to come, which some considered a forerunner of the Messiah (i.e. the second Elijah or Jeremias, Mal 4:5 Joh 7:40-41 Mt 16:14 17:10-12) and others as the Messiah himself (Jn (1:21) 6:14-15 7:52 Mt 16:14-16 Jn 1:21). But the people had doubts about Jesus as Messiah because the Messiah was to be from Bethlehem, which Jesus was not, in their view (Jn 7:40-44). Toward the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus explicitly authenticated himself as the sent Messiah and the Son of the Father by referring to the works (i.e. miracles) He had done (Jn 5:36 10:25,32,37,38 14:10-11 15:24), and thus qualifying them as signs, and He explicitly referred to Moses:

45 Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; it is Moses who accuses you, on whom you set your hope.

46 If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me.

47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?". (Jn 5:45-47 RSV)

Just as Moses had healed his leprous hand just by taking it out of his mantle before the elders of the Israelites, likewise Jesus healed a leprous hand just by letting it be stretched out before the eyes of the Pharisees in the synagogue:

9 And he went on from there, and entered their synagogue.

10 And behold, there was a man with a withered hand. And they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath?" so that they might accuse him. ...

13 Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, whole like the other.

14 But the Pharisees went out and took counsel against him, how to destroy him. (Mt 12:9-14 RSV)

The authors of the Gospel of John – in my opinion John Mark, the Virgin Mary and her husband Joseph Caiphas²⁸ – say about the changing of water into wine in Cana, which resembles the changing of water into blood that Moses could do as his third sign (Ex 4:9):

11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him. (Jn 2:11 RSV)

And the Gospel of John specifically calls a next miracle performed by Jesus “the second sign”, which refers to Moses’ “latter sign”:

52 So he asked them the hour when he began to mend, and they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."

53 The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live"; and he himself believed, and all his household.

54 This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee. (Jn 4:52-54)

In these citations, and in the following, John uses the word σημειον for ‘sign’, just as the Septuagint had done for the authenticating signs done by Moses in Exodus 4. And also the people witnessing Jesus’ miracle of giving them an abundance of bread after He had prayed, just as Moses’ prayer had brought the people an abundance of manna, recognized it as a sign that He was the prophet like Moses:

13 So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten.

14 When the people saw the sign which he had done, they said, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world!" (Jn 6:13-14)

And the people expected the Messiah to do signs:

31 Yet many of the people believed in him; they said, "When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?" (Jn 7:31 RSV)

²⁸ Hoeven, 2008, updated 2013, John Mark – Author of the Gospel of John with Jesus’ mother; Hoeven, 2009, updated 2011, Jesus and Isaac – Joseph Caiphas; Hoeven, 2009, updated 2011, Paul’s Cephas is Caiphas – Author of 1Peter and Hebrews; Hoeven, 2009, updated 2011, The Elder and the Elect Lady – Joseph ‘Peter’ and Mary in Rome; Capper, 1998, ‘With the Oldest Monks ...’ Light from Essene History on the Career of the Beloved Disciple?, signalled the close association of the source of the Fourth Gospel with the Essenes, and with the Sadducean hierarchy, and with the movement of John the Baptist. The shortest link between these four is the marriage and co-authorship of the Essene Joseph Caiphas with the Virgin Mary, daughter of the Sadducean high priest Annas and blood relative and visitor of the mother of John the Baptist. The beloved disciple, also co-author of the Fourth Gospel, lived in the house of the Cenacle virtually next door to Caiphas in or near the Essene quarter of Jerusalem and probably was John Mark, the secretary of the Council of the Temple and the Sanhedrin. Capper, 2015, *Essene Adoptions and the Essene Houses of the Community...*, suggests that Herod the Great appointed very learned and just Essenes – also loyal to the Zadokite high priests – to high legal and administrative positions in order to exclude the influence of the Hasmonean dynasty, competitors of Herod and his Zadokite high priests. Also the Roman procurator Valerius Gratus may have appointed the just, ascetic and learned Essene Joseph Caiphas to high priest, while Caiphas’ father’s name and family name were apparently unknown, in order to diminish the influence and rivalry of the Hasmoneans, Pharisees and Sadducees (cf. Safrai *et al.*, 1974, *The Jewish People in the First Century*, p.349) and in order to ensure the high priest’s complete concord with the Roman government’s policies, as it was an explicit Essene law to “ever show fidelity to all men, and especially to those in authority” (Josephus, *War of the Jews* 2.8.7[137]), which may also have been one of the reasons why Joseph Caiphas accepted the appointment of high priest. This, his being an Essene, could help explain Joseph Caiphas’ exceptionally long high priesthood of 18 years.

Peter confirms that Jesus is the prophet like Moses

After Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension, Simon Peter explicitly tells the Jews that Jesus is indeed the expected prophet like Moses (Act 3:20-23).

20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities. (Acts 3:20-26 AV)

The unique characteristic of Moses is that he was exposed and adopted as a child and then was misunderstood and refused by his fellow Israelites (Ex 2:14 Acts 7:25,35 Heb 11:25) and had to authenticate himself to them by signs. The giving of the law could only be done after Moses had authenticated himself as a prophet sent by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In Jesus' times, many rabbis explained the law to the Jews, and also Jesus could have been seen by them as just another rabbi who explained the law in a new way, be it with a strange authority (Mt 7:28-29). The uniqueness that links Jesus and Moses is not the giving of the law, respectively, a new interpretation of the law, nor the leading of the people out of Egypt, respectively, out of sin, but their having been exposed as a child and therefore refused: both had to endure "the reproach of Christ" (Heb 11:26).

Moses ... Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt (Heb 11:24,26 AV)

Saint Melito of Sardis wrote that Jesus was exposed in Moses

In the second century, Saint Melito of Sardis, a bishop who observed the Christian Pasch on the same day as the Jews observed their Passover, wrote, in his Homily on the Passion that Jesus was exposed in Moses, as a type:

"59. If you desire that the mystery of the Lord be seen, look at Abel who was likewise slain, at Isaac who was also bound, at Joseph who was also sold, at Moses who was also exposed, at David who was also persecuted, at the prophets who also suffered because of Christ.

...

69. He is the Pasch that is our salvation. He suffered much in many [who became before him]. He was killed in Abel, bound in Isaac, exiled in Jacob, sold in Joseph,

exposed in Moses, sacrificed in the lamb, persecuted in David, dishonored in the prophets.” (St. Melito of Sardis, Homily on the Passion)

2.2.3. Suffering and triumphant and forever-lasting Messiah

The prophecies of Isaiah 53 about the ‘suffering servant’ and of Daniel 9:25-26 about “an anointed one” that would be “cut off”, were prophecies about the Messiah; the forever-lasting triumphant Messiahhood is described in Ps 110 Isa 9:5-6 Da 7:14. After his death and resurrection, Jesus combined the Messianic prophecies, while referring to Himself:²⁹

26 Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"

27 And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. (Lu 24:26-27 RSV)

2.3. Anointing woman OK: The Virgin Mary is more than a prophetess - Bride of the Holy Spirit

In this part of the article, I will argue that Jesus’ virgin mother Mary could have validly anointed Jesus Messiah. The next chapter (3. Disclosures) will show that the woman who anointed Jesus’ head could have been no one else but she.

My thesis is that after the infant Jesus had been exposed by Joseph son of Jacob and adopted by Joseph son of Heli, his virgin mother Mary lived separately from her husband and incognito, perhaps in an Essene community for widows and married women living separately from their husbands,³⁰ and became known as Mary Magdalene.³¹ Just as Jesus during his adult years was not known as the Bethlehem-born Son of David, also his mother was not and cannot have been known as Jesus’ mother who gave birth to Him in Bethlehem and who was the bride of Joseph of Jacob, the Son of David. She herself of course knew who she was, and who Jesus was, and that she was entitled to anoint her Son Messiah.

2.3.1. Mary knew Jesus was the Messiah, suffering and then triumphant

The Virgin Mary knew her Son was the biblically promised Messiah and even Son of God, for the angel Gabriel had told her this at the annunciation of her virginal pregnancy and the shepherds had confirmed this by telling their angels’ message to Mary, after Jesus’ virginal birth in the foretold Bethlehem.

30 And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David,

33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end."

34 And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?"

²⁹ cf. Hoeven, 2009 (updated 2011), Jesus and Isaac – Joseph Caiphas

³⁰ cf. Capper, 2015

³¹ Hoeven, 2009, Jesus and Moses – Mary Magdalene

[34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? AV]

35 And the angel said to her, "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. (Lu 1:30-35 RSV)

10 And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people;

11 for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

12 And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

...

16 And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17 And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child;

18 and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

19 But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. (Lu 2:10-19 RSV)

In Nazareth, Jesus Himself had said that Isaiah's prophecy "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor" had been fulfilled that day in Him (Lu 4:17-21). But Mary also knew from Simeon that her Son would be "a sign that is spoken against" and that "also" her soul would be pierced:

34 and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against

35 (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed." (Lu 2:34-35 RSV)

In addition, she most probably had heard from her husband Joseph that Jesus "will save his people from their sins" (Mt 1:21). Later Jesus said that He "came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mt 20:28). Moreover, right before the anointment of his head, reported in Mt 26:3-10, Jesus had told his disciples that "after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of man will be delivered up to be crucified" (Mt 26:1-2) and Mary may have heard this. So, Mary could have anointed her Son Messiah before his announced suffering, death and resurrection, also knowing that she was the bride of the Holy Spirit and therefore entitled to perform this physical anointing together with her divine spouse, the Holy Spirit.

2.3.2. Mary, prophetess above all prophetesses

The Spirit of God could come upon someone and make him or her prophesy, as also said by Joel "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy" (Joe 2:28).³² Throughout Jewish history, up to and including the first century AD, also a woman could be a prophetess, since Miriam (Ex 15:20), Deborah (Jud 4:4), Huldah (2Ki 22:14), the wife of Isaiah (Isa 8:3), Noadiah (Ne 6:14), and

³² e.g., the seventy elders in the desert (Ex 11:25-29); Balaam (Nu 24.2-4); Saul (1Sa 10:6,10-13 19:23-24); the messengers of Saul (1Sa 19:20); David (2Sa 23:2); Azariah the son of Ozed (2Ch 15:1-2,8); the Levite Jahaziel the son of Zechariah (2Ch 20:14-15); Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest (2Ch 24:20); "thy prophets" (Nehemiah 9:30); Isaiah (Isa 48:16-17); Ezechiel (Ez 2:2-4 3:24-27 11:5); "all flesh" and "your sons and your daughters" (Joe 2:28); "the former prophets" (Zec 7:12).

Anna (Lu 2:36) were all a “prophetess”, and, in New Covenant-times, the evangelist Philip had four unmarried daughters who “prophesied” (Acts 21:8-9), and a woman Jezebel called herself a “prophetess” (Re 2:22).

Jesus’ virgin mother Mary was a blood relative (‘sungenis’) of Elisabeth, who was “of the daughters of Aaron” (Lu 1:5,36 NA27) and who, when “filled with the Holy Spirit”, prophesied about Mary at the visitation (Lu 1:41-45). She was married to the priest Zachariah, who was also “filled with the Holy Spirit” and then “prophesied” (Lu 1:67). Mary’s husband Joseph, according to my study,³³ was appointed by the Roman procurator Valerius Gratus in 18 AD to become the high priest Joseph Caiaphas,³⁴ the son-in-law of Annas. He, as the official high priest, “prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation” (Jn 11:51).

The Virgin Mary, as a high priest’s daughter and a high priest’s wife, may very well have been a prophetess herself, like the wife of the prophet Isaiah was a “prophetess” herself (Isa 8:3), and like Huldah, the wife of Sallum, who was the priest with the high office of “keeper of the wardrobe” of the priestly garments in the temple,³⁵ was a “prophetess” (2Ki 22:14-20) and probably lived in the temple precincts (“the second” part of the temple), like the “prophetess” Anna would do later (Lu 2:36-38); Huldah had the southern temple gates called after her (Middot 1:3). The Virgin Mary herself prophesied in her Magnificat (Lu 1:46-55): “For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed” (Lu 1:48). From heaven, she still brings prophetic messages (e.g. those of Fatima, Amsterdam,³⁶ and Akita) to the world.

Most of all, the Virgin Mary was a prophetess above all others, because she is uniquely full of grace (“gratia plena” Lu 1:28 Vulgate, cf. CCC 490-491), was conceived and preserved free from all stain of original sin (CCC 722, 966), the Holy Spirit came upon her at Christ’s Incarnation (Lu 1:35 Mt 1:18), and Fathers and writers of the Church

“saw in the mysterious relationship between the Spirit and Mary an aspect redolent of marriage, poetically portrayed by Prudentius: “The unwed Virgin espoused the Spirit,”(79) and they called her the “Temple of the Holy Spirit,”(80) an expression that emphasizes the sacred character of the Virgin, now the permanent dwelling of the Spirit of God” and “they attributed to the Spirit the faith, hope and charity that animated the Virgin’s heart, the strength that sustained her acceptance of the will of

³³ Hoeven, 2009 (updated 2011), Jesus and Isaac – Joseph Caiaphas; Hoeven, 2009 (updated 2011), Paul’s Cephas is Caiaphas – Author of 1Peter and Hebrews; Hoeven, 2009, Chronological Sequence of Appearances – And the Eleven, Cephas and James discussed; Hoeven, 2009 (updated 2011), The Elder and the Elect Lady – Joseph ‘Peter’ and Mary in Rome; cf. Hoeven, 2008 (updated 2013), John Mark – Author of the Gospel of John with Jesus’ mother; cf. Hoeven, 2009, James and the brothers – Davidic representatives in the temple liturgy

³⁴ King Uzziah was punished by God for entering the holy place of the temple to burn incense while this daily duty was already allotted to an Aaronite priest every morning and performed in the name of Azariah, the official high priest (2Chr 26:16-20); king Jerobeam of Israel burned incense at the altar in Bethel (1Ki 13:1). Several kings had performed priestly liturgical acts in the sanctuary: sacrificing (1Sa3:9-10 2Sa 6:13.17-18 1Ki 3:4.15 8:5.62-64 9:25), bringing up the sacrifice upon the altar (1Ki 12,33 2Ki 16:12-15), blessing the people in the name of God (2Sa 6:18 1Ki 8:14); consecrating a part of the temple (1Ki 8:64); wearing linen as the priests did (2Sa 6:14). And “David’s sons were priests (‘cohen’ 2Sa 8:18). The prophesied so-called “Branch” who would sit on the throne of the high priest Joshua, would be a descendant of David (Zec 6,11-13 3,1-5.8 Jer 33,15-18). Epiphanius, in 374-7 AD, wrote about the Hasmonean high priest-king “Alexander, a ruler of priestly and kingly stock”, that “when the two tribes, the kingly and priestly, were united – I mean the tribe of Judah with Aaron and the whole tribe of Levi – kings also became priests” (Panarion 29,3,3-6 and 51,22,21). Menelaus was even from the tribe of Benjamin, not of Levi or David, but nevertheless was appointed high priest by Antiochus and remained the high priest for about ten years, from 171 to about 161 BC (2Macc 3:4 4:23). The Messiah would be both a Davidic king (2Sa 7:12-16, Ps 2 Ps 89:28-38 1Chr 17:11-14 22:9-10 28:6-7) and a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Ps 110).

³⁵ Cf. Hoeven, 2009, Jesus and Isaac – Joseph Caiaphas

³⁶ The messages of The Lady of All Nations, Amsterdam, 1945-1959, <http://www.de-vrouwe.info>

God, and the vigor that upheld her in her suffering at the foot of the cross.(81) In Mary's prophetic canticle (cf. Lk. 1:46-55) they saw a special working of the Spirit who had spoken through the mouths of the prophets.(82)” (Blessed Paul VI, *Marialis Cultis* 26).

Also the prayer of the Holy Rosary says she is the Bride of the Holy Spirit. Speaking about the Virgin Mary, the Catechism of the Catholic Church says:

“Mary, the all-holy ever-virgin Mother of God, is the masterwork of the mission of the Son and the Spirit in the fullness of time. For the first time in the plan of salvation and because his Spirit had prepared her, the Father found the dwelling place where his Son and his Spirit could dwell among men. ... With and through the Holy Spirit, the Virgin conceives and gives birth to the Son of God. ... She is the burning bush of the definitive theophany. Filled with the Holy Spirit she makes the Word visible in the humility of his flesh. It is to the poor and the first representatives of the gentiles that she makes him known. (Cf. Lk 1:15-19; Mt 2:11.) Finally, through Mary, the Holy Spirit begins to bring men, the objects of God's merciful love, (Cf. Lk 2:14.) into communion with Christ. And the humble are always the first to accept him: shepherds, magi, Simeon and Anna, the bride and groom at Cana, and the first disciples. At the end of this mission of the Spirit, Mary became the Woman, the new Eve ("mother of the living"), the mother of the "whole Christ." (Cf. Jn 19:25-27.) As such, she was present with the Twelve, who "with one accord devoted themselves to prayer," (Acts 1:14.) at the dawn of the "end time" which the Spirit was to inaugurate on the morning of Pentecost with the manifestation of the Church.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 721-726)

So, according to Church teaching, the Holy Spirit also dwelt in Mary after the birth of Jesus Christ, fulfilling “this mission of the Spirit” also during her further earthly life, at least until Mary stood at the foot of the cross and became “the mother of the "whole Christ.”” (CCC 726). The dogmatic bull *Ineffabilis Deus* also says “the Mother of God was the abode of all Divine graces, adorned with all the charisms of the Holy Spirit, yea, the treasury well nigh infinite and abyss inexhaustible of these charisms”.³⁷ The anointment of the head of Jesus could then also have been done by her in union with the Holy Spirit and therefore be a valid royal, dynastic, anointment. That she was a woman need not have been an obstacle, for even the ‘mortals’, אֲנָשִׁי, of Judah, probably including its women, anointed David king over Judah (2Sa 2:4 BHS).³⁸

2.3.3. Three different women, three different anointments

The Greek Fathers, as a whole, distinguish the three persons:

- the "sinner" of Luke 7:36-50;
- the sister of Martha and Lazarus, Luke 10:38-42 and John 11; and
- Mary Magdalene.³⁹

³⁷ “by this singular and solemn salutation, otherwise never heard of, it is shown that the Mother of God was the abode of all Divine graces, adorned with all the charisms of the Holy Spirit, yea, the treasury well nigh infinite and abyss inexhaustible of these charisms, so that she was never subjected to the one accursed” (Bull *Ineffabilis Deus*.)” This quote is in the encyclical *Fulgens Corona* of Pope Pius XII, 1953

³⁸ cf. אֲנָשִׁי נִינְוָה “the people of Nineveh”, “The Ninevites” (Jonah 3:5 BHS, RSV, NIV)

³⁹ Hugh Pope, 1910, ‘St. Mary Magdalen’, Catholic Encyclopedia, New Advent edition, 1997, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09761a.htm> ; this item of the encyclopedia I misinterpreted in my previous articles “From Bethlehem to Nazareth – And a memorial in Bethany”, published in 2008, and “Jesus and Isaac – Joseph Caiphas” (2009, updated 2011), but now, in 2016, this error has been corrected.

Compliant with this distinction is my opinion that there were three different women who anointed Jesus in some way:

- 1) an anonymous sinner who anointed Jesus' feet in Galilee (Lu 7:37-38)
- 2) Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha and Lazarus, who surely anointed Jesus' feet in Bethany (Jn 11:1-2) before his festive entrance into Jerusalem (Jesus' arrival in Bethany "six days before the Passover" Jn 12:1; anointment of the feet: Jn 12:2-8; festive entrance on "the next day": Jn 12:12-19)
- 3) Jesus' incognito virgin mother, known as Mary Magdalene,⁴⁰ who was "the woman" (Mt 26:10) who anointed Jesus' head after his festive entrance into Jerusalem and two days before the Passover (festive entrance: Mk 11:1-10 and Mt 21:1-11 and three arrivals in the temple on three subsequent days ("already late" Mk 11:11, "the next day" vss. 12-15, "evening came"... "in the morning" vss. 19-27), anointment of the head: "It was now two days before the Passover" Mk 14:1-9 and Mt 26:6-13).

Most of the Western medieval Church held that the sinner of Luke 7, Mary of Bethany of John 11-12 and Mary Magdalene were one and the same woman.⁴¹ For instance, Pope Gregory the Great, in his sermon 33, on Luke 7,36-50, identified Mary of Bethany of John 11-12 with the sinner of Luke 7 and with Mary Magdalene of Luke 8:2, from whom seven demons 'had departed'.⁴² In 1910 AD, his view was defended by the author of an article of the Catholic Encyclopedia, Hugué Pope, who equated the anointing of the feet of John 11-12 with the anointing of the head of Matthew 26 and Mark 14, and from there connected the high praise and memorial for the woman in Matthew and Mark with Mary Magdalene, because she is so prominently present in the Gospel descriptions of Jesus' cross and burial and "was the first recorded witness of the Resurrection".⁴³ The Greek Orthodox Church, however, always held that the three women were three separate persons.⁴⁴ Since the reform of the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar in 1969, Mary of Bethany and Mary Magdalene are explicitly celebrated on two different days by the Catholic Church as well, each woman having her own liturgical memorial (22 July for Mary Magdalene⁴⁵ and 29 July for Martha, Mary and Lazarus of Bethany),⁴⁶ and Mary Magdalene's liturgy does not have a reading about the sinner of Luke 7 any longer.⁴⁷

⁴⁰ For their identification, see Hoeven, 2009, Jesus and Moses – Mary Magdalene

⁴¹ Hugh Pope, 1910, 'St. Mary Magdalen', New Advent edition, 1997; Ludwig Jansen, 2001, The Making of the Magdalen: Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages, p. 35

⁴² Gregory I, PP, in *Sancti Gregorii Magnum Romani Pontificis, XL Homiliarum in Evangelia, Libri Duo*, p. 264: "Hanc verum quam Lucas peccatricem mulierem, Joannes Mariam nominat, illam esse Mariam credimus, de qua Marcus septem daemonia ejecta fuisse testatur."; English translation of this specific part of the 33rd homily: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Magdalen and <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/who-was-mary-magdalen-119565482/?no-ist=&cmd=chdjys1wdwitmjy0ndqynti0nte5mdk0nw&page=4>; 'had departed': see Hoeven, 2009, Jesus and Moses – Mary Magdalene

⁴³ Hugh Pope, 1910; in adding the word "recorded", this author seems reluctant to say that Mary Magdalene actually was the first witness of the resurrection (Mk 16:9), probably because he felt that the first appearance of the risen Jesus would be much more appropriate for Jesus' virgin mother, who stood at the cross.

⁴⁴ Ludwig Jansen, 2001, p.35

⁴⁵ Since 3 June 2016, the celebration of St. Mary Magdalene has the dignity of liturgical Feast instead of only memorial, <http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2016/06/10/0422/00974.html>

⁴⁶ *Calendarium Romanum* of 1969 of the Blessed Pope Paul VI

⁴⁷ On 22 July the *Calendarium Romanum*, 1969, says "No change has been made in the title of today's memorial, but it concerns only Saint Mary Magdalene, to whom Christ appeared after his resurrection. It is not about the sister of Saint Martha, nor about the sinful woman whose sins the Lord forgave (Luke 7:36–50)" (p. 131) and "it

The woman

The woman who anointed Jesus' head beforehand for burial would indeed most probably also have been present among the women who wanted to anoint Jesus' body after death. Among these, Mary Magdalene is most prominent, being the only one who is mentioned among them in all four Gospels, and she is also the only one who is mentioned by all four Gospels as standing at the foot of the cross and she is the only one who is specified in both specifications of the women who saw the burial of Jesus, and she is also the one who first saw the risen Jesus, which is explicitly stated in Mark 16:9 and in the 1969 *Calendarium Romanum*⁴⁸:

“Now when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene”. (Mk 16:9 RSV)

Both Mary Magdalene and Jesus' mother are mentioned in both the Gospel of Matthew and that of Mark,⁴⁹ in which the anointing of Jesus' head is described. However, in Mark and in Matthew's Gospel outside the Infancy narratives, the mentioned “mother” only appears when she wants to speak to Him while He is preaching in Galilee, and is the mother of Jesus' “brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas” and of his “sisters”⁵⁰ – and, in my view, is only Jesus' adoptive mother – and no mother of Jesus is mentioned as present at the cross at all in these Gospels; also note that, in both Mark and Matthew, Mary Magdalene is only mentioned by name in the description of the cross, burial and empty tomb of Jesus, after the anointment of the head has been described. So, if some hold that it's possible that, in spite of the singular anonymity of “the woman”, this anointing woman was Mary Magdalene, then this anonymous woman might as well have been Jesus' virgin mother, who stood at the cross, – which I hold identical (but not identical to the sinner of Luke 7 or to Mary of Bethany).⁵¹

According to Matthew Jesus called the anointress “the woman” (“Why do you trouble the woman?” Mt 26:10 RSV) at the anointment, but this is in line with the fact that He called his mother “woman” at the wedding in Cana and also at the cross (Jn 2:4 and 19:26). In fact, there is no verse in the New Testament in which Jesus calls his mother “mother”.

The “alabaster” of flasks of ointment (Mt 26:7 Mk 14:3 Lu 7:37), according to the honourable Bede, possibly referring to information of Pliny, came from Thebe (Egypt) or from Damascus (Syria) or from India.⁵² The “pound of costly ointment of pure nard” which Mary of Bethany poured on Jesus' feet – ‘litran murou nardou pistikēs polutimou’ –, may have been of the same “myrrh” (‘smurna’ of the same root as the word ‘murou’), which the wise men from the

will make mention neither of Mary of Bethany nor of the sinful woman of Luke 7:36–50, but only of Mary Magdalene, the first person to whom Christ appeared after his resurrection” (p. 98) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Magdalene); Latin text of *Calendarium Romanum* of Paul VI on July 22: http://www.binetti.ru/colf/22_07.htm

⁴⁸ “*Maria Magdalena cui Christus post suam resurrectionem primae apparuit.*” *Calendarium Romanum* of 1969 of Paul VI on July 22: http://www.binetti.ru/colf/22_07.htm

⁴⁹ Magdalene: Mt 27:56,61 28:1 Mk 15:40,47 16:1,9, mother: Mt 1:18 2:11 (2:13,14,20,21) 12:46-50 13:55 Mk 3:31-35 6:3

⁵⁰ Mt 12:46 13:55-56 Mk 3:31-32 6:3

⁵¹ Hoeven, 2009, Jesus and Moses – Mary Magdalene; perhaps Jesus' virgin mother Mary, who since the cross of Jesus was also the ‘mother’ of the beloved disciple (Jn 19:26-27), viz. John Mark (cf. Hoeven, 2008, John Mark – Author of the Gospel of John with Jesus' mother), asked her ‘son’ Mark that no name or identity would be mentioned in his description of her anointing of Jesus' head in Mk 14. This omission could have been repeated in the Gospel of Matthew.

⁵² Haskins, 1993, Mary Magdalen: myth and metaphor, p. 109.

East (India?) had presented to the Child Jesus, probably in the same “house” where both the young Holy family and the adult Jesus “lodged”, in Bethany (Mt 2:11 26:6; Mt 21:17).⁵³ Of this myrrh Joseph and Mary can have left a flask in Bethany when they fled to Egypt, for Mary of Bethany had “kept” it: in Greek *τητηρηκεν*, the indicative perfect of the verb *τηρεω*: to attend to carefully, to take care of: a) to guard b) to keep.⁵⁴ Jesus’ virgin mother Mary may also have kept a flask of the myrrh she had received from the wise men, in order to be able to anoint Jesus Messiah with it at some stage. The price, at which Judas set down the ointment, indicates that it was of the most precious kind.⁵⁵

3. Disclosures

6 But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me.

ο δε ιησους ειπεν αφερε αυτην τι αυτη κοπους παρεχετε καλον εργον ηργασατο εν εμοι

[But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman (τη γυναικι)? For she has done a beautiful thing to me (καλον ηργασατο εις εμε). (Mt 26:10 RSV WH)]

7 For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you will, you can do good to them; but you will not always have me.

παντοτε γαρ τους πτωχους εχετε μεθ εαυτων και οταν θελητε δυνασθε αυτοις [παντοτε] ευ ποιησαι εμε δε ου παντοτε εχετε

8 She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burying.

ο εσχεν εποιησεν προελαβεν μυρισαι το σωμα μου εις τον ενταφιασμον

[12 In pouring this ointment on my body she has done it to prepare me for burial (προς το ενταφιασαι με εποιησεν). (Mt 26:12 RSV WH)]

9 And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her." (Mk 14:6-9 RSV)

αμην δε λεγω υμιν οπου εαν κηρυχθη το ευαγγελιον εις ολον τον κοσμον και ο εποιησεν αυτη λαληθησεται εις μνημοσυνον αυτης (Mk 14:6-9 WH)⁵⁶

3.1. A beautiful work

She has done a beautiful thing (Mk 14: 6 RSV)

καλον εργον ηργασατο (Mk 14:6 WH NA27 TR)

do good (Mk 14:7 RSV)

ευ ποιησαι (Mk 14:7 WH NA27 TR)

⁵³ ‘murou’ Jn 12:3, NA²⁷; ‘smurna’ Mt 2:11, NA²⁷; Bethany: Hoeven, 2008, From Bethlehem to Nazareth – And a memorial in Bethany

⁵⁴ “kept it”: Green’s literal translation, Green’s modern KJV, Revised Webster translation, Darby translation and others, Jn 12:7, (Strong’s concordance, Online Bible Lexicon); *τητηρηκεν* in TR; *τηρηση* in NA²⁷ WH = Aorist Active Subjunctive of *τηρεω*.

⁵⁵ Mk 14:5 Jn 12:5; Ricciotti, 1944, Leven van Jezus, p. 566

⁵⁶ Online parallel text of the RSV, WH, TR, and SBLGNT:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mk%2014%3A6-9&version=RSV;WHNU;TR1894;SBLGNT>

The work (εργον) of the woman is called καλον ('kalon') = 'beautiful', both in Mk 14:6 and Mt 26:10 (WH NA27 TR), in contrast to what the disciples could do to the poor: just ευ = 'good' (Mk 14:7 WH NA27 TR). An anointment beforehand merely for burying a person may perhaps be called "beautiful", but it is much better qualified as 'dramatic'. An anointment on the head (also) signifying Jesus' Messiahhood, on the other hand, fits the qualification "beautiful" very well. The crown of king Solomon and his queen-mother was called "the crown of your beauty" (Jer 13:18 Young's Literal Translation).

The word καλον is also used in "it would be better (καλον) for him if a great millstone were hung round his neck", and "it is better (καλον) for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go to hell", and "woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It would have been better (καλον) for that man if he had not been born" (Mk 9:42,43 14:21 WH TR NA27). Here, even death and being maimed are καλον because it can prevent a person from going to hell and can be conducive to redemption (cf. 1Pe 4:6 3:19). That the work of the woman is καλον, can thus also mean it is conducive to redemption or even redemptive (cf. "I am the good (καλον) shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." Jn 10:11).

3.2. In Me

εν εμοι (Mk 14:6 WH SBLGNT NA27)
in me (Mk 14:6 Vulgate)

The parallel verse in Matthew has εις εμε, 'to Me' (Mt 26:10 WH TR SBLGNT⁵⁷ NA27), and also the Textus Receptus of Mk 14:6 has εις εμε, but Mark's εν εμοι, 'in Me', is the *lectio difficilior* and thus more likely to be the original. According to Mark 14:6, Jesus literally said 'she has worked a beautiful work in Me'.

For someone to be able to work "in Christ", one would first have to *be* "in Christ",⁵⁸ which for any ordinary person would mean to have been redeemed from sin by the redemptive death of Jesus Christ and by the personal acceptance of this redemption and the appliance of it to oneself in the reception of the Sacraments and a life of conversion: "if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2Co 5:17); "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ" (Eph 2:13 RSV); "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him" (Jn 6:56); "He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5).⁵⁹ However, the woman worked, and thus was, 'in Christ' before Jesus' redeeming death and resurrection even took place, historically. There is only one woman or even person who could have been this person: the Immaculate Conception, the Virgin Mary, mother of Christ. According to Church teaching, she uniquely was redeemed by Christ and preserved free from original sin in the moment of her conception in virtue of the merits of the redeeming sacrifice of her Son:

... the Most Blessed Virgin Mary at the first moment of her conception was, by singular grace and privilege of the Omnipotent God, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the Human race, preserved from all stains of original sin. (Dogmatic bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, of Dec. 8, 1854)" (Pope Pius XII, Encyclical *Fulgens Corona*, 1953)

⁵⁷ <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mt+26%3A10&version=RSV;WHNU;TR1894;SBLGNT>

⁵⁸ Cf. "in Christ" Rom 6:11 8:1-2 12:5 16:7 1Cor 1:2,30 3:1 15:18 16:24 2Cor 1:21 5:17 12:2 Gal 1:22 3:28 Eph 2:11-13 Php 4:21 Col 1:2 1Th 2:15 2Ti 3:12 1Pe 5:14

⁵⁹ Cf. Jn 14:18-20

Christ was the Redeemer of his mother and performed his redeeming action in her “in the most perfect way” (*Fulgens Corona*: AAS 45 [1953] 581), from the first moment of her existence” (Saint John Paul II, 23rd catechesis on the M.B.V. Mary, June 12, 1996).⁶⁰

According to the New Testament and Church teaching, any baptized Christian, while in a state of sanctifying grace, can to a certain degree participate in Christ’s suffering⁶¹ and can even, like Paul, “complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church” (Col 1:24), and his or her suffering can become “a participation in the saving work of Jesus”⁶² (CCC 1521) (cf. CCC 2010-2011, 2023-2025). In the sanctuary of Fatima, Pope Benedict XVI said to the sick faithful that, by entrusting every setback and pain to Jesus, ‘you will be redeemers in the Redeemer’.⁶³ Only Mary, the Immaculate Conception, could – and, also in the anointment, actually did – participate in the redemptive work of Christ in a unique way, as she already co-operated and participated in it before the death and resurrection of Christ. She even made possible his redemptive work by giving Him his human body and by giving Him away when her husband exposed Him as a Child and by sharing in his silence about his and her true descent and history and by sharing in the consequential suffering (e.g., the disciples gave her “trouble” and some “reproached her”, Mk 14:6 Mt 26:10) and by giving her maternal consent to Jesus’ consequential death for the sins of humanity (see also 3.5 and 3.6 below). She “faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross” (CCC 964). She could therefore uniquely be called the co-redemptrix, with and ‘in’ Jesus.

3.3. What she had, she did

ο εσχεν εποησεν (Mk 14:8 WH NA27)
quod habuit haec fecit (Mk 14:8 Vulgate)

The Greek text of this verse 8 literally says: ‘What she had, she did’ or ‘What she had, she executed’ (this is again in contrast to what Jesus said of the disciples: δυνασθε ποιησαι =

⁶⁰ “Cristo fu il redentore di sua Madre ed esercitò in lei la sua azione redentiva "nel modo perfettissimo" (*Fulgens Corona*: AAS 45 [1953] 581), sin dal primo momento dell’esistenza. Il Concilio Vaticano II ha proclamato che la Chiesa "ammira ed esalta in Maria il frutto più eccellente della Redenzione" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 103).” Saint John Paul II, 23rd catechesis on the M.B.V. Mary, June 12, 1996

⁶¹ E.g. 1Pe 4:13-17 Ro 8:17 Php 3:10; “In the Paschal Mystery Christ began *the union with man in the community of the Church*. The mystery of the Church is expressed in this: that already in the act of Baptism, which brings about a configuration with Christ, and then through his Sacrifice—sacramentally through the Eucharist—the Church is continually being built up spiritually as the Body of Christ. In this Body, Christ wishes to be united with every individual, and in a special way he is united with those who suffer.”, “*the Church completes the redemptive work of Christ*.” St. John Paul II, *Salvifici doloris* 24; “the revelation of the salvific power and salvific significance of suffering in Christ’s messianic mission and, subsequently, in the mission and vocation of the Church.” Ibid. 25; “may your suffering in union with the Cross of Christ be victorious!” Ibid. 31.

⁶² The Dutch translation says “verlossingswerk” = ‘redemptive work’: “het wordt deelname aan het verlossingswerk van Jezus” (Katechismus van de Katholieke Kerk, 1521, SRKK/LICAP – Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Utrecht/Brussel 1995, p. 336, also in the 2001 digital version adjusted according to the 1997 ‘editio typica’ <http://www.rkdocumenten.nl/rkdocs/index.php?mi=600&doc=1&id=1230> (accessed 31 May 2016); the Latin text is: “participatio fit salvifici operis Iesu” http://www.vatican.va/archive/catechism_lt/p2s2c2a5_lt.htm

⁶³ He said it in Portuguese: “Sereis redentores no Redentor” http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/pt/homilies/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20100513_fatima.html (Saudação aos doentes); cf. the Portuguese reporter saying ‘redentores in Redentor’ at 1:14 of <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jn9Fz0gwMiQ&list=PLC97CF363ECC8BCD6>; cf. Benedict XVI speaking Portuguese in the Holy Mass of 13-05-2010 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4AVcs7fKJnA>

‘you can do’ Mk 14:7 WH TR NA27). The Virgin Mary was the only woman who had the knowledge that Jesus was the dynastic and from-everlasting Messiah – high priest and king –, worthy to be physically anointed.⁶⁴ She also had the Holy Spirit as her Spouse entitling her to give Him this anointment.⁶⁵ With her husband Joseph, she was the only woman at that moment who had the knowledge that Jesus would “save his people from their sins” (Mt 1:21). As his real biological mother, she was also the only one who had the authority to give Him her maternal consent to his high priestly sacrificial redeeming death, the death on the cross after two days that He had just announced to his disciples (Mt 1:21 20:28 26:1-2). She executed this unique authority by anointing her Son beforehand for burial. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that Mary consented to the immolation of her Son:

Mary's role in the Church is inseparable from her union with Christ and flows directly from it. "This union of the mother with the Son in the work of salvation is made manifest from the time of Christ's virginal conception up to his death";^(LG 57) it is made manifest above all at the hour of his Passion:

Thus the Blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross. There she stood, in keeping with the divine plan, enduring with her only begotten Son the intensity of his suffering, joining herself with his sacrifice in her mother's heart, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this victim, born of her: to be given, by the same Christ Jesus dying on the cross, as a mother to his disciple, with these words: "Woman, behold your son." (LG 58; cf. Jn 19:26-27.) (CCC 964)

Note that Mary had all crucial knowledge about her Son since the time of Jesus' birth. Any other prophetess, who may have been incited by the Holy Spirit to anoint Jesus Messiah, shortly before the anointment, would only have received this command, like the prophet Samuel had received the command to anoint one of the sons of Jesse, which turned out to be the young shepherd David, while Samuel did not know him before (“are these all of your sons?” 1Sa 16:1-3,11-13). Such a prophetess anointing Jesus would not fit Jesus' description “What she had, she did”, but rather ‘what she received, she did’. Besides, such a prophetess would have announced her deed at the meal, saying she had received the command from the Lord to anoint Jesus Messiah, and then would have anointed Him as such with accompanying words. Also a woman who may have wanted to anoint Jesus' head only for burial, after Mary of Bethany had anointed the feet, would have said so, especially after Mary of Bethany had received a critical comment from Judas after her deed (Jn 12:4-6). But the actual anointress of Jesus' head performed the anointing without announcing why: some who were there, asked why it was done and reproached her (Mt 26:8-9 Mk 14:4-5). Jesus' virgin mother had a very strong reason not to announce why she anointed Jesus, even though she anointed Him Messiah and with this deed consented to his death: she did not want to disclose then that she actually was Jesus' virgin mother who had heard from an angel that her Son was the Messiah and who had given birth to Him virginally in Bethlehem and let Him be called Jesus by her husband, the Son of David – at least not as long as Jesus Himself did not disclose all of this.

⁶⁴ See 2.3.1., above. Martha of Bethany (and Simon Peter and the rest of the Twelve except Judas) merely believed it (Jn 11:27, 6:68-69) and the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well only wondered about it, even after Jesus had told her He was the Christ (Jn 4:25-26,29). Only Jesus' virgin mother Mary and her husband Joseph knew it.

⁶⁵ See 2.3.2., above

3.4. For burial

The anointment of Jesus' head was not recognized by the disciples as a dynastic anointment and the maternal consent and incitement to Jesus' sacrificial death, because the "woman" was not known to them as a prophetess or as Jesus' mother, but probably only as (Mary) Magdalene, and Jesus was not known to them as the son of Joseph of Jacob, Son of David, born in Bethlehem, but as the son of Joseph of Heli, and Jesus also was not known as God-become-man yet. At that moment, Jesus only affirms and discloses the burial meaning of the anointment, both in the intention of the woman – "she has done it to prepare me for burial" Mt 26:12 – and in his interpretation. He does not yet disclose the reality of his dynastic Messiahhood, his being the Son of the wife of Joseph of Jacob, of the royal line of David.⁶⁶

Even though Jesus, when standing before Pilate, said "My kingship is not of this world" (Jn 18:36 cf. Jn 8:23), as it is from everlasting and for God – "for Me" (Micah 5:2) –, it was also in this world at that moment.⁶⁷ Jesus confirmed to Pilate that He was king (Jn 18:37), even that He was "the King of the Jews" (Mt 27:11 Mk 15:2 Lu 23:3, cf. Jn 19:21), and, at the Last Supper, after He had let Judas go, Jesus had already said "I have overcome the world" (Jn 16:33, cf. Jn 13:27,31).

That He is the triumphant Messiah, He had already made clear to his disciples when speaking of his glorious return on the clouds of heaven as the King who will judge all nations (Mk 8:38 13:26-27 14:61-62 Mt 24:30-31 25:31-46). After his ascension and probably after the assumption of his virgin mother into heaven, He also confirmed He is the from-everlasting and dynastic Messiah of the Jewish people, "the root and the offspring of David" (cf. "the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end"):

12 "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense, to repay every one for what he has done.

13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

...

16 "I Jesus have sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star."

...

20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! (Re 22:12,16,20 RSV).

3.5. This Good News

12 In pouring this ointment on my body she has done it to prepare me for burial (προσ το ενταφιασαι με εποιησεν).

(12 In pouring this ointment over me, her object was to prepare me for burial. (1912 Weymouth NT Translation)

13 Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel (το ευαγγελιον τουτο) is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her." (Mt 26:12-13 RSV (WH TR⁶⁸ NA27))

⁶⁶ For a reconstruction of the disclosure process of Jesus' virginal birth and birthplace and royal descentance see Hoeven, 2009, The Infancy Gospels – "vehicles of Christology" or Revelation of Christ?

⁶⁷ Jesus also said that his disciples were not "of the world" but nevertheless "in the world" (Jn 17:11,14).

⁶⁸ <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matt%2026%3A12-13&version=RSV;WHNU;TR1894;SBLGNT>

At first sight it seems strange that Jesus calls the fact that He has been anointed on the head by the woman to prepare Him for burial “this gospel”, in Greek: το ευαγγελιον τουτο , literally: ‘this Good News’, which will be preached in the whole world. The anointment of Jesus just for burial is not Good News to the whole world. Even the death of Jesus as merely an anointed king cannot be Good News in its own right, except perhaps for his opponents. His having been anointed on the head beforehand for burial can only be Good News, in keeping with Jesus’ own preaching of the Good News (Gospel) in Mark and Matthew, if the anointment on the head is a valid high priestly anointment and his subsequent death is the death of the anointed high priest “to save his people from their sins” (Mt 1:21).⁶⁹ Then ‘this Good News’ is the high priestly sacrifice of Jesus’ death for our sins, described at large by the author of Hebrews. According to Mark and Matthew, Jesus had indeed preached the Gospel of the coming of the kingdom of God and the need for personal repentance of ones sins and personal conversion in order to be able to enter it⁷⁰:

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." ...

23 And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people. (Mt 4:17,23 RSV)

14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mk 1:14-15 RSV)

2 And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them,

3 and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Mt 18:2-4 RSV).

In the anointment of Jesus’ head He can only have been validly anointed high priest, if the woman had the intention of validly anointing Jesus the Messiah, the eternal high priest. At the moment of the anointing, Mary was the only woman who had the knowledge that Jesus, even though “it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah” (Heb 7:14), was nevertheless the eternal high priest as He was the dynastic Messiah, from everlasting and from Bethlehem, and that He would save his people from their sins (Mt 1:21).

Jesus certainly intended his death as “a ransom for many”, and the pouring out of his blood as “for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Mt 20:28 26:28 Mk 10:45). As Jesus said that the anointment was done “in Me”, and thus by his immaculate mother Mary (Mk 14:6), and that “she has done it to prepare me for burial” (Mt 26:13), Mary must have accepted the death of her Son. Because she accepted it “in Me”, she must have accepted it in the same way as He accepted it, i.e., as his unique redemptive death, for otherwise she would not have accepted her own redemption and would not have been ‘in Christ’ at the moment of the anointment. She indeed knew from the start that He would “save his people from their sins” (Mt 1:21) and Jesus had already said that He would give his life as a ransom for many and would die on the cross (e.g. Mt 16:21 20:19,28 26:2), so she indeed had to choose whether or not to accept her

⁶⁹ “Nur vom Standpunkt der Erlösung aus erhält die Salbung einen Sinn.” Lücking, 1993, p. 121

⁷⁰ Jesus only instituted the Sacrament of Penance after his redeeming death and resurrection (Jn 20:22-23); before his resurrection, the disciples were not even allowed to tell anyone that He was the Christ (Mt 16:20 cf. Mk 9:9).

Son's redemptive death on the cross. She also could have told the high priests and scribes about Jesus' and her and Joseph's true descent and history, and thus would have forced her Son and husband to confirm her story or else lie and call her a liar, and she thus would probably have caused two witnesses to give a corresponding and therefore determining testimony about her (cf. Jn 8:17 De 19:15 Mt 18:16).⁷¹ Instead, she chose to keep silent and accept her Son's death as the sacrificial death for the redemption of humanity. Besides, why else would she have accepted his death on the cross?⁷² That the anointment was worth a memorial of her, confirms that it expressed the mother's acceptance of her Son's redemptive death (see 3.6. below). In the anointment of Jesus' head she both anointed Him high priest and expressed this acceptance and gave her maternal consent to his sacrificial death, thereby also making visible that she is the co-redemptrix. **Also in this sense – and perhaps most of all – it is true that 'what she had (her redemption), she did (co-redeem)' (Mk 14:8).**

The author of Hebrews says "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered (προσενεχθεις, passive participle) to bear the sins of many" (Heb 9:28 AV WH NA27): in so far as Christ in his Passion and death was offered, passively, to God the Father, He was not offered by God the Father or by Himself, but most probably by his human legal father, Joseph son of Jacob, later called Caiaphas,⁷³ and by his mother, the Virgin Mary, who together had already presented Him to Lord as a Child (Lu 2:21-24 παραστησαι, "to present", literally 'to make stand beside' WH AV). A peaceful death of Jesus at an old age would not have been the prophesied sacrificial expiating death,⁷⁴ offered for the redemption and the forgiveness of sins of many also by the high priest Joseph, the official representative of the people before God.⁷⁵

3.6. Memorial of her – Dogma of Mary Coredemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate

Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, (this) also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial (μνημοσυνον) of her. (Mk 14:9 AV)

Mary of Bethany had already anointed Jesus' feet before his festive entrance into Jerusalem. But, either because she had not meant it as an anointment for burial, or, if she had, because she was not Jesus' mother, it apparently was not worth a memorial of her (Jn 11:1-2 2:1-8). The woman who anointed Jesus' head after his festive entrance into Jerusalem, on the other hand, knew Jesus had interpreted the anointment by Mary of Bethany, or at least why she had kept the ointment, as for burial (Jn 12:7), so she knew Jesus would interpret her anointing as

⁷¹ Like Abraham had to sacrifice his son Isaac, Joseph Caiaphas, as Jesus' legal father, "according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God"(Acts 2:23) sacrificed his Son Jesus by tearing his high priestly robes and calling Jesus' affirmation that He was the Christ, the Son of God/Son of the Blessed, "blasphemy" (Mt 26:63-65 Mk 14:61-63; cf. Hoeven, 2009, updated 2011, Jesus and Isaac – Joseph Caiaphas, e.g. 1.2.b).

⁷² Note that also a less painful death could have led to Jesus' resurrection.

⁷³ Actively, Jesus "offered Himself" Heb 9:14 cf. Heb 7:27 Tit 32:14; cf. Hoeven, 2009, updated 2011, Jesus and Isaac – Joseph Caiaphas; Hoeven, 2009, updated 2011, Paul's Cephas is Caiaphas – Author of 1Peter and Hebrews

⁷⁴ Jesus' death was to be "a guilt offering", and "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him" Isa 53:5,10; He was a "sacrifice" = θυσια from θυω = to sacrifice, kill, slaughter, Eph 5:2 TR WH NA27; "to make expiation", εις το ιλασκεσθαι Heb 2:17 RSV TR WH NA27, cf. επι το ιλαστηριον Le 16:15 LXX

⁷⁵ Cf. the prayer given at Fatima, where also St. Joseph appeared on 13 October 1917 and blessed the people with the Sign of the Cross: "O my Jesus, forgive us, save us from the fire of hell. Lead all souls to heaven, especially those who are most in need." Joseph had not been conceived immaculately and thus could not be a co-redemptor the way the Immaculate Mary was, but he could uniquely say "O my Jesus, forgive us".

<http://www.worldfatima.com/en/apparitions-our-lady>

for burial as well, especially now He had said that after only two days He would be delivered up to be crucified (Mt 26:1-2). Thus, when she anointed Jesus' head, she had the intention of letting Jesus know she anointed Him for burial. In Matthew, Jesus literally speaks of her intention: "she has done it to prepare me for burial" (Mt 26:13).

Only because of this intention of her, what she did could be worth to be told as a memorial of her. And Jesus indeed decreed a memorial of her, which can only be because this time the woman who anointed Him intentionally for burial was his virgin mother, and thus gave Him his maternal consent to his redeeming suffering and death.⁷⁶ That she anointed Jesus' head instead of his feet, meant it was also a Messianic anointing, meant for the One whom the woman knew to be the dynastic, suffering and triumphant Messiah.

Note again that Jesus does not say that there should be a memorial of the anointing, but a memorial of the woman herself in the whole world. It makes no sense to observe a memorial of an anonymous woman. Indeed, in the Catholic Church, neither of the two Gospel pericopes that call for a memorial of her (Mk 14:1-9 and Mt 26:6-13) are part of the obligatory readings of the Holy Mass or of Good Friday; only Mark 14:1-9 is a part of a facultative reading of the Holy Mass on Palm Sunday of year B, which occurs only once in every three years.⁷⁷

A memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary, on the other hand, as the mother who with her spouse, the Holy Spirit, anointed her Son, the dynastic Son of David, Messiah and by that anointing consented to his high priestly sacrificial death, would be a proper acknowledgement of all that she "has done" (Mk 14:9) and still does, together with the Holy Spirit and "in" Jesus Christ (Mk 14:6), for the eternal salvation of our souls. It is unthinkable that Jesus would have ordered a memorial for any other woman than his mother, who is 'blessed among women' and who had already prophesied: "all generations will call me blessed" (Lu 1:42,48). This scripturally decreed memorial of Jesus' mother in the whole world would have to be the dogma of Mary Coredemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate.⁷⁸ The four other dogmas on Jesus' virgin mother Mary – her being the Immaculate Conception, her being the Mother of God, her being perpetually a virgin, her having been assumed bodily into heaven – all establish what Mary is, not what she "has done" (Mk 14:9).

This memorial would 'enhance the Gospel'⁷⁹ – "wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told" – in that Jesus Christ is emphasized as being the eternal high priest-king of all nations: also the dynastic Messiah of the Jewish people, the "Christ, the King of Israel" (Mk 15:32, cf. Mt 27:42). As Jesus' mother, the Virgin Mary is also the **גבירה** 'gebirah' = 'great Lady' = queen of the Jewish people,⁸⁰ and indeed the Lady of all nations,⁸¹ and it is appropriate that she will be proclaimed queen of the Jews, queen of the twelve tribes of Israel, and indeed of all humanity, and will be 'crowned'⁸² on earth with

⁷⁶ Lücking wrote that the anointment of the head, worthy of a worldwide memorial, must tell Jesus more than that He would die: "Wenn die Salbung aber eine so wichtige Bedeutung hat, muß sie ihm mehr sagen, als daß er sterben werde. Man kann sie daher mit Franz Schnider einen "Erkenntnisgrund" nennen, einen "Ort der Erkenntnis für Jesus". Lücking, 1993, p. 99

⁷⁷ <http://www.easterbrooks.com/cgi-bin/Cathcal.cgi?20150329> ; cf. <http://www.kevinlaughery.com/lc2014.html> , <http://www.kevinlaughery.com/lc2015.html> and <http://www.kevinlaughery.com/lc2016.html>

⁷⁸ The proclamation of this dogma was not only requested but also foretold by 'The Lady of All Nations', viz. in her 50th message, on 31 May 1954, <http://www.de-vrouwe.info/en/1945-1959/120-botschaft-1954>

⁷⁹ "it is not clear how the memorial of the woman enhances the gospel", in Mack, 2008, *The Anointing of Jesus: Elaboration within a Chreia*, p. 100

⁸⁰ Jer 13:18, cf. 1Ki 2:19 2Ki 24:15

⁸¹ cf. Hoeven, 2009, updated 2011, *The Elder and the Elect Lady – Joseph 'Peter' and Mary in Rome*

⁸² cf. "the crown of your glory" of king Solomon and his queen-mother, **עטרת תפארתכם** (plurals), **στεφανος** **δοξης υμων** (Jer 13:18 AV, BHS, LXX) could be two crowns, as in Zec 6:14 **עטרת** is translated "crowns" (BHS, AV). In Jewish tradition, the Blessed Virgin Mary is despised as being a woman who committed adultery or prostitution. Celsus, drawing upon Jewish sources, wrote in 177-180 AD that she committed adultery with a

this dogma of Coredemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate, like she is already crowned with “a crown of twelve stars” in heaven (Re 12:1, cf. Jas 1:1 Re 21:12,14).

Judas, “one of the twelve” who had been chosen to proclaim the Gospel in the whole world, apparently refused to “also” tell about the beautiful work the woman “has done” (what he had considered a “waste” cf. Mt 26:8), for right after he had heard Jesus decree this “memorial of her”, he “went to the chief priests in order to betray Him to them” (Mk 14:9-10). The enmity of Judas, whom Jesus already had called “a devil” in Galilee (Jn 6:70-71), towards the woman reflects what God had said to the old serpent: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers” (Gen 3:15), and confirms that the woman is the Immaculate Mary, the “new Eve”: the anointress of Christ faces the anti-christ (CCC 726; cf. 2John 1:7,10 Re 12:4,9).⁸³

Blessed Pope Paul VI has exhorted the future bringing out of “the hidden relationship between the Spirit of God and the Virgin of Nazareth” (*Marialis Cultis* 27). It is a relationship that, just as her true relationship with the eternal Son of God virginally born of her, she had kept hidden in compliance and cooperation with her Son during his earthly adult life, in keeping with the divine plan of “restoring supernatural life to souls” (CCC 968):

It is sometimes said that many spiritual writings today do not sufficiently reflect the whole doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit. It is the task of specialists to verify and weigh the truth of this assertion, but it is our task to exhort everyone, especially those in the pastoral ministry and also theologians, to meditate more deeply on the working of the Holy Spirit in the history of salvation, and to ensure that Christian spiritual writings give due prominence to His life-giving action. Such a study will bring out in particular the hidden relationship between the Spirit of God and the Virgin of Nazareth, and show the influence they exert on the Church. From a more profound meditation on the truths of the Faith will flow a more vital piety. (Blessed Paul VI, *Marialis Cultis* 27)

Her role in relation to the Church and to all humanity goes still further. "In a wholly singular way she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope, and burning charity in the Savior's work of restoring supernatural life to souls. For this reason she is a mother to us in the order of grace."^(LG 61.) (CCC 968)

In summary, besides Jesus’ designation “the woman” (Mt 26:10), Jesus’ five “peculiar”⁸⁴ designations – “a beautiful work”, “in me”, “what she had, she executed”, “this Gospel”, “a memorial of her” (Mk 14:6,8,9) – show that the woman who anointed Jesus’ head was his virgin mother Mary. A schematic representation of how the evidence is intertwined is in Figure 1.

soldier named Panthera, and Tertullian in 197 AD mentions a charge of Jewish origin, that Jesus was a son of a prostitute (Brown, 1977, 1993, *The Birth of the Messiah*, p. 535).

⁸³ Cf. Hoeven, 2008, *From Bethlehem to Nazareth*, table 5. Note that the ‘waste’ of very precious ointment by Mary of Bethany had not incited Judas to go to the high priests (Jn 12: 1-11).

⁸⁴ “The peculiar terminology and syntax of the statement (ο εσχεν εποησεν)”, “such peculiar terms and syntax” in Mack, 2008, *The Anointing of Jesus: Elaboration within a Chreia*, p. 98

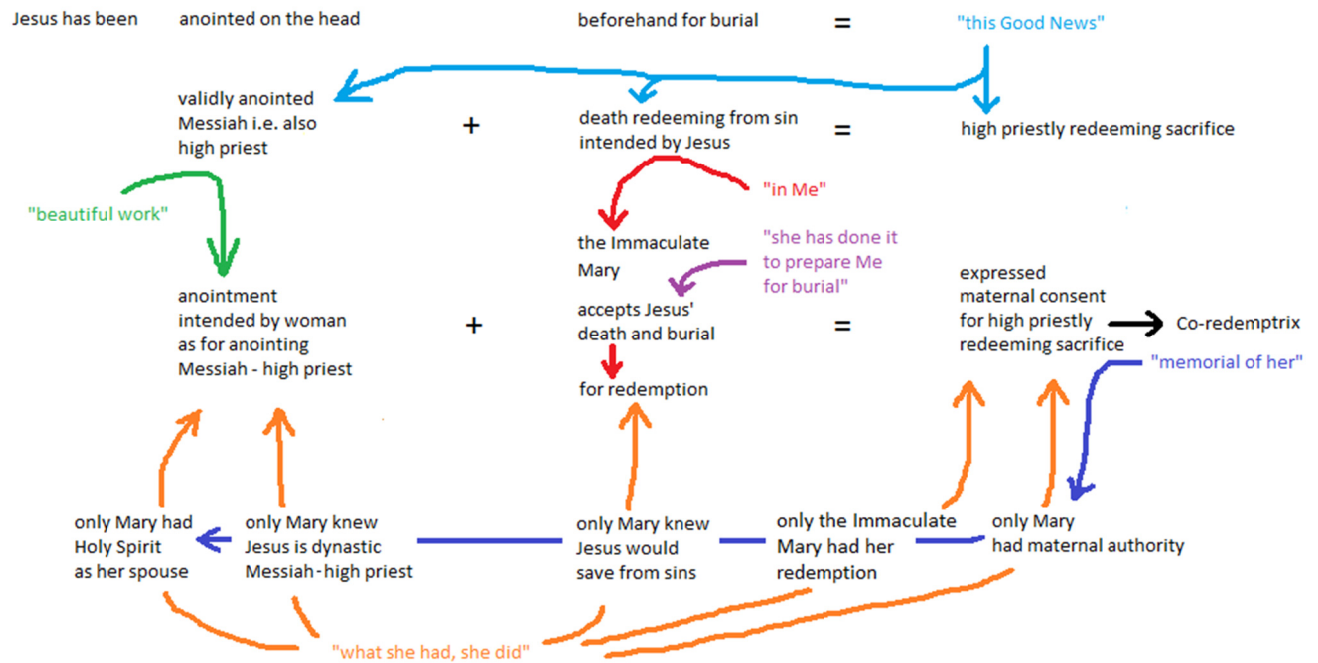


Fig. 1. Schematic representation of the intertwining of the evidence

3.7. The Virgin Mary lived an incognito life

Conversely, another conclusion can be drawn from this. Like Jesus, the disciples around Him had seen ("Behold") the "mother" of Jesus who had wanted to speak to Him while He was preaching:

- 46 While he yet talked to the people, behold, *his* mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.
- 47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.
- 48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?
- 49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!
- 50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. (Mt 12:46-50 AV)

Yet, the disciples did not know that the woman who anointed Jesus' head, i.e., the Virgin Mary, was Jesus' mother, for if they knew it, they would not have "reproached her" and have given her "trouble" in Jesus' presence (Mk 14:5-6). This shows that Jesus' virgin mother lived an incognito life when Jesus was an adult, and that the 'mother' who had wanted to speak to Him in Galilee was not his real mother. Similarly, when Jesus was twelve years old, Jesus' "parents" did not understand Him when He told them that He had to be in his Father's house (Lu 2:41-50), i.e., the Temple, and therefore were only his adoptive parents.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Cf. Hoeven, 2009, Jesus and Moses – Mary Magdalene

4. Sequel and Effect

Jesus followed again the road, which He as a young Child, probably on an ass in the arms of his mother, had covered about thirty three years ago from the temple to the “house” where they lodged, probably in Bethany (Mt 2:11, cf. Mt 21:17).⁸⁶ But now, at the height of his life, He followed it in the opposite direction: from Bethany to the temple⁸⁷ sitting on a colt of an ass. Jesus, as a grown man, had returned to the place where his young life suddenly had turned another direction. From where He then had been acknowledged to be the “king of the Jews” by the wise men,⁸⁸ He now starts his royal entrance into Jerusalem, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah: “as it is written, “Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on an ass's colt!”” (Jn 12:14-15 RSV).⁸⁹

15 But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he [Jesus] did, and the children crying out in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant;

16 and they said to him, “Do you hear what these are saying?” And Jesus said to them, “Yes; have you never read, ‘Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast brought perfect praise?’”

17 And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there. (Mt 21:15-17 RSV)

The children, who applauded Jesus in the temple with “Hosanna to the Son of David”, and who Jesus compares to “babes and sucklings”, make one think of the Son of David and babe that Jesus was Himself at his presentation in the temple. The contrast in the temple between the praise of the children and the displeasure of the chief priests and scribes is a clear fulfilment of Simon’s prophecy, made in this very place when Jesus was presented to the Lord: that Jesus would be “a sign that is spoken against [...] that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed”.⁹⁰

After the festive procession, Mary, “the woman”, gives Jesus the dynastic royal and high priestly anointment. Where He long ago, as the young “king of the Jews”, had received the myrrh from the wise men, He now gets anointed to be the King indeed. But He also says that Mary “has done it to prepare me for burial”. Taking into account that Jesus could still escape his recently predicted death on the cross⁹¹ – “I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from me” (Jn 10:17-18⁹²) – but, as He said, “came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many”⁹³, it is reasonable to assume that the royal and high priestly anointment “beforehand for burying” was for Jesus a sign of his mother’s consent to his sacrificial death and that He was to set off for the royal city one last time (this would be a parallel of what happened in Cana: Jesus performed his first Messianic sign – changing water into wine – only after his mother had shown Him her concern⁹⁴). Instead of the silent

⁸⁶ Hoeven, 2008, From Bethlehem to Nazareth – And a memorial in Bethany

⁸⁷ Mk 11:11 Jn 12:1,12

⁸⁸ Mt 2:2,11

⁸⁹ See Zec 9:9

⁹⁰ Lu 2:34-35

⁹¹ Mt 26:1-2

⁹² “For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this charge I have received from my Father.” Jn 10:17-18 RSV

⁹³ Mt 20:28

⁹⁴ Jn 2:1-11

departure of the wise men away from Herod, and the flight of “the young Child and his mother” to Egypt, now, from the same house, follow the silent departure of Judas Iscariot to the chief priests⁹⁵ and the definite walk of Jesus and his mother to Jerusalem. From where they then had to flee, they are now purposefully heading for his Passion: “there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother”.⁹⁶ She, who had been Jesus’ co-operator in his “coming in the flesh” (2John 7), was also his co-operator in his “becoming obedient even unto death, and *that the death of the cross*” (Php 2:8).⁹⁷

- 7 What then? Israel failed to obtain what it sought. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened,
- 8 as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that should not see and ears that should not hear, down to this very day."
- 9 And David says, "Let their table become a snare and a trap, a pitfall and a retribution for them;
- 10 let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs for ever."
- 11 So I ask, have they stumbled so as to fall? By no means! But through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous.
- 12 Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!
- 13 Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry
- 14 in order to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them.
- 15 For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?
- ...
- 25 Lest you be wise in your own conceits, I want you to understand this mystery, brethren: a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles come in,
- 26 and so all Israel will be saved; as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob";
- 27 "and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins." (Rom 11:7-15,25-27 RSV)

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⁹⁵ Mk 14:10

⁹⁶ Jn 19:25

⁹⁷ Both citations are from the 1884 Darby Version.

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Update 27-06-2016

p. 5
Removal of “accompanying” in
where also the accompanying sacrifices were sacrificed

p. 23
Addition of the sentence:
Also in this sense – and perhaps most of all – it is true that ‘what she had (her redemption), she did (co-redeem)’ (Mk 14:8).

p. 26
Adjustment of Figure 1 according to the added sentence of p. 23.