

Devotion to Mary, Undoer of Knots: Creating space for the conversion of the heart

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Abstract:

Devotion in the Catholic faith is a form of loyalty and closeness to God through the intercession of the saints. Over time, some traditional forms of devotion have seen a decline in followers, as they are considered too formal and lacking in personal spiritual experiences. Amid this situation, in recent years, a form of devotion known as the Devotion to Mary, Untier of Knots, has gained recognition among the faithful. This devotion is characterized by the depiction of the Virgin Mary as a loving mother who helps people unravel the knots of life's problems. This research aims to revisit and explore the meaning of devotion in the Catholic faith, specifically examine the Devotion to Mary, Untier of Knots, and identify its potential in helping the faithful experience a conversion of heart. Using a literature review and qualitative methods, this study analyzes the theological foundation of this devotion and its relevance in the lives of Catholics, particularly in Indonesia. The results indicate that the Devotion to Mary, Untier of Knots, holds profound spiritual appeal, especially in providing peace, hope, and encouragement for the faithful to undergo a conversion of heart. This devotion offers a more personal and contextual religious experience, helping believers face life's challenges with greater faith and hope.

Keywords: *conversion of heart; Mary Undoer of Knots; Catholic faith; religious devotion; spirituality*

INTRODUCTION

Devotion, which is rooted in the Latin word "*devotio*", contains a rich meaning of devotion and surrender. Simply put, devotion can be defined as a deep commitment to be faithful and devoted to God based on sincere love. However, devotion is not just a feeling or a word. It is a real manifestation of a person's sincerity in practicing the teachings of their religion. Devotion is reflected in real actions, namely through special services carried out with full reverence and awareness. Devotion is a bridge that connects humans with their God. Through devotion, a person expresses gratitude, love, and hope to the Creator. Devotion is also a means to deepen spirituality and draw closer to God. In a broader context, devotion is not limited only to religious rituals. It can be manifested in various aspects of life, such as work, family, and society (Feldt, 2023).

Devotion can be a strong moral foundation for someone in living their daily life. Thus, devotion is a way for someone to express love, loyalty, and sincerity that is manifested in real actions. It is a spiritual path that someone takes to get closer to their God and live a meaningful life. In the context of the Catholic faith, devotion is often manifested in various prayer practices that are personal or community in nature. The practice of devotion is one form of prayer that is widely favored by Catholics. The love of the people for the practice of devotion is proven by the many types of devotion that exist in the Catholic

Church, such as devotion to God the Father, God the Trinity, God the Holy Spirit with various forms of practice, devotion to Jesus Christ, devotion to the Virgin Mary, devotion to the saints and various other types of devotion (Morrison, 2021).

Over time, some forms of formal devotion began to be abandoned by the devotees (Auxiliary Legio Maria) (Tarus, 2005). On several occasions, the author conducted interviews with several congregations while undergoing the Pastoral Orientation Year program. In the discussion, they revealed that devotion practices that were too formal seemed to be limited to prayer routines. Prayer formulations that were too long and rigid were considered to provide less of a deep and personal spiritual experience. Furthermore, they said that a more relevant form of devotion is a form of devotion that can be a place to complain, share burdens, and gain strength in facing various life problems. This situation became the reason for the congregation to decide to abandon forms of devotion that were too formal.

Although some forms of devotion are starting to be abandoned, some other forms of devotion are still maintained in various more contextual forms. One form of devotion that is popular among the people is the Devotion to Mary Undoer of Knots. This devotion has its own appeal because of its simpler nature, by not displaying long prayer formulas, as found in some other forms of devotion to the Virgin Mary. This devotion emphasizes the Virgin Mary as a loving mother figure, helping people unravel the knots or problems of life that they experience.

Based on this phenomenon, this study aims to explore the practice of Mary, the Undoer of Knots devotion. This devotion has the potential to provide a significant spiritual impact for the people, especially in providing peace, hope, and repentance in facing various life challenges. Therefore, the study will deepen the Mary, the Undoer of Knots devotion and analyze its meaning for the lives of the faithful. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the spiritual development of the people and contribute to other forms of devotion that are starting to be abandoned.

METHOD

This article uses the library study (Nazir, 1988) to explore and analyze the theological basis of devotion to Mary, the Undoer of Knots. The author will explore information from various written sources regarding the devotion. After finding sufficient information, the author will analyze it. After conducting the analysis, the author will compile the ideas using inductive and deductive methods (Bungin, 2007). This method is expected to be able to help the author in describing the findings of the analysis conducted. So that devotion to Mary, the Undoer of Knots becomes easier to understand and accepted by all believers as a form of respect and prayer through the intercession of Mother Mary. Qualitative research methods are also used to observe, research, and capture the reality of the situation experienced by Catholics. The key informant interview method will be used in qualitative research by conducting interviews with several key parties. Interviews will be conducted with devotees in the Diocese of Bandung, including legionaries (permanent members and auxiliary or non-permanent members) and Catholics who love devotion to the Virgin Mary. Some of the questions are about personal and communal life situations, practices of devotion to the Virgin Mary and relationships with God. This key informant interview method can broaden insight into the role of devotion to the Virgin Mary among Christians.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Devotion to Mary the Undoer of Knots

The devotion to Our Lady Undoer of Knots first appeared in the late 17th century. Historical records of this devotion are very limited and not well documented. Although its existence is not well documented and its historical records are very limited, its spiritual traces and meaning can be traced back to the early Church in the 2nd century. The origins of this devotion are closely related to the marital crisis experienced by Wolfgang Von Langenmantel and his wife, Sophie Imhoff, who were married in 1612. Their marriage was on the verge of separation, and divorce was one of the options they considered. However, before making a final decision, Wolfgang chose to seek spiritual guidance by traveling to the Ingolstadt monastery. There, he met Jesuit Father Jakob Rem, a priest known for his dedication to developing devotion to Our Lady, especially the devotion of the three Hail Marys. In the meeting, Father Rem advised Wolfgang to submit his household problems to the intercession of the Virgin Mary, who in the devotional tradition is believed to have the power to help the faithful in untangling various knots of

life's problems. This belief in the role of the Virgin Mary as a divine intermediary later developed into a devotion to Our Lady Undoer of Knots (Boursiquot, 2017).

For four consecutive Saturdays in a span of twenty-eight days, Wolfgang made a pilgrimage to this monastery to dedicate his marriage to Sophie to the Virgin Mary. Gradually, the couple's condition improved until they finally reconciled. The grace they asked God for was reconciliation and forgiveness granted through the intercession of the Virgin Mary. Thus, their marriage was saved, and all obstacles were overcome (Boursiquot, 2017). The knots that are often depicted in the image of the Virgin Mary, Undoer of Knots, are symbols of the various sufferings that often occur in human life. The sufferings in question are such as family disputes, misunderstandings between children and parents, violence, anger, drug addiction, fear and loss of peace in life. Basically, the knots in question are a term to represent all the suffering and hardships of human life (Boursiquot, 2017).

As an expression of gratitude for the reconciliation that occurred with the family of Wolfgang Von Langenmantel and his wife, Sophie Imhoff, one of their grandchildren named Hieronymus Ambrosius von Langenmantel, chose to live a religious life. Over time, he ordered a painting of the Virgin Mary entitled "Mary, Undoer of Knots". The painting was painted by a famous painter at that time, Johann Melchior Georg Schmittner (1625-1707). The painting was painted in a Baroque style full of grace. In the painting, the Virgin Mary is holding a ribbon and untying the knots on the ribbon. The Virgin Mary is in the Kingdom of Heaven, surrounded by angels and standing on a crescent moon, destroying the snake (devil). The Holy Spirit through the image of a dove flying above her head. He placed the picture in a chapel in the Church of Saint Peter am Perlach in Augsburg. If we pay close attention to the image of Our Lady of the Undoing of Knots, we can see that at the bottom of the image is the figure of Tobias being guided by the Angel Raphael on his journey to his future wife, Sarah (see the Book of Tobit in the Old Testament) (Indonesia, 2023).

This story has a deep symbolic meaning, especially in the context of devotion to Mary as the undoer of life's problems (Boursiquot, 2017). Tobias, a young man full of faith, experiences various challenges on his journey, including threats from evil spirits that have disturbed Sarah's life. However, with the guidance of the Angel Raphael, Tobias is able to overcome these obstacles and achieve the happiness that God has prepared for him. The presence of Tobias in the iconography of Our Lady the Undoer of Knots reminds us that in every journey of life, especially when facing difficulties and uncertainties, we need divine guidance. Mary, who is full of love and tenderness, is present as an intermediary who helps the faithful undo the various problems that hinder their relationship with God and others (Boursiquot, 2017). Thus, the figures of Tobias and the Angel Raphael in this image emphasise the belief that God always provides help for those who hope in Him through the intercession of Our Lady.

Pope Francis' admiration for the devotion to Mary the Undoer of Knots

In the 1980s, Father Jorge Mario Bergoglio discovered devotion to Our Lady of the Undoing of Knots while he was in Germany to complete his thesis. During his studies, he often visited the Church of Saint Peter am Perlach in Augsburg, which was run by the Jesuits, the order that had also been part of his priestly journey. Inside the church, his attention was drawn to a unique painting depicting the Virgin Mary tenderly undoing the knots of a long ribbon held by two angels. This painting is not only artistically interesting, but also has a deep theological meaning, symbolizing the role of the Virgin Mary in helping the faithful free themselves from the difficulties, sins, and confusions of life (Boursiquot, 2017).

Struck by the beauty and spirituality of the painting, Father Bergoglio felt compelled to bring the image to Argentina. He saw that the message of this devotion had great relevance for his parishioners, who often faced challenges in life. Upon arriving in Buenos Aires, he began to introduce the devotion to Our Lady of the Undoer of Knots to his parishioners. He explained that, like a loving mother, Our Lady is always ready to help her parishioners face life's problems, guiding them toward God's love, and undoing the knots that hinder their journey of faith or their relationship with God.

The echo of the devotion to Our Lady of the Undoer of Knots was so strong among Argentine Catholics that it quickly spread to various communities in South America. The presence of Our Lady as the Undoer of Knots provided comfort and hope to many who were struggling with life's difficulties, both in their spiritual and daily aspects. As this devotion grew, people felt a deeper closeness to the figure of Our Lady as the mediator of God's love and mercy. Until now, devotion to Our Lady of the Undoer of Knots

continues to grow, not only in South America but also in various parts of the world, bringing the message that no problem is too difficult for the loving hands of Our Lady to unravel (Boursiquot, 2017).

Biblical and theological basis of Mary the Undoer of Knots

Every form of devotion in the Catholic Church has a strong foundation both biblically and theologically. This aims to ensure that every devotion practice remains within the corridor of true faith and does not deviate from the teachings of the Church. In addition, the basis of Scripture in devotion is not merely a theological justification, but also as evidence that the practice always leads to the Triune God as the center of Christian faith. In the case of devotion to Our Lady Undoing the Knot, its theological basis is rooted in the thought of Saint Irenaeus, who reflected on the central role of Our Lady in the history of salvation. He taught that the obedience of Our Lady serves as a reversal of Eve's disobedience, a reality that is theologically very significant. His famous statement asserts that "the knot of disobedience made by the first woman, Eve, is untied by the obedience of Our Lady to the will of the Father; the knot created by the first woman, Eve, is untied by the virgin Mary through her faith" (Boursiquot, 2017).

St. Irenaeus, in his theological interpretation of the Book of Genesis, not only emphasizes the dimension of 'predestination' about Christ who will crush the head of the serpent, but also about Him who must be born of a woman. Since through a woman, sin entered the world, so salvation entered the world through a woman, namely the mother of the Savior. However, what is new from Irenaeus here is the recognition of a "woman", namely, "Mary". She not only carries out her function passively in terms of salvation, but also plays an active role. Thus, Mother Mary is not only a figure who accepts a role in the plan of salvation, but also actively takes part in the process of redemption, becoming a means that opens the way for the reconciliation of humanity with God.

This idea is not only found in Irenaeus' reflections, but is also affirmed in the Church's teaching documents, one of which is the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*. This document states that in the divine plan of salvation, the merciful God willed that Mary's role as Mother of the Redeemer be accepted before the incarnation (Pasi, 2016). Thus, there is a clear theological parallel between Eve and Mary: just as Eve became the means of the fall of man into sin, Mary, through her obedience and faith, became the means of new life in Christ. This is affirmed in article 56 of *Lumen Gentium*, where the Church, in line with the teaching of the early Church Fathers, reaffirms Irenaeus' view that "the knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience; which the first woman Eve had tied by her unbelief, was untied by the Blessed Virgin Mary by her faith." Thus, Mary not only became a blessed figure among women but also played a profound role in the history of salvation, where, through her active role, she became the unraveler of the knots of sin that have bound humanity since the first fall.

That is why the Virgin Mary is often presented as a person who unites humanity with life with Christ. This attitude negates Eve's attitude, which unites humanity with death. In other words, the attitude of the Virgin Mary, who obediently carries out God's command to give birth to life, is a restoration from Eve's attitude that rejected the Word of God, and resulted in sin and death. This idea becomes one of the solid theological foundations for the practice of devotion to the Virgin Mary, the Undoer of Knots. In the Church tradition, the Virgin Mary is understood as a figure who not only accepts a passive role in the historical events of human salvation, but also actively becomes God's means of untying the knots of sin that have bound humanity since the first fall. Eve's disobedience, which is the root of humanity's separation from God, creates a chain of knots that represent a state of sin that causes suffering, spiritual confusion, and alienation from divine love (Pasi, 2016).

Devotion to the Virgin Mary is not only rooted in the tradition of the Church, but also has a solid foundation in the Scriptures. One of the key passages in the practice of devotion to the Virgin Mary is John 19:26-27, where Jesus, hanging on the cross, entrusts the Virgin Mary to His beloved disciple by saying: "Behold your mother" (Martasudjita, n.d.) and vice versa, the disciple to Mary, "Behold your son". Through this passage, it can be understood that the role of the Virgin Mary is not only as the mother of Jesus Christ, but also as the spiritual mother of all believers (the Church), represented by His beloved disciple. In the context of the devotion to Mary Undoing the Knot, this relationship becomes a symbol that the Virgin Mary, as a merciful mother, is involved in the work of salvation brought by her Son Jesus Christ by accompanying the people who are struggling against the knots of sin and suffering.

The Gospel of John 19:26-27 is also in line with Luke 1:38. As the "new Eve", Mother Mary plays a role in reversing the effects of original sin caused by Eve through her perfect obedience and faith in God.

Mother Mary's response to the Angel Gabriel was not merely a passive acceptance of God's will that had chosen her to be the mother of Jesus Christ, but also an active act of faith, which opened the way for human salvation (Martasudjita, n.d.). In other words, Mary not only became the biological mother of Jesus, but was also involved in the plan of salvation more deeply, namely as the undoer of the knot of sin and human error that hindered their relationship with God.

Analysis of the Novena prayer devotion to Mary the Undoer of Knots

One of the steps that must be taken to better understand the devotion of Mary the Undoer of Knots is to analyze the formulation of her prayers. Through the formulation of the prayers, we can find the spiritual and theological values of this devotion. This section is a description of the results of the analysis of the text or formulation of the prayer novena devotion of Mary, the Undoer of Knots. Through this analysis, we will find several special features contained in this devotion.

1. A simple prayer formula

The Devotion of Mary Undoer of Knots offers a simple yet meaningful prayer formula, reflecting the depth of Catholic spirituality that flows in a form that is easily accessible to the people. The simplicity of this prayer is precisely its strength, because it gives space for each person to personally convey their life's struggles with sincere and spontaneous expressions. When the people pray, "Today I entrust to You, this knot..." (Boursiquot, 2017), they are invited to concretely identify the problems they are facing, whether it is a family problem, a job problem, or a relationship with others, while also acknowledging the various negative impacts that arise. The short structure of this prayer actually allows for a deeper inner dialogue, where the people are not bound by a rigid formula, but can freely convey their hearts to Mother Mary.

The symbol of the "knot" that is the center of this devotion wisely illustrates the complexity of life's problems that are often interconnected and difficult to unravel on our own. Through this prayer, the Church offers hope that no problem is too complicated when entrusted to the intercession of Our Lady, Mediatrix of all graces. Our Lady, Undoer of Knots, desires that the knots of life can be unraveled. She comes to each person and invites them to place the knot of their problems in her hands. So that she can unravel them one by one. She is a mother who always cares for her children, who come to her for help.

2. Mother Mary, Mother Figure

Another thing that is very much emphasized in this prayer formulation is the image of Mary as a mother. "Virgin Mary, Mother of true love, Mother who never refuses to come to the aid of a child in need, Mother whose hands never cease to serve her beloved children because they are moved by divine love and the extraordinary compassion in your heart, direct your compassionate gaze upon me and see the tangled knots in my life. You know very well how desperate I am, how miserable I am, and how tied I am by these knots."

When hanging on the cross, Jesus Christ gave a will, namely His last wish regarding the figure of Mother Mary (Hahn, 2006). Through His beloved disciple, Jesus gave Mother Mary to be the mother of all of us; "When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He had blessed standing beside her, He said to His mother, 'Woman, here is your son!' Then He said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother!' And from that hour the disciple took Mary into his own home" (John 19:26-27). We are all beloved disciples of Jesus; we are His brothers and sisters. Therefore, Mother Mary is also the mother of all of us, as Jesus had willed through the disciple whom He blessed.

In his presentation on the Virgin Mary, Scott Hahn realized that mothers are generally difficult figures to understand. They are not very visible on the surface, so many people often do not pay much attention to their existence. Although the relationship between a child and a mother is not always visible on the surface, there is a deeper relationship between the two, namely concerning feelings, acceptance and love. The presence of a mother always seems ordinary in the eyes of humans, but behind it there is a broad heart, sacrifice and the secret of life. Likewise, the Virgin Mary, who seems human and close to our lives, but in her seemingly ordinary existence, she holds a Divine secret that is beyond human knowledge.

Hahn stated that the role of the Virgin Mary in the mystery of human salvation is a gift from God. The gift is a grace that is beyond human measure and is sometimes difficult to fully explain. In this grace,

there is a paradox: the Virgin Mary is an ordinary human being, but she is given extraordinary grace by God. This is what makes it difficult to fully understand, but a source of awe and faith for many people (Hahn, 2006).

Through the special grace granted to her by God, Mother Mary has an important role in the faith life of the people. She became a loving mother, patient and helped everyone who came to her for help. His privilege is solely by the grace of God. So, as a true mother, Maria never saw her glory as her own. Because, she insists that she only does God's will; "Be it to me according to your word". (Luke 1:38).

3. *Our Lady as Mediatrix*

The practice of devotion to the Virgin Mary is never separated from her role as a mediator (mediatrix) of human prayers to God. Through devotion to the Virgin Mary, people convey all their prayers and requests to God. In the tradition of the Catholic Church, the Virgin Mary is known as the Mediatrix or mediator, who acts as an intermediary between the faithful and God. This title is based on the belief that Mary, through her prayers and intercession, helps people who are facing difficulties. The theological basis of this role is rooted in her role in the incarnation of Jesus Christ, where Mary became a means for God to enter the world by giving birth to the Savior. After being taken to heaven, Mary is believed to continue to mediate God's grace for people who are still struggling on earth, working together in the divine plan of salvation.

The history of the idea of the Mediatrix dates back to the Eastern Church, where Church Fathers such as Saint John Damascene referred to Mary as a mediator in the work of salvation. In the Middle Ages, figures such as Bernard of Clairvaux described Mary as a "channel of grace" who conveys Christ's grace to humanity, while Peter Damian called her the "neck of the Church" connecting Christ to His people. Bernardine of Sienna further explained that grace flows from God the Father through Christ, then Mary, before reaching humanity.

In the post-Reformation period, the idea of the Mediatrix was further enriched by Saint Louis de Montfort, who in his *True Devotion to Mary* stated that Mary is the "treasurer of graces" who distributes grace according to her will (de Montfort et al., 1941). Saint Alphonsus de Liguori also emphasized Mary's role as the advocate of the people before Christ, the just Judge. Support for Mary's role as mediator is also evident in the teachings of the popes, such as Pope Pius IX, who called her the "treasurer of all graces", and Pope Leo XIII, who affirmed that grace flows through Mary's prayers (Fagan, 2005). Thus, devotion to Mary as Mediatrix remains alive in the Catholic tradition, supported by deep theological and spiritual reflection.

The prayer "Mary Undoes the Knots" is a form of devotion that deeply reflects the role of Mary as Mediatrix in the Catholic tradition. This prayer not only shows reverence for Mary, but also affirms the belief that she is empowered by God to be an active intercessor in untying the difficulties of the lives of the faithful. The phrase "to her God entrusted the task of undoing the knots" emphasizes that Mary's role is divine, not based on her own power, but because of her participation in the plan of salvation.

This is in line with the thinking of the Church Fathers and theologians such as Saint Louis de Montfort, who saw Mary as a "channel of grace" connecting humanity to Christ. The petition in this prayer, "through the grace and power of your prayer, to your Son and my Deliverer," shows that her intercession always points to Jesus, in accordance with the principle *per Mariam ad Iesum* (through Mary to Jesus). By entrusting the "ribbon of life" to Mary, the faithful acknowledge their dependence on her prayer and intercession, while entrusting themselves completely to divine providence.

Mary Undoer of Knots: A devotion opportunity for a change of heart

Since the beginning of Christianity, Mary, the mother of Jesus, has always been present and played a role in the journey of the lives of believers. In prayer and life together, Mother Mary is present and lives with Christ's disciples (Mahulae, 2013). Her role and presence were very real among the early congregation, where she was present and became a mother to them. She truly carried out what Jesus said on the cross: "When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son!'" (John 19:26). Likewise, in the history of the development of the Church, Mother Mary remains present and plays a role and always accompanies the faithful. Mother Mary does not let her children walk alone; she accompanies them as a loving mother. The devotion and various honors given to her are clear evidence that Mother Mary is believed to always be

present and play a role in the lives of believers to this day. Various forms of devotion are offered to Mother Mary, as a real expression of the people's belief in her role and endless love for them (the Church) (Kardiman & Tamat, 2024).

In today's world, the lives of Christians are often colored by various challenges that create very complex "knots" in their daily experiences. They can experience these knots anywhere, such as in husband-wife relationships, parent-child relationships, or in life together in a particular community. FH is a parishioner from one of the parishes in the Diocese of Bandung. He said that the main and frequent problems in my life are family problems, especially with my husband. In addition, with children we sometimes have different opinions and make us distant for some time. These knots are not only psychological or social, but also spiritual, because they hinder the growth of love and faith in the household and in life together in a community (Suwito, 2021). In this context, devotion to Mary Undoer of Knots emerges as an appropriate response of faith; this devotion offers hope that through the intercession of Mother Mary, every tangle of life can be unraveled by the power of God's love. This devotion is not merely a religious tradition, but an invitation to experience inner transformation through total surrender to Divine providence.

The Devotion of Mary the Undoer of Knots has a special power in answering concrete problems of Christian families. For example, in a husband-wife relationship that is broken due to misunderstanding, infidelity, a bad relationship between parents and children, a broken relationship in a community and various other problems (knots) in life. This devotion invites all people to always emulate the loyalty, struggle and humility of Mother Mary. By asking for her intercession, they are invited to let go of their egos, open their hearts to forgiveness, and entrust their lives to God's providence. Likewise, in the relationship between parents and children, which is often colored by generational tension, this devotion becomes a means to ask for the grace of patience and mutual understanding. Mother Mary, who once experienced anxiety as a mother (Luke 2:48-51), understands the struggles of families and becomes a helper in undoing the knots of the lives of the congregation's families.

More than a personal devotion, this practice also has a communal dimension that strengthens the solidarity of the faith of the people. When a family or community prays together through devotion to Mary Undoer of Knots, they not only ask for change in their own lives but also bear witness to the healing power of prayer. The testimonies of people who have experienced reconciliation, restoration of relationships, or inner peace after practicing this devotion show that Our Lady is truly the solution that leads them (mediatrix) to Christ, the source of forgiveness and the giver of all graces. In this way, this devotion not only changes the heart of a person but also creates a culture of love and reconciliation in the Church and in community life.

Mother Mary: A picture of a loving mother

Discussions about Mary's maternal role always refer to her exemplary role as a mother and a woman based on faith. Mother Mary, with her holiness, humility and love, made herself the basis of a living education for Christians to this day (Boe et al., 2024). This is what makes her role as a mother special and holy. Mary's motherhood has a special and profound meaning, which attracts believers to Christ. This is shown through her attitude of obedience, loyalty and total surrender to the will of God.

Discussions about the maternal role of Mother Mary in the teachings of the Church are very varied. In the document of the Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium* Art. 53, 56, 62, 63, 65, the role of Mother Mary in the Church as a mother is briefly discussed. *Lumen Gentium*, Art. 53 strongly emphasizes the role of Mother Mary as the mother of the Body of Christ, the Church. This is an affirmation of the role of Mother Mary as the spiritual mother of all Christians and keeper of the unity of the Church. LG Art. 56 affirms the total devotion of the Mother of God to the will of God as well as her faithfulness in carrying out the special calling given by God. LG Art. 62 affirms Mary's Intercession. In this article, Mary is seen as an effective intercessor and mediator for Christians to obtain the gifts that lead to eternal salvation. LG Art. 63 affirms Mary as the Mother of God, the model of the Church in terms of faith, love, and perfect union with Christ. Then, in LG Art. 65 Mary is described as the Mother of Theological Virtues, namely faith, hope and love.

The motherly soul of Mother Mary is one of the reasons why people love devotion to her. In an interview session, Mrs. FH said that when facing problems, whether personal problems or problems that befell her family, Mother Mary became a comfortable place to talk and share the burdens of life that were

befalling her. Through devotions that were dedicated specifically to Mother Mary, she asked Mother Mary to give her and her family help by conveying to God all the problems that were being faced. As a Catholic, she believed that Mother Mary would definitely listen to all her complaints and was willing to convey to Jesus Christ the requests that she made.

As a mother, Mother Mary has a gentle heart for every child who comes to ask for help from her. Mother Mary's gentle heart is also the reason why people love her devotion (Boe et al., 2024). MAB is a student who is facing various college assignments. As a medical student, almost every day she faces very difficult college assignments. In a desperate situation, she came to Mother Mary. She needed a mother figure who could treat her gently. When college forced her to continue studying, she felt that Mother Mary was a place for her to take shelter to gain strength and comfort. For her, devotion to Mother Mary gave her new strength and made her feel valuable. So that in the end, she could do her college assignments with new enthusiasm.

The simple devotion of Mary, the Undoer of Knots

The devotion of Mary the Undoer of Knots is chosen by many people because of its simple and easy-to-understand prayers. The Devotion is considered not to be trapped in long or complicated prayer formulas; the prayers in this devotion actually flow so naturally, like an intimate conversation with a mother. This was expressed by several respondents regarding the reasons they chose devotion to Mary, the Undoer of Knots. This simplicity allows people to more freely convey their hearts, complaints, and hopes to Mother Mary without feeling burdened by stiff words. Thus, this devotion becomes a warm bridge between the people and Mother Mary, allowing them to tell stories with full trust.

In addition, the short and concise prayers in this devotion give the congregation more space to reflect on each of their requests. Without having to memorize or read long texts, the congregation can focus on the deep meaning of the prayer while building a personal relationship with Mother Mary. This simplicity also makes it easier for more people, including those who are new to the devotion, to participate in carrying out this devotion. CHS is a respondent who previously did not know about the devotion to Mary, the Undoer of Knots. However, after listening to a brief explanation of the devotion, he admitted that he felt interested. The very simple nature of this devotion is an attraction for the congregation, both personally and within the family and church community.

Devotion to Mary Undoer of Knots leads to a change of heart

The Devotion of Mary Undoer Knots is not only a means of petition, but also brings people to a profound change of heart. Through simple prayers offered with sincerity, many people experience an inner conversion, where they begin to realize God's love at work in their lives. Mother Mary, as a mother of mercy, becomes a bridge that brings them closer to God, opening their hearts to receive His grace. In this devotion, people learn to let go of their ego, bitterness, and fear, and then surrender everything to God with full trust. ILC said that through this devotion, he increasingly realized how much God loves him. This helped him to be more open to God and surrender all the problems of his life through the intercession of Mother Mary.

One of the reasons this devotion is able to change hearts is that it provides a space for people to freely complain to God through the Virgin Mary. In being together with the Virgin Mary, they feel heard and accepted, so that hearts that were previously hard and far from God slowly become soft and open. This process enables them to see life with the eyes of faith, realizing that every "knot" of problems or sins can be unraveled by the grace of God. Thus, this devotion is not just a religious tradition, but a path of spiritual renewal that leads people to true repentance.

Moreover, through the devotion of Mary the Unraveler of Knots, people learn to surrender completely to the will of God, as Mother Mary always obeyed in her life. When they emulate Mary's obedience, their hearts are formed to be more sensitive to the voice of God. This devotion teaches that repentance is not only about leaving sin, but also about opening oneself completely to the work of God that will work in the people who hope in Him. Like CHS who emphasized that through this devotion, he is more open to God about all the problems in his life and also opens himself to the grace that God has bestowed upon him. Thus, every prayer offered through this devotion becomes a small step towards a cleaner heart, and more ready to be formed by God's love.

CONCLUSION

Devotion to Mary Undoer of Knots is a form of veneration in the Catholic faith that offers a personal and contextual spiritual approach. This devotion is not only deeply rooted in the Church tradition but also has a deep theological and biblical basis, especially through the thought of Saint Irenaeus and Church documents such as *Lumen Gentium*. Through this devotion, Mother Mary is understood as the "New Eve" who actively plays a role in the history of salvation, undoing the knots of sin and human suffering through her obedience and faith. The simplicity of prayer in this devotion is its main attraction, allowing people to engage in a deep inner dialogue with Mother Mary as a loving mother. This devotion also emphasizes Mary's role as a mediator (*Mediatrix*), who brings people to Christ through their prayers and petitions. In the context of modern life full of challenges, the devotion to Mary Undoer of Knots provides hope, serenity, and strength for people to face various life problems, both in the family, community, and personal life.

The results of the study show that this devotion is not only a means of supplication, but also brings about a profound change of heart. People who practice it experience repentance, openness to God's grace, and restoration of relationships with others. Thus, the devotion to Mary Undoer of Knots is not just a religious tradition, but a spiritual path that leads people to inner transformation and closeness to God. Overall, this devotion offers strong relevance for Catholics, especially in Indonesia, in facing the complexities of modern life. Through the experience of this devotion, people are invited to emulate the obedience and faith of Mother Mary, and to entrust all life's problems to divine providence. Thus, the devotion to Mary Undoer of Knots remains a source of comfort and strength for the Church and believers throughout the world.

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