

Article

Refugium peccatorum: The Virgin Mary's Saving Protection in Medieval Liturgical Hymns

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Abstract: The current article does not directly study the liturgical ritual as a set of gestures and forms of ceremonial behavior. Instead, it focuses on shedding light on the doctrinal content of many Mariological liturgical hymns, precisely the conceptual basis that gives meaning to the corresponding Marian liturgical rituals. Based strictly on the study of primary sources of Christian doctrine, this article aims to highlight the belief in the help, protection, and mediation of the Virgin Mary on behalf of human beings as reflected in countless medieval Latin liturgical hymns. The article is divided into two central parts: in the first, the author presents, in the original Latin and its English translation, an extensive series of fragments of liturgical hymns that develop the Mariological belief; in the second, he summarizes the primary doctrinal meanings and emotional attitudes that hymnographers reflect when poetically reconfiguring this belief in their hymns. Following the conclusion, the article catalogs the abundant sequence of Christian primary sources used in this research.

Keywords: Mariology; liturgy; Marian intercession; mercy; sinner; eternal salvation



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1. Introduction

From the outset, it is necessary to clarify that this article does not seek to directly study the liturgical ritual in its generic sense, nor even some of the gestures, procedures, bodily expressions, or forms of ceremonial behavior with which the various Christian religious rites are externalized and visualized. We focus our interest on analyzing many Mariological liturgical hymns, whose doctrinal content underpins and gives conceptual meaning to the corresponding Marian liturgical rituals. To be more precise, we will focus our attention on those medieval Latin liturgical hymns that proclaim belief in the exclusive power of the Virgin Mary as protector, helper, and intercessor of humanity before her divine Son.

Now, among the well-known *Litany of Loreto*—a collection of invocations to the Virgin Mary that have been taking shape since at least the twelfth century—there are four that are especially relevant to the study we will undertake in this article:¹ *Salus infirmorum*, *Refugium peccatorum*, *Consolatrix afflictorum*, and *Auxilium Christianorum*. Although each has its profile, they all substantially coincide in proclaiming Mary for her supernatural privilege as helper, protector, and mediator of humanity's material and spiritual needs.

It is worth noting that the theme of the mediation and assistance of the Virgin has received very different consideration from contemporary Mariologists. Some authors (de La Potterie 1988; De Fiores 1992; Stock 1997; Menke 1999; Cerbelaud 2003) do not even mention it. Others (Bastero de Eleizalde 1995, pp. 288–97; Fernández 1999, pp. 257–76; de La Soujeole 2007, pp. 193–208; Pérez Too and Perrella 2009, pp. 327–36; Casás Otero 2015, pp. 233–55) address the topic, but in a rather superficial way and without any further foundation in the patristic and theological tradition.

On the contrary, several experts (Graef 1964; Carol 1964, pp. 760–804; Robichaud 1964, pp. 805–37; Meo 1993, pp. 1304–19; Ossanna and Cipriani 1993, pp. 1173–79; Pikaza 1993, pp. 1320–25; Ponce Cuéllar 2001, pp. 442–500; Pozo 2005, pp. 367–79; Hauke 2008, pp. 253–302; Calero de los Ríos 2010, pp. 321–73; García Paredes 2015, pp. 377–402) studied this specific topic with some care, emphasizing one or another of the different doctrinal aspects underlying it.

It is important to note that the Mariologists who best develop the reference topic are Benoît-Henri Merkelbach (1954, pp. 414–511), Gabriele María Roschini (1962, Vol. I, pp. 457–650), Stefano De Fiores (2006–2008, Vol. 1, pp. 165–84, and Vol. 2, pp. 1080–142), Luigi Bonarrigo (2018, pp. 480–95), and especially Brian K. Reynolds (2019, pp. 107–292), who dedicated the most extensive and significant part of his documented monograph on the Virgin Mary to her. We have also analyzed this topic in depth in a recently published book (Salvador-González 2023).

The belief in the Virgin Mary's helpful protection over humanity has been developed over the centuries by numerous Fathers and medieval theologians of the Eastern and Western Churches. However, in this article, we will not consider the medieval patristic and theological texts on this subject but rather focus our attention on the expressions of countless medieval liturgical hymns that address this Mariological topic. As we will see extensively in this article, these hymns developed the doctrinal ideas and sentiments inherent in the concise statements of the four invocations of the *Litany of Loreto*: *Salus infirmorum*, *Refugium peccatorum*, *Consolatrix afflictorum*, and *Auxilium Christianorum* with great lyrical creativity and numerous poetic variations. Ultimately, both these four Loreto invocations and the countless liturgical hymns alluding to the subject above extol, as we will see in this article, the Virgin Mary as a merciful helper and protector of humanity, while requesting her mediation, protection, and assistance on behalf of human beings, especially those burdened by material and spiritual needs. In analyzing the hymns that allude to the topic under analysis, we have prioritized those that emphasize the Virgin's protection of sinners, that is, the invocation *Refugium peccatorum*.

It is important to emphasize that these liturgical hymns written around the Mariological ideas we study involve two complementary attitudes: proclamatory and supplicatory. Through the former, the hymnographer praises the Virgin Mary for her exclusive privileges as helper, intercessor, and protector of human beings, especially those most in material or spiritual need. Through the supplicatory attitude, the authors of the liturgical hymns vividly express their request for Mary's help, protection, and intercession to obtain material and spiritual blessings, and above all, the forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation.

2. The Invocation *Refugium peccatorum* in Medieval Liturgical Hymns

To better appreciate these liturgical hymns' conceptual and emotional development on the topic in question, we will present them in strict chronological order, grouping them by century. Moreover, logically, we will present only the stanzas or fragments that refer to the Mariological theme we are analyzing.

2.1. Twelfth-Century Hymns

Dating from the twelfth century, the following six hymns alluding to the Mariological argument under study have been recorded:

Hymnus 504. Psalterium Mariae salutes the Virgin Mary as liberator from sin in these brief verses:

Hail, eternally happy,
You who break the chains of sin,
So that our souls
May praise God.

Ave felix per saecula,
quae peccatorum vincula
rumpis, ut deo animae
nostrae sint laudis victimae.²

Hymnus 527. De sancta Maria (troparium) acclaims the Virgin as a merciful refuge for the guilty, through these rhymes:

2. Worthy of the praise of angels, Accept the praise of sinners, Holy Mary. Hope of the guilty, hope of the fallen, joy of the blessed, Holy Mary.	2. Laude digna angelorum, sume laudes peccatorum, sancta Maria. Spes reorum, spes lapsorum, laetitia beatorum, sancta Maria. ³
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Hymnus 97. De Beata Maria Virgine recognizes the mother of the Redeemer as a helper of the needy in soul or body, stating:

Hail, eternally happy, You who break the chains of sin, So that our souls May praise God.	4a. Tu solamen miserorum Atque mater orphanorum, Medicamen peccatorum, Desiderium iustorum. ⁴
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Hymnus 78. De Beata Maria Virgine reveals Mary as the restorer of those who have fallen into sin, and asks for her saving protection in these stanzas:

4a. What was lost through Eve Had been exalted, But through you, the homeland of the exiled Has been restored (now); Please make accessible to us The courts of life, O hope of sinners, Mary.	4a. Per Evam perdita Fuerant condita, Sed per te (nunc) est reddita Exsuli patria; Nobis vitae atria Tu resera, (O) peccatorum spes, Maria.
4b. Hail, flower and Sweet refuge [from affliction], Jewel of chastity And throne of grace, Queen of the court, Reconcile the guilty With the King of mercy.	4b. Ave, flos et [a Vae] Assylum suave, Gemma pudicitiae Thronusque gratiae, Reis, regina curiae, Concilia Regem misericordiae. ⁵

The *Hymnus 350. De Sancta Maria* requests the intercessory help of the mother of the Lord, assimilated to the most precious wealth of Paradise, with this plea:

Gem of heaven, the gate of forgiveness, Appease the King of glory With the flower of your chastity.	Gemma coeli, porta veniae, tuaeflorem pudicitiae placaregem gloriae. ⁶
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The Abbot of Cluny Peter the Venerable (†1156), in *Hymnus 250. (1.) Prosa in Nativitate Domini*, recognizes the Virgin as the helper of sinners in these brief expressions:

6a. Enclosed garden, fountain of gardens, Who washes away the filth of sins, Purifies the stained, And gives life to the dead.	6a. Hortus clausus, fons hortorum, Sordes lavans peccatorum, Inquinatos purificans Et mortuos vivificans. ⁷
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Once again Peter the Venerable, in *Hymnus 261. (12.) De Beata Maria Virgine Antiphona ad Magnificat*, greets the Virgin for her saving power, by formulating:

Hail, morning star,	Ave, stella matutina,
Medicine for sinners,	Peccatorum medicina,
Princess and queen of the world,	Mundi princeps et regina,
The only one worthy of being called a virgin,	Virgo sola digna dici,
Against the weapons of the enemy,	Contra tela inimici,
Raise the shield of salvation	Clipeum pone salutis
The title of your virtue.	Tuae titulum virtutis. ⁸

2.2. Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Hymns

Written at some imprecise date between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the following two hymns referring to our topic of study have been documented:

A certain Cistercian monk known as Anonymus Noanus, in *Hymnus 289. (2.) Incipit Speculum Reginae Caelorum*, calls for the effective intercession of the Virgin on behalf of the guilty, through these consonances:

18. For you are the empress of all	18. Nam pro vita peccatorum
For the lives of sinners	Imperatrix es cunctorum
For the salvation of all;	Ad salutem omnium;
Therefore, bow yourself	Ergo temet ipsam prostra
Before God as ours	Coram Deo sicut nostra
For the assembly of believers.	Pro coetu credentium. ⁹

The same cryptic Anonymus Noanus, in *Hymnus 293. (6.) Incipit laus et speculum reginae caelorum adversus haereticos*, requests the saving help of the Virgin Mary for the benefit of sinners, with these rhymes:

37a. Nourishing Mother of sinners,	37a. Mater alma peccatorum,
Pious nourisher of converts,	Pia nutrix conversorum,
Recaller of those who have strayed	Revocatrix aversorum
Toward the path of justice,	Ad viam iustitiae,
37b. Cleanse us and protect us,	37b. Nos emunda nosque fove,
Surround us, move the camps	Nos circumda, castra move
Always with the fortifications	Munimentis semper novae
Of your new diligence.	Tuae diligentiae. ¹⁰

2.3. Thirteenth-Century Hymns

Dating from the thirteenth century, the following thirteen hymns alluding to the reference topic have been recorded:

Hymnus 483. Sequentia de beata Virgine asks for Mary's merciful protection on behalf of the guilty, stating:

Hear, Mother of compassion,	Audi, mater pietatis
To those of us who groan over sins,	nos gementes pro peccatis
and protect us from evil,	et a malis nos tuere,
So that we may not be condemned with the wicked	ne damnemur cum impiis
in eternal punishments,	in aeternis suppliciis,
Have mercy on sinners.	peccatorum miserere. ¹¹

Hymnus 513. Prosa de beata Virgine salutes the mother of the Redeemer for her saving power, noting:

Hail, gate of paradise,	Ave porta paradisi,
those heavenly foreseen	tuo coelitus praevisi

Are restored by your guidance.
Hail, salvation of sinners,
restorer of angels
with the fruit of your womb.

reparantur ductu.
Ave salus peccatorum,
restauratrix angelorum
ventris tui fructu.¹²

Hymnus 126. De beata Maria Virgine asks the Virgin for mercy in the face of his own shortcomings, in these succinct terms:

12. Queen of the world, Mary,
Excuse
the limitations
of our sins
And give us the joys of heaven.

12. Regina mundi, Maria,
Excusa peccatorum
Nostrorum
Distermina
Et da coelorum gaudia.¹³

Hymnus 229 praises the compassionate Virgin Mary with these lyrical metaphors:

3. Hail, O woman in labor,
How rightly you are called
Fruitful olive tree,
And haven of the sea!
You alone are the only
refuge of sinners.

3. Ave, o puerpera,
Quam recte vocaris
Oliva fructifera
Atque portus maris,
Tu sola es peccatorum
Singulare refugium.¹⁴

Hymnus 141. De Beata Maria Virgine exalts Mary for her sublime supernatural power and her protection of the fallen, proclaiming:

2a. You are the crown of queens,
The empress of great ladies,
Beautiful pearl,
A rose unfaded by frost.
2b. You are the sweetness of sinners,
You are the sure footing of those who fall,
You give health to the sick,
You restore power through virtue.

2a. Tu corona reginarum,
Imperatrix dominarum,
Speciosa margarita,
Rosa gelu non attrita.
2b. Tu dulcedo peccatorum,
Tu pes tutus es lapsorum,
Tu infirmis das salutem,
Reddis posse per virtutem.¹⁵

Hymnus XVIII. Psalterium beatae Mariae Virginis. Tertia Quinquagena demands the protective assistance of the Virgin on behalf of the guilty, stating:

5. Hail, light of the elect,
Medicine for sinners,
Stretch out your hand now,
To make your people happy.

5. Ave. lumen electorum,
Medicamen peccatorum,
Nunc extende manum tuam
Ad laetandum gentem tuam.¹⁶

Several stanzas later, this hymn expresses similar ideas, in these terms:

37. Hail, called the light of the saints,
Merciful to sinners,
Make our choir stand
In the sight of the angels.

37. Ave, dicta lux sanctorum,
Miseratrix peccatorum,
Fac astare nostrum chorum
In conspectu angelorum.¹⁷

Hymnus III. Psalterium beatae Mariae Virginis. Prima Quinquagena asks for the Virgin's saving help to ensure upright conduct, in these terms:

34. Hail, propitiation
of the world,

34. Ave, mundi
propitiatio

hope and salvation
of sinners,
repress those who want
to commit crimes,
and impress us
with the fear of God.

Peccatorum
spes et salvatio,
Delinquere
volentes reprime
Et timore
Dei nos imprime.¹⁸

Hymnus 51. In Nativitate Beatae Mariae Virginis greets the Mother of God, who helps us, in these brief verses:

10a. Hail, Virgin forechosen,
Beloved hope of sinners,
Fruitful through the Holy Spirit.

10a. Ave, virgo praelecta,
Peccatorum spes dilecta,
Fecunda sancto spiritu.¹⁹

Hymnus 77. De Beata Maria Virgine calls for the merciful protection of the Mother of the Redeemer for the remission of sins and the eternal salvation of the faithful, stating:

12a. Father's Mother, command with your nature,
Pray the Father to forgive
Freely the guilt of the poor,
And the heavy bonds of sinners
Graciously granting pardon;
12b. With which, after the passing of this life,
He may also open the entrance to us
To the palace of the shining heaven,
To the Kingdom of God that remains
In eternal glory.

12a. Mater patris, iube natura,
Ora patrem, ut reatum
Solvat gratis, miserorum
Nexus graves peccatorum
Pie data venia;
12b. Quo post huius vitae gressum
Pandat nobis et ingressum
Aulae caeli refulgentis,
Regni Dei permanentis
In aeterna gloria.²⁰

Hymnus 136. De Beata Maria Virgine praises the merciful mother of God with these lyrical expressions:

1. Hail, glorious Virgin,
Beautiful spouse of God,
Conjugal chamber of the supreme King,
Temple of the Holy Spirit,
Mother and daughter
Of the Creator of the universe,
You are the consolation of sinners
And the glory of the righteous.

1. Ave, virgo gloriosa,
Sponsa Dei speciosa,
Summi regis thalamus,
Templum sancti spiritus,
Creatoris omnium
Genetrix et filia,
Es solamen peccatorum
Et iustorum gloria.²¹

Hymnus 374. Hosanna Gaude virgo De Beata Maria Virgine congratulates the merciful Virgin with these poetic figures:

4a. Rejoice, restorer of life,
Rejoice, full of grace.
4b. Mediatrix of sinners,
Rejoice, daughter of Zion.
5a. Rejoice, star of the sea, haven
of the shipwrecked of the world,
5b. Consoler of our grief,
Rejoice, salvation of the people.
6. Make us rejoice with you.
In heaven.

4a. Gaude, vitae reparatrix,
Gaude, plena gratia
4b. Peccatorum mediatrix,
Gaude, Sion filia.
5a. Gaude, maris stella, portus
Naufragantis saeculi,
5b. Nostri consolatrix luctus,
Gaude, salus populi.
6. Tu nos tecum fac gaudere
In excelsis.²²

The unknown poet known as Anonymus Camberonensis, in *Hymnus 108. (6). Rhythmus Sextus*, requests the help of the Virgin Mary on behalf of the guilty, stating:

235. Without disdain the poor,	235. Nec dedignans misero
Pay attention to sorrows,	Aerumnas attendere,
But diligently help	Sed parata invocanti
Anyone who calls upon you,	cuilibet succurrere,
O patron saint of sinners.	O patrona peccatorum. ²³

2.4. Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Hymn

We have found *Hymnus 430. (3.) De Beata Maria Virgine. Super Sanctus*, written in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries by a Cistercian monk known as Anonymus Stirpinensis, which greets the Virgin Mary, Help of Christians in these concise verses:

3. Hail, living fountain of the gardens,	3. Ave, vivus fons hortorum,
For which the minds of the contrite	Quem mens sitit contritorum,
Are eager, O Mary,	O Maria, peccatorum
Sweet refreshment of sinners.	Dulce refrigerium. ²⁴

2.5. Fourteenth-Century Hymns

Dating from the fourteenth century, the following fifteen hymns alluding to the topic of interest have been found:

Hymnus 76. De beata Maria Virgine ratifies the analyzed doctrine of Mary's universal savior authority, whose continuous protection asks in these short verses:

6a. You are the always open	6a. Tu pietatis
gate of mercy,	semper patens janua,
6b. Always be propitious	6b. Nobis omnibus
For all of us.	Semper sit propitia. ²⁵

Hymnus 474. De gloriosa virgine Maria. Ad completorium expresses his trust in the merciful protector of those guilty of sin, stating:

Oh, blessed Virgin, come,	O beata virgo, veni,
Find us vigilant,	nos vigilantes inveni,
whether at least	vel secunda vel tertia
in the second or third watch of the night,	saltem noctis vigilia
Hear us, most compassionate among the compassionate,	exaudi piarum piissima,
Hope of sinners, Virgin Mary.	spes peccatorum, virgo Maria. ²⁶

Hymnus 536. Oratio de sancta Maria requests the Virgin's beneficial intervention for the salvation of the faithful, through these rhymes:

Oh, rose without thorns,	Eja rosa sine spina,
medicine for sinners,	peccatorum medicina,
Intercede for me before Christ	pro me Christum interpella.
that He may save me from the storm	ut me salvet a procella
of this filthy world,	hujus mundi tam immundi,
whose raging waves are attacking me	cujus fluctus furibundi
from all sides,	omni parte me impingunt
moreover, girding me with the belt of sin.	et peccati zona cingunt. ²⁷

Hymnus 591. Laudes Mariae Virginis glorifies the helpful capacity of the Mother of God the Son for human beings, especially in their material and spiritual needs, by proclaiming:

Hail, sure protection of the clergy and true support of the poor, You are the pure file of malice and nourisher of grace, Gentle refuge of sinners, Soothing consolation of the sick. Assist us after death, And, after passing Through the vile life of this world, Please lead us to the Father and the Son by [your] grace, not by [our] merit.	Ave cleri tutum praesidium pauperisque verum subsidium. tu es pura lima malitiae et allatrix gratiae, peccatorum mite refugium, aegrotantium solabile solatium. nobis assis post obitum, post istius saeculi vitae vilis transitum, per gratiam, non per meritum ducas nos ad patrem et filium.²⁸
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Hymnus 601. Hortus rosarum dei genitricis Mariae extols the Virgin for her powerful help on behalf of those in need, stating:

You are the door to the excluded, and the hope of the desperate, You are the life of those who need healing, and the death of sins.	Tu porta exclusorum et spes desperatorum, tu vita sanandorum et funus peccatorum.²⁹
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Hymnus 89. De beata Maria Virgine asks for the help of the Mother of the Redeemer to obtain grace and eternal salvation, expressing:

5a. Through you, Christ, splendor of the Father, may the forgiveness of sins be granted to us through the prayers of your mother, 5b. That we may not be condemned with the wicked, but may be glorified with the righteous. In eternal glory.	5a. Per te, Christe, splendor patris Nobis detur prece matris Peccatorum venia, 5b. Cum iniquis ne damnemur, Sed cum justis gloriemur In aeterna gloria.³⁰
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Hymnus 73. De Gaudiis Beatae Mariae Virginis celebrates the healing power of the Mother of God in this verse:

11. Rejoice, thornless rose, Medicine for sinners Who gives remedy to the fallen, Here, worthy mediator And benign consoler, Who brings the means of peace.	11. Gaude, rosa sine spina, Peccatorum medicina Lapsis dans remedium, Eja, digna mediatrix Et benigna consolatrix, Pacis ferens medium.³¹
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Hymnus 126. De Nomine Beatae Mariae Virginis asks for Mary's mercy, stating:

1. Merciful mother of orphans And comforter of the sad, Advocate of sinners, Have mercy on the miserable.	1. Mater pia orphanorum Consolatrixque maestorum, Advocatrix peccatorum, Miserere miserorum.³²
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Hymnus XV. Psalterium beatae Mariae Virginis. Tertia Quinquagena calls upon the restorative intercession of the Redeemer's mother, expressing:

24. Rejoice, O virgin, who crushes the rod of sinners, May cruelty not be cruel in the fate of the righteous, May He who is the peace of the saints	24. Gaude, virgo, conterens virgam peccatorum, Ne saeva desaeviat in sortem iustorum, In se nos consolidet,
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strengthen us in Himself,
Christ, the mountain, and the summit
of the eternal mountains.

qui est pax sanctorum,
Mons et vertex montium
Christus aeternorum.³³

Hymnus 63. De Beata Maria Virgine praises the Mother of God, whose healing power it seeks through these lyrical metaphors:

4a. Hail, Queen of heaven,
Counselor to those who wander,
Medicine for sinners,
Reward of the victor,
Pool of God's grace,
Remedy for sickness.
4b. Incline your ear here,
Marriage of love,
Protect us from the sewer,
Space for repentance
Grant that we may have
the reward in heaven
5. In the heavenly hierarchy;
Draw us, Virgin Mary,
To heavenly joys.

4a. Ave. caelorum regina,
Consultrix errantium,
Peccatorum medicina,
Victoris stipendium,
Gratiae Dei piscina,
Languoris remedium.
4b. Aurem tuam huc inclina,
Amoris conubium,
Defende nos a sentina,
Paenitendi spatium
Dona nobis, ut in caelis
Habeamus praemium
5. In caelesti ierarchia;
Trahe nos, virgo Maria,
Ad superna gaudia.³⁴

Hymnus 110. De Beata Maria Virgine proclaims the Mother of God the Son for her merciful protection of the needy, stating:

3a. Esta [María] es el fin de la miseria,
El principio de la gracia,
La fuente de la misericordia,
La medicina de los languidecientes,
El auxilio divino.
3b. La Emperatriz de la gloria,
La Reina de los cielos,
La puerta abierta del perdón,
La salvación y el refugio
De todos los pecadores.

3a. Haec finis miseriae,
Gratiae principium,
Fons misericordiae,
Medela languentium,
Divinum auxilium.
3b. Imperatrix gloriae,
Regina caelestium,
Patens porta veniae,
Peccatorum omnium
Salus et refugium.³⁵

Hymnus 84. De Beata Maria Virgine manifests the saving power of the Virgin Mary on behalf of those who have lost their way, stating:

4a. You are the rope of the poor,
By which the hearts of sinners
are lifted.
4b. Comforter of those who seek,
Hope of those who seek forgiveness
of sins.

4a. Tu es miserorum chorda,
Per quam relevantur corda
Peccatorum.
4b. Consolatrix quaerentium,
Spes veniam quaerentium
Peccatorum.³⁶

Hymnus 150. Ad Beatam Mariam Virginem praises the mother of the Messiah for her role as helper of the needy in these rhymes:

11. You are a high light, O Mary,
The straight path of sinners,
The pious spouse of Jesus Christ
And the Queen of the world.

11. Lux es alta, o Maria,
Peccatorum recta via,
Iesu Christi sponsa pia
Et regina saeculi.

12. Mother, you are the cause of our happiness, The comforter of the afflicted, The deliverer from all danger Of sins.	12. Mater, nostra es beatrix, Afflictorum consolatrix, Peccatorum liberatrix Totius periculi. ³⁷
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The Franciscan friar Gualterus Wiburnus († c. 1367), in *Hymnus 417. (1.) Encomium Beatae Mariae*, acknowledges the saving power of the Virgin Mary on behalf of sinners, stating:

35. Hail, with whose pious prayer The guilty rejoice in forgiveness after the dregs of their sins are cleansed, Whom you transfer To the starry palaces of heaven after the bolts of hell are broken.	35. Ave, cuius pia prece Peccatorum tersa faece Rei gaudent venia, Quos confractis inferorum Claustris transfers ad caelorum Stellata palatia. ³⁸
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Hymnus 468. Agnus "Salve mater" greets the Virgin Mary, Help of Christians with these lyrical expressions:

Hail, rose without thorns. Hail, divine hope of the world, Hail, flower with lily; Pardon of sinners, O Mary	Salve, rosa sine spina Salve, mundi spes divina, Salve, flos cum lilio; Peccatorum venia, O Maria. ³⁹
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2.6. Thirteenth- to Fifteenth-Century Hymns

Written at some imprecise date in the long interval between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, the following four hymns relating to our topic have been recorded:

Hymnus 4 praises the merciful Virgin, helper of the people in need, through these lyrical metaphors:

1. Hail, star of the sea, Who shines for the wretched, Dwelling place of the Deity, Gate of the Prince, Open fountain of Paradise, You are Cypress, you are Mount Zion, The bridge of sinners. With the shadow of the Father, The Word becomes flesh through you With the sacred breath.	1. Ave maris stella, Lucens miseris, Deitatis cella, Porta principis. Paradisi patens fons, Tu Cupressus, Sion mons, Peccatorum pons. Patris obumbratione Verbum caro fit per te Sacro flamine. ⁴⁰
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Hymnus 7 requests the saving mediation of the Virgin Mary with these lyrical expressions:

1. Hail, reddening rose, Beautiful virgin, You are the glorious mother of Jesus Christ, Do not hate us for our sins, Be our intercessor, So that we may escape from the face of our enemy.	1. Ave rubens rosa. Virgo speciosa, Jesu Christi tu es Mater gloriosa. Peccatorum nostrorum Ne sis odiosa, Sis interventrix nostri, Ut evadamus rostri Inimici nostri. ⁴¹
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Hymnus 29 expresses concepts similar to those of the previous hymn, stating:

2. You are the medicine of sinners,
The health of the weak,
The true rose without thorns,
The lily of chastity:
Consider what I ask of you,
Mother of the true God,
I know that I have sinned.
Have mercy on me,
Consoler of holy hope.

2. Peccatorum medicina,
Salus es debilium,
Rosa vera sine spina,
Castitatis lilium:
Respice, quod posco,
Mater veri Dei,
Me peccasse nosco.
Miserere mei,
Consolatrix sanctae spei.⁴²

Hymnus 101 emphasizes the supernatural saving power of the Virgin Mary in these brief sentences:

9. After God, you are
The salvation of all,
The hope of sinners,
The terror of demons.

9. Tu es post Deum
Salus omnium,
Spes peccatorum,
Terror daemonum.⁴³

2.7. Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century Hymns

Written at some unknown date between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the following six hymns alluding to our subject have been recorded:

Hymnus 48. De Beata Virgine Maria invokes the help of the mother of Jesus to avoid evil and do good, through these stanzas:

3. O blessed Virgin,
Our Advocate,
Royal Woman,
Deliver us from evils.

4. Break the chains
Of our sins.
Adorn us with good morals
And right acts.

3. O virgo beata,
Nostra advocata,
Femina regalis,
Serva nos a malis.

4. Dissolve nostrorum
Vincla peccatorum.
Orna nos moribus
Et justis actibus.⁴⁴

Hymnus 52. Salutationes Beatae Mariae Virginis praises the Virgin for her beneficial protection in these terms:

56. Hail, holy temple of God,
In which the guilty obtain
The forgiveness of sins,
In which they received salvation
And the mercy
That the prophets promised.

56. Salve, templum sanctum Dei,
In quo consequuntur rei
Peccatorum veniam,
Quo salutem susceperunt,
Quam prophetae promiserunt
Et misericordiam.⁴⁵

Hymnus 88. Super Ave Maria proclaims the sublime saving power of the Redeemer's mother, with these consonances:

6. The honor of the angels
Is with you especially,
The salvation of sinners
Is with you physically,
Jesus, the guide of the righteous,
Is with you eternally,
The reward of the world
is with you finally.

6. Tecum specialiter
Decus angelorum,
Tecum corporaliter
Salus peccatorum,
Tecum aeternaliter
Iesus, dux iustorum,
Tecum est finaliter
Merces saeculorum.⁴⁶

Hymnus VI. Psalterium beatae Mariae Virginis. Prima Quinquagena expresses devotion to Mary Help of Christians in these schools with phrases:

33. I will bless you, you who are Blessed above all, And among women The true hope of sinners.	33. Benedicam te, quae es Benedicta super omnes Et inter mulieres Peccatorum vera spes. ⁴⁷
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Hymnus VI. Psalterium beatae Mariae Virginis. Secunda Quinquagena conveys his trust in the Mother of God for her saving power, stating:

4. Hear, O God, that one Who is called the hope of sinners And prays to you for my salvation Relenting on my behalf. [...] 6. Have mercy on me, Lady, I take refuge under your wings, Name me among your children, For I have fled from sins.	4. Exaudi, Deus, eam, Quae peccatorum spes vocatur Et in salutem meam Pro me placando te precatur. [...] 6. Miserere mei, domina, Sub alis tuis confugi, Inter filios tuos nomina, A peccatis namque fugi. ⁴⁸
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Hymnus XIV. Psalterium beatae Mariae Virginis. Tertia Quinquagena cries out for the Virgin's restorative protection to live righteously, in these verses:

34. Mother of God, remember the prayers of your children who remember your name, so that no infection of sins stains those distinguished by the titles of morality, especially yours.	34. Mater Dei, memor sis precum filiorum, Qui sunt tui nominis memores, ut morum Insignitos titulis, maxime tuorum, Maculet infectio nulla peccatorum. ⁴⁹
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2.8. Fifteenth-Century Hymns

Dating from the fifteenth century, the following sixty-one hymns referring to the subject under analysis have been found, five of which were written by the famous Benedictine hymnographer Ulrich Stöcklins von Rottach:

Hymnus 368. Prosa de virgine Maria requests the purifying aid of the mother of Christ in these verses:

Lily of chastity, conforter of all, Forgiveness for sinners. Cleanse the filth of crimes, Cleanse, full of grace, The scars of wounds. Mary, free us from the bond of sin, From the enemy, from the flesh, From the world.	Castitatis lilium, consolatrix omnium, peccatorum venia. Munda sordes scelerum, cicatrices vulnerum terge plena gratia. De peccati vinculo, hoste, carne, saeculo libera nos Maria. ⁵⁰
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Hymnus 418. Super cantico Magnificat emphatically demands the saving protection of the Virgin Mary, proclaiming:

Powerful Virgin, gateway to heaven,
 Strengthen us on this path,
 Born of royal lineage,
 Bring us back to eternity,
 Mother of God, Mary.
 Through you, gracious one, our evil deeds
 are eliminated,
 advocate of sinners,
 Born for the salvation of the world,
 Mother of God, Mary!

Potens virgo, coeli porta,
 in hac via nos conforta,
 ex regali stirpe orta,
 ad aeterna nos reporta,
 mater dei Maria.
 Deponentur per te, grata,
 mala nostra perpetrata,
 peccatorum avocata,
 pro salute mundi nata,
 mater dei Maria!⁵¹

Hymnus 484. De beata Virgine Maria demands the healing help of the mother of God the Son, stating:

Hail, health of the sick
 and comfort of the wretched,
 Blot out the filth of sins
 from those who praise you, Lady.
 Hail, through whom salvation is given,
 through whom grief is devastated,
 May approval be granted to us
 among the armies of heaven. Amen

Ave salus infirmorum
 et solamen miserorum,
 dele sordes peccatorum
 te laudantum, domina.
 Ave, per quam salus datur,
 per quam luctus devastatur,
 nobis plausus tribuatur
 inter coeli agmina. Amen.⁵²

Hymnus 490. De beata Virgine solemnitas antiphona emphatically requests Mary's saving protection in these emotional phrases:

Sweetness of purity,
 Honor of angels,
 Restorer of grace,
 Hope of the despairing.
 The children of Mother Eve
 cry out weeping to you,
 Mother of the true Son,
 Look upon those who groan.
 We sigh to you,
 Mother of the Savior,
 Be our helper
 in the valley of suffering.
 Incline your eyes of compassion
 Upon us,
 Hasten to free
 The niches of sins.
 Show us the reward,
 The fruit of your womb,
 Your blessed Son,
 that we may enjoy
 With the eternal Lord,
 O clement, O pious,
 without any limit,
 O sweet Mary!

Dulcedo munditiae,
 decus angelorum,
 reparatrix gratiae,
 spes desperatorum.
 Ad te clamant filii
 matris Evae flentes,
 mater veri filii
 respice gementes.
 Suspiramus, genitrix,
 ad te salvatoris,
 nobis ut sis adjutrix
 in valle laboris.
 Tu pietatis oculos
 super nos inclina,
 peccatorum loculos
 solvere festina.
 Nobis monstra praemium,
 fructum ventris tui
 benedictum filium,
 ut possimus frui
 Cum aeterno domino,
 O clemens, o pia,
 absque ullo termino,
 O dulcis Maria!⁵³

Hymnus 498. Oratio super Ave maris stella requires the protection of the Virgin Mary to obtain eternal salvation, through these poetic metaphors:

Happy gate of heaven, where peace was born, Lead us back there, Where you always are. Beloved star of heaven, bright as the sun, splendor of souls, hope of sinners, Gate of Heaven, where the King of Heaven made for himself a marriage bed, Prize of the elect.	4. Felix coeli porta, in qua pax est orta, illuc nos reporta, ubi semper es. coeli sidus carum instar solis clarum, splendor animarum peccatorum spes, porta supernorum, in qua sibi thorum fecit rex coelorum electorum pres. ⁵⁴
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A few stanzas later, this hymn continues to express similar requests for sinners, stating:

Untie the chains of the guilty, giving them peace, and cleanse me, Virgin, from my faults; break the bonds of sin, the nexus of crimes, so that we may not be engulfed in the affliction of evils. Grant the hope of salvation to the guilty and the help of virtue to those deprived [of it], We beseech you.	Solve vincla reis, pacem donans eis et a culpis meis, virgo, munda me; vincla peccatorum, nexus delictorum rumpe, ne malorum nos involvat vae: reis spem salutis et opem virtutis confer destitutis, obsecramus te. ⁵⁵
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Hymnus 507. Oratio, quae dicitur crinale beatæ Mariæ virginis asks for the restorative protection of the mother of the Messiah in these verses:

Hail, living fountain of the gardens, For which the minds of the contrite thirst, Wash away the stain of sins, Provide the nectar of heaven, O steward of forgiveness.	Ave vivus fons hortorum, quem mens sitit contritorum, lava labem peccatorum, nectar praebe supernorum, O pincerna veniae. ⁵⁶
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Hymnus 510. Ad beatam Mariam Virginem calls upon the Virgin Mary for help on behalf of those guilty of sin, with these vivid expressions:

Oh, Mary, sweet consolation of the sick, You are the helper of the unfortunate, Be my protection. Compassionate with the miserable, Being miserable, I flee to you, Take away from me the weight of sins Which, unworthy, I surrender.	O Maria languidorum dulcis consolatio, tu adjutrix miserorum, mihi sis protectio, miseratrix miserorum, ad te miser fugio, tolle pondus peccatorum, quod indignus profero. ⁵⁷
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Hymnus 511. Salutationes beatæ Mariæ Virginis celebrates Mary's renewing power in these terms:

Hail, full of grace.
 Fruitful Virgin,
 Hope and glory of the world,
 Immaculate Mother,
 Forgiveness of sins,
 Consecrated Spouse,
 Joy of the saints,
 Hail, honor of virgins,
 Blessed Queen.

Ave plena gratia
 virgo fecundata,
 mundi spes et gloria,
 mater illibata,
 peccatorum venia,
 sponsa consecrata,
 sanctorum laetitia,
 Ave decus virginum,
 regina beata.⁵⁸

A few stanzas later, this hymn implores the redemptive intercession of the Virgin Mary, proclaiming:

Hail, full of joy,
 most honorable maiden,
 sweet refreshment,
 cover with heavenly dew,
 pray for me now
 to your holy Son,
 ask forgiveness
 for all my sins.

Ave plenum gaudium,
 puella decora,
 dulce refrigerium
 coelitus irrora,
 tuum sanctum filium
 pro me nunc exora,
 peccatorum omnium
 veniam implora.⁵⁹

Hymnus 533. Ad beatam Virginem Mariam salutes the heavenly Sovereign for her healing power, in these rhymes:

Hail, morning star,
 medicine for sinners,
 Princess and queen of the world,
 Be our discipline.

Ave stella matutina,
 peccatorum medicina,
 mundi princeps et regina,
 esto nobis disciplina.⁶⁰

Hymnus 558. Oratio ad gloriosam Virginem Mariam claims saving help for the guilty of sin in this stanza:

Look upon me, O Mary,
 Mother and daughter of God,
 and visit me, for I am miserable,
 Overwhelmed by the mass of crimes,
 For if you visit me,
 By visiting me, you will purify me.
 Your visit is
 The forgiveness of my sins.

Respice hunc, o Maria,
 mater dei et filia,
 et visita me miserum
 oppressum mole scelerum,
 Nam si tu me visitabis,
 visitando me purgabis,
 tua est visitatio
 peccatorum remissio.⁶¹

Hymnus 588. De sancta Maria praises the Virgin for her compassionate protection of sinners, proclaiming:

You are the adornment of heaven,
 The protection against sins,
 You are a firm hope of forgiveness;
 You are the advocate of the guilty.
 You are the pleasing form of the righteous,
 You are the entire source of grace.

Tu coelorum ornamentum,
 peccatorum tutamentum,
 tu firma spes es veniae;
 tu reorum advocata,
 tu justorum forma grata,
 tu fons totus gratiae.⁶²

Hymnus 590. Ad beatam Virginem Mariam celebrates Mary, helper of the guilty, with these succinct praises:

Gate of heaven,
light of angels,
joy of the righteous,
hope of sinners.

Janua coelorum,
lux angelorum,
gaudium justorum,
spes peccatorum.⁶³

Hymnus 68. De beata Maria Virgine asks for the restorative intercession of the Redeemer's mother, stating:

2a. Good mother and matron,
Pray to your Son,
That he may cleanse the multitude
of our sins.

2a. Mater bona et matrona,
Roga prolem,
Ut nostrorum peccatorum
Tergat molem.⁶⁴

Hymnus 57. De Praesentatione Beatae Mariae Virginis congratulates the Virgin Mary, Help of Christians, with these idyllic words:

1a. Rejoice, glorious virgin,
Hail, rose of paradise,
Hail, honor of virgins,
1b. Born of Hebrew descent,
Advocate of sinners,
Joy of angels.

1a. Gaude, virgo gloriosa,
Ave, paradisi rosa,
Salve, decus virginum,
1b. Hebraeorum stirpe nata,
Peccatorum advocata,
Angelorum gaudium.⁶⁵

A few stanzas later, this hymn continues, calling more emphatically for the healing protection of the Virgin, declaring:

7a. Look upon those who praise you,
Look upon the innocent,
Have mercy on sinners,
And make the rebels obey
Him who rules the universe;
7b. So that all may praise you.
Let them not sin against the [Holy] Spirit,
Nor offend the Creator,
Moreover, sing praises to the Redeemer.
For ever and ever.

7a. Te laudantes intueri,
Innocentes contuere,
Peccatorum miserere
Et rebelles fac parere
Gubernanti omnia;
7b. Ut quicumque te collaudant
Contra pneuma non delinquant,
Creatorem non offendant,
Redemptori laudes pangant
Per aeterna saecula.⁶⁶

Hymnus 94. In Purificatione Beatae Mariae Virginis praises Mary Help of Christians in these terms:

3b. Through you,
Lady of the whole world,
whom the armies
of saints praise,
The crimes of sinners
Are forgiven,
Mary.

3b. Per te mundi
totius domina,
Quam sanctorum
collaudant agmina,
Peccatorum
solvuntur crimina,
Maria.⁶⁷

Hymnus 59. De Conceptione Beatae Mariae Virginis unveils the Mother of God as an effective intercessor for humanity in need, through this stanza:

2. You are the daughter of the eternal King,
You are his mother and his daughter,
And you, who are our advocate,

2. Tu aeterni regis nata,
Mater es et filia,
Tuque nostra advocata

You are also the lady of life,
The broad vein of sinners
That pours forth balms for us.

Es et vitae domina,
Peccatorum vena lata
Nobis stillando balsama.⁶⁸

Hymnus 51. De Nominibus Beatae Mariae Virginis exalts the Virgin, helper, mediator, and protector of human beings through this emphatic sequence of praises:

205. Support for the people in need,
Raising of the fallen,
Elimination of crimes,
Consummation of virtues
And perfection of good things,
210. Revocation of exiles,
Liberation of the guilty,
Destruction of enemies,
And protection of your own,
Remission of sins,
215. Redemption of captives,
Promotion of health
And overcoming sickness,
Acquisition of health
And restoration of life.

205. Inopum sustentatio,
Lapsorum relevatio,
Delictorum deletio,
Virtutum consummatio
Et bonorum perfectio,
210. Exsulum revocatio,
Reorum liberatio,
Hostium interitio,
Tuorumque tuitio,
Peccatorum remissio,
215. Captivorum redemptio,
Sanitatis collatio
Et languoris curvatio,
Salutis acquisitio
Et vitae restitutio.⁶⁹

Hymnus 104. Oratio de Virgine Maria, matre Jesu celebrates the Virgin for her restorative help in these precise rhymes:

5. Hail, liberator of Eve,
Comforter of sinners,
Enlightener of hearts,
Raiser of the dead.

5. Ave, Evae liberatrix,
Peccatorum consolatrix,
Cordium illuminatrix,
Mortuorum suscitatrix.⁷⁰

Hymnus 100. Ad Beatam Mariam Virginem manifests the healing power of the mother of Christ, declaring:

7. You are the salvation of the sick,
The help of sinners,
The sealed fountain, the fountain of gardens,
Cleansing the filth of sins.

7. Tu es salus infirmorum,
Auxilium peccatorum,
Fons signatus, fons hortorum,
Terger sordes delictorum.⁷¹

Hymnus 107. Ad Beatam Mariam Virginem acclaims the Virgin Mary, Help of Christians, through these suggestive metaphors:

5. City of safety,
Temple of the Holy Trinity,
Refuge of sinners;
In this time of drought,
[you are] the abundance of fertility,
The subsidy for the people in need.

5. Civitas securitatis,
Templum sanctae trinitatis,
Peccatorum refugium;
Hoc tempore siccitatis
Copia fertilitatis,
Egenorum subsidium.⁷²

Hymnus 109. Ad Beatam Mariam Virginem greets the merciful helper of those guilty of sin, in these consonances:

4. Hail, most blessed,
Salvation of sinners,
Great, greatest, most beloved,
Heaven's darling,
Best comforter,
Protector of the guilty,
Most blessed Virgin,
True light of the saints.

4. Ave, beatissima
Salus peccatorum,
Magna, major, maxima,
Praelata coelorum,
Consolatrix optima,
Patrona reorum,
Virgo beatissima,
Vera lux sanctorum.⁷³

Hymnus 125. De Beata Maria Virgine celebrates the Virgin Mary, intercessor of humankind, with these suggestive analogies:

2. Through you, Virgin Mary,
The divine is given to us,
The cypress of purity
Grows green in you,
The lily of chastity
Whitens more in you,
You are the mother of the Minors,
The refuge of sinners.

2. Per te, virgo Maria,
Nobis dantur divina,
In te virescit satis
Cypressus puritatis,
In te candescit magis
Lilium castitatis,
Te es mater Minorum,
Refugium peccatorum.⁷⁴

Hymnus 260 requests the healing protection of the Virgin Mary for those guilty of sin, saying:

3. You are the only hope of the guilty,
Chaste Mother, pure Virgin,
Do not take into the darkness
The prayers of our sins
So that we may not be slaughtered
by the hammer or the mace of the enemy,
But that we may be defended
under your wings and your mantle.

3. Sola spes tu es reorum,
Mater casta, virgo pura,
Preces nostrum peccatorum
Non perducas ad obscura,
Ut hostis non trucidemur
Tormento seu malleo,
Sed sub alis defensemur
Tuis et sub pallio.⁷⁵

Hymnus 18. De Beata Maria Virgine. Die Lunae. Prosa 1 calls for the restorative help of the Mother of God in this stanza:

3. O Mary, fountain of gardens,
Alabaster of ointments,
Wash, heal with your prayer
the wounds of sinners,
So that the King of Heaven may guide us.
To heaven, guiding us.

3. O Maria, fons hortorum,
Alabastrum unguentorum,
Lava, sana vulnera
Tua prece peccatorum,
Ut te duce rex coelorum
Nos ducat ad aethera.⁷⁶

Two stanzas later, this hymn further emphasizes the praises of the Virgin Mary, Help of Christians, declaring:

2. Advocate of sinners,
Comforter of the poor,
Relief of the weak,
You are the favorite of the angels,
Salvation, peace, life of the righteous,
You are the lily of purity.

2. Advocata peccatorum,
Consolatrix miserorum,
Solamen debiliu,
Tu praelata angelorum,
Salus, pax, vita justorum,
Tu pudoris lilium.⁷⁷

Hymnus 23. De Conceptione Beatae Mariae Virginis. In 1. Vesperis. Responsoria implores the compassionate protection of the Redeemer's mother on behalf of those guilty of sin, proclaiming:

1. O gracious advocate of the guilty, Mother of mercy, O health of the sick, Giver of life, Praise and honor of the Church, Obtain for us, gracious Raiser of the fallen, The place of forgiveness. V. O mother of the King of glory, Full of all grace, Save us mercifully today.	1. O clemens reorum Advocatrix Mater misericordiae, O salus aegrotorum, Vitae datrix, Laus et honor ecclesiae, Nobis, pia lapsorum Relevatrix, Obtine locum veniae. V. O mater regis gloriae, Plena omnis gratiae, Nos salva clementer hodie. ⁷⁸
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Hymnus 23. De Conceptione Beatae Mariae Virginis. In 1. Nocturno. Antiphonae calls for the protective aid of the merciful Mother of the Savior, in these stanzas:

1. The advocate of sinners, Mary, Queen of Heaven, Transcends the choirs of angels. [...]	1. Advocata peccatorum, Maria, regina caelorum, Transcendit choro angelorum. [...]
3. Hear us, Mother of mercy, Who cry out today To the throne of your grace, And appease us to your Son.	3. Nos clamantes hodie Ad gratiae tuae solium Exaudi, mater clementiae, Et placa nobis filium. ⁷⁹

Hymnus 97. Super Ave Maria asks for the beneficial help of the heavenly Sovereign to avoid sin, in these consonances:

7. Blessed Lady, Light of the angels, Who reigns above the armies of the elect, And purifies the crimes of the world, Medicine for diseases, Save us, so that the burden of sins does not oppress us.	7. Benedicta domina, Lumen angelorum, Sursum super agmina Regnans electorum, Mundi mundans crimina, Medela languorum, Serva nos, ne sarcina Premat peccatorum. ⁸⁰
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Hymnus 102. Super Ave Maria praises the Mother of the Redeemer for her healing power of intercession through these suggestive formulations:

4. Blessed, gracious, Glorious Mother of God, Make the crimes of offenses abhorrent to us; You are the queen of heaven, The medicine of sinners, A blooming rose without thorns, You are the mistress of the world.	4. Benedicta, gratiosa, Dei mater gloriosa, Fac, ut nobis sint exosa Delictorum crimina; Tu caelorum es regina, Peccatorum medicina, Florens rosa sine spina, Tu es mundi domina. ⁸¹
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Hymnus 107. Super Ave Maria glorifies the Virgin for her privileged ability to help humanity in need, saying:

5. The Lord exalted you, Raised you above the stars, Endowed you with the angels In eternal joy; The Lord, who rules over all things, Choose you as queen, And subjected all things to you, Through you, He drives away vices. The Lord, who nourished all things, Ordained you as mother Of sinners And the cruelty of the devil fled;	5. Dominus te exaltavit, Supra astra te levavit, Angelis te praedotavit Aeterna in laetitia; Dominus, qui cuncta regit, In reginam te elegit, Tibi cunctaque subegit, Per te fugat vitia. Dominus, qui cuncta pavit, Te in matrem ordinavit Peccatorum et fugavit Daemoni saevitia; ⁸²
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Hymnus 109. Super Ave Maria praises the sublime Virgin for her supernatural power of saving help, in these rhymes:

7. You, Lady, are blessed and venerable, You are the pool of sinners And a delightful rose, There is no woman in the world Compared to you, Lead us to the heights of heaven, You who are worthy of God's love.	7. Benedicta tu, domina, Es atque venerabilis, Peccatorum es piscina Et rosa delectabilis, In mundo non est femina, Quae sit tibi consimilis, Duc nos ad caeli culmina, Deo quae es amabilis. ⁸³
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Hymnus 113. Super Ave Maria implores the protection of the Virgin Mary for those guilty of sin, in these vivid terms:

1. Hail, Empress of the World And Queen of Heaven, Mediatix of sinners And medicine for sins.	1. Ave, mundi imperatrix Atque caelorum regina, Peccatorum mediatix Et culparum medicina.
2. Mary, O Virgin Mother, Chosen above all others, Mother of God, blameless, Have mercy on the wretched now.	2. Maria, o virgo parens, Electa prae ceteris, Mater Dei labe carens Miserere nunc miseris. ⁸⁴

Hymnus 132. Super Ave Maria honors the Virgin, protector of those guilty of sin, in these verses:

6. And you, pearl of heaven, Light and life of sinners, Giving forth blameless children, Blessed be your creator, and your governor, God before the ages.	6. Et tu, caeli margarita, Peccatorum lux et vita, Parens sine macula, Benedictus sit creator Tuus atque gubernator, Deus ante saecula. ⁸⁵
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Hymnus 140. Super Ave Maria greets the compassionate Virgin Mary, Help of Christians in these verses:

1. Hail, Queen of virgins, Rose that blooms without thorns,	1. Ave, virginum regina, Rosa florens sine spina,
--	--

Hail, merciful and divine,
Medicine for sinners.

Ave, clemens et divina,
Peccatorum medicina.⁸⁶

Hymnus 143. Super Ave Maria congratulates the Virgin for her merciful work of helping those in need, in these rhymes:

1. Hail, glorious Virgin,
Consoler of sinners,
Hail, sweet, beautiful one,
Hail, new restorer,
Hail, who rises like a rose,
Preserver of chastity,
Hail, fruitful Mother,
Compassionate with the miserable.

1. Ave, virgo gloriosa,
Peccatorum consolatrix,
Ave, dulcis speciosa,
Ave, nova reparatrix,
Ave, scandens velut rosa,
Castitatis conservatrix,
Ave, mater fructuosa,
Miserorum miseratrix.⁸⁷

Hymnus 140. De Partu Virginis trusts in the saving help of the Virgin Mary, stating:

18. Through you, Mary, I will come
To the forgiveness of sins,
Strong and powerful woman,
I will also be guided by you
To the glory of the angels,
So that I may boast eternally.

18. Per te, Maria, veniam
Ad peccatorum veniam,
Fortis et potens mulier,
Per te deducar etiam
Ad angelorum gloriam,
Ut in aeternum glorier.⁸⁸

Hymnus 181. De X Gaudiis Beatae Mariae Virginis applauds the Virgin Mary for her effective assistance to those suffering material and spiritual needs, saying:

9. Rejoice, for you alone are
The savior of the wretched,
You are also the refuge
And the salvation of sinners.
10. Rejoice, for you are the haven
And the hope of the hopeless,
You are also the consolation
And the mother of the afflicted.

9. Gaude, quia sola tu
Salvatrix miserorum
Es necnon refugium
Et salus peccatorum.
10. Gaude, quia portus es
Et spes desperatorum,
Es quoque solacium
Et mater afflictorum.⁸⁹

Hymnus V. Psalterium Beatae Mariae Virginis. Prima Quinquagena requests the beneficial help of the Virgin, pointing out:

11. Hail, you who did not fail
In holiness, but existed
Rejecting vanity.
Through the prayers of the needy,
Arise, washing away
All the dregs of sins.

11. Ave, quae non defecisti
Sanctitate, sed fuisti
Vanitatem respuens.
Egenorum propter preces
Exsurge cunctasque faeces
Peccatorum abluens.⁹⁰

Hymnus V. Psalterium Beatae Mariae Virginis. Secunda Quinquagena asks for the saving help of the Mother of God in these rhymes:

24. Hail, strong as a pillar,
Who are raised to glory
From the misery of the world,
Break the horn of sinners
And bring victory to yours
In the war of vices.

24. Ave, fortis ut columna,
Quae de mundi es aerumna
Erecta ad gloriam,
Frange cornu peccatorum
Et in bello vitiorum
Tuis fer victoriam.⁹¹

Hymnus X. Soliloquium sive Psalterium Beatae Mariae Virginis. XVII claims the merciful patronage of the Virgin Mary for the benefit of all human beings, regardless of their moral conduct, by stating:

94. We ask you, merciful one, Who accepts the good and the bad, Liberator of sinners, Who turns the bad into good.	94. Quaerimus te, miseratrix, Bonos, malos suscipiens, Peccatorum liberatrix, De malis bonos faciens.⁹²
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Hymnus 78. De Beata Maria Virgine implores the kindhearted protection of the Mother of God with these ardent expressions:

3a. O matron of the nurturing King, Sing to God with the voice of the psalm, And bring the help we ask for, So that we may not die in guilt, O Mary. 3b. O mother of compassion, Hear those who weep for sins. And protect us from evils, Have mercy on sinners, O Mary.	3a. O matrona regis almi, Psalle Deo voce psalmi Ferque opem, quam precamur, Ne in culpa moriamur, O Maria. 3b. O nos, mater pietatis, Audi flentes pro peccatis Et a malis nos tuere, Peccatorum miserere, O Maria.⁹³
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Hymnus 43. In Assumptione Beatae Mariae Virginis requests the merciful intercession of the Redeemer's mother to obtain eternal salvation in these verses:

7a. Therefore, compassionate mediatrix, merciful to sinners, pray to your Son, 7b. That after the course of this life, he may take us with you upward to heavenly joy.	7a. Ergo, pia mediatrix, Peccatorum miseratrix, Tuum roga filium, 7b. Ut post huius vitae cursum Nos assumat tecum sursum Ad caeleste gaudium.⁹⁴
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Hymnus 44. De Beata Maria Virgine. Infra Octavam Assumptionis acclaims Mary, helper of mankind, with these lyrical praises:

1a. Hail, Mother of the Savior, You who give birth to the God of gods, Hail, only virgin, You are called the Star of the Sea. 1b. Hail, restorer of life, Hail, opener of the way, Hail, holy legislator, Comforter of sinners.	1a. Salve, mater salvatoris, Quae deorum Deum paris, Salve virgo singularis, Quae vocaris Stella maris. 1b. Salve, vitae reparatrix, Salve viae reseratrix, Salve, sancta legislatrix, Peccatorum consolatrix.⁹⁵
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Hymnus 77. De Beata Maria Virgine greets the sublime protector of the faithful in these simple verses:

3b. Hail, joy of heaven, Port that brings suffrage, Refuge of sinners, Hope and mercy.	3b. Salve, caelorum gaudium, Portus portans suffragium, Peccatorum refugium, Spes et misericordia.⁹⁶
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Hymnus 94. De Beata Maria Virgine acclaims the mother of the Messiah with these poetic metaphors:

1b. Hail, Virgin, fountain of the gardens, Who keeps the bed virginal, Hail, ladder of sinners, Hail, gate of heaven.	1b. Ave, virgo, fons hortorum, Servans virginale thorum, Ave, scala peccatorum, Ave, caeli ianua. ⁹⁷
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Hymnus 98. De Beata Maria Virgine celebrates the Virgin Mary for her mercy toward the materially and spiritually needy, declaring:

4a. Empress of queens, Reformer of our lives, Fruitful Olive Tree; 4b. Merciful to sinners, Lifter of the poor, What compassionate deeds you do.	4a. Reginarum imperatrix, Vitae nostrae reformatrix, Oliva fructifera; 4b. Peccatorum miseratrix, Miserorum sublevatrix, Pia gestans viscera. ⁹⁸
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Hymnus 112. De Beata Maria Virgine urges us to seek the effective saving intercession of the Mother of the Lord in these verses:

3a. You are truly the mediatrix, Pious reconciler Between us and your Son, 3b. Through whom you have the privilege Of being the forgiver Of sins and the savior. [...] 5a. Let us then approach her in safety, We who are wrapped In the filth of sins, 5b. Turning to the mother, Let us beg with prayers That she may attend to our salvation.	3a. Tu es vere mediatrix, Pia reconciliatrix Inter nos et filium, 3b. A quo, quod es condonatrix Peccatorum et salvatrix, Habes privilegium. [...] 5a. Accedamus ergo tuti Nos, qui sumus involuti Peccatorum sordibus, 5b. Coram matre provoluti, Intendat nostrae salutis, Exoremus precibus. ⁹⁹
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Hymnus 116. De Beata Maria Virgine praises the Queen of Heaven for her compassionate assistance to those in need, in these suggestive terms:

1a. Empress of the Angels, Hail, Mother of orphans, You are the uplifter of sinners, Enlightener, eyedrops of weak eyes.	1a. Imperatrix angelorum, Salve, mater orphanorum, Relevatrix tu peccatorum, Illuminatrix, oculorum Debilium Collyrium. ¹⁰⁰
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Hymnus 124. De Beata Maria Virgine congratulates Mary, while asking for her mediation before her divine Son on behalf of the faithful, assessing:

1a. Rejoice, salvation of sinners, Bosom, reward, hope of your people, Appease us to your Son.	1a. Gaude, salus peccatorum, Sinus, merces, spes tuorum, Placa nobis filium. ¹⁰¹
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Hymnus 157. De Beata Maria Virgine requests Mary's restorative help in this brief stanza:

3. Therefore, you, most holy, The only hope of sinners, Strengthen your servant, So that he may sing you a song.	3. Ergo tu, sanctissima, Peccatorum spes unica, Conforta tuum famulum, Ut tibi dicat canticum. ¹⁰²
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The *Hymnus 480. De Beata Virgine. Oratio* thus greets the mother of God for her competence in saving people, especially the poorest, in the following terms:

Rejoice, crossroads of salvation,	Gaude salutis trivium,
Mary, the hope of the humble,	Maria, spes humilium,
You are the open door of forgiveness,	tu porta patens veniae,
consolation of indulgence,	levamen indulgentiae,
do not despise me, merciful.	non me pia despice. ¹⁰³

The *Hymnus 484. De Beata Virgine Maria* celebrates the rescuing intercessory power of God's mother in favor of those most in need through these verses:

Hail, holy temple of God,	Ave templum sanctum Dei,
Source of salvation, the door of hope,	fons salutis, porta spei,
all the prisoners run towards you	ad te currunt omnes rei
With full confidence.	plena cum fiducia. ¹⁰⁴

Hymnus 77. Kyrie "O Maria lux" requires the compassionate patronage of the Virgin to obtain eternal salvation, formulating:

a. Medicine for sinners,	a. Medicina peccatorum,
Closed gate, fountain of gardens.	Porta clausa, fons hortorum.
Have compassion,	eleison,
b. Bring prayers to your Son,	b. Funde preces ad filium,
So that he will not deliver us to punishment,	Ne tradat ad supplicium,
Have compassion.	eleison. ¹⁰⁵

The German hymnographer Ulrich Stöcklins von Rottach (Udalricus Wessofontanus), in *Hymnus 10. Oratio devota de Beata Maria Virgine*, invokes the Queen of Heaven for her saving intercession on behalf of the faithful through these fervent rhymes:

Mother, help us quickly,	Mater, ope succurre celeri,
So that we are not delivered to the prison of hell,	Ne inferni tradamur carceri,
Do open the door for us so that we can	Ut possimus consortes fieri
become consorts of Heaven,	Coeli, nobis januam aperi. ¹⁰⁶

The same Ulrich Stöcklins von Rottach, in *Hymnus 38. Abecedarius XIII*, requests the rescuing mediation of Mary before her divine Son, the Supreme Universal Judge, in favor of the believer to achieve eternal salvation through these pressing verses:

Grant us to avoid the terrible	Diram da iudicis
Wrath of the Judge [Christ],	iram nos fugere,
When he comes to examine	Cum nostram venerit
Our life,	vitam discutere,
[we ask you to] want to reject then	Velis insidias
the snares of the enemy [the devil],	hostis tunc pellere,
and open us	Et nobis januas
The gates of Heaven.	coelorum pandere. ¹⁰⁷

Ulrich Stöcklins von Rottach, in *Hymnus XI. Psalterium Secundum. Quinquagena I*, asks the heavenly intercessor for mercy for the guilty, in these terms:

33. Hail, flame of the heavenly lampstand,	33. Ave, fax caelestis candelabri,
Who opens the recesses of sins,	Peccatorum resolvens loculos,

Turn the eyes of compassion
On the covenant in the foul swamp.

Super foedum caeno volutabri
Pietatis reflecte oculos.¹⁰⁸

Once again Ulrich Stöcklins von Rottach, in *Hymnus XV. Psalterium "Hymnarius Beatae Mariae Virginis"*. *Proemium*, requests Mary's compassionate help to act righteously, stating:

2. Merciful Virgin, free me
from the poison of errors
and the chains of sins,
and grant me in abundance
the faculty of reason
and the truth of speech.

2. A venenis me errorum
Et catenis peccatorum,
Virgo clemens, erue
Ac rationis facultatem
Et sermonis veritatem
Abundanter tribue.¹⁰⁹

Finally, Ulrich Stöcklins von Rottach, in *Hymnus XVII. Psalterium. Quinquagena III*, claims the patronage of the Virgin Mary over human beings, in these expressive terms:

115. Rejoice, tree,
whose shade
cooled the scorched world.
Break the chain
of sins
and defend the faithful people.

115. Gaude, arbor.
cuius umbraculum
Frigeravit adustum saeculum.
Peccatorum
disrumpe vinculum
Ac defende fidelem populum.¹¹⁰

2.9. Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Hymns

We have documented two hymns, written at some unknown date between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, alluding to the topic under study:

Hymnus 134. De Beata Maria Virgine praises the mother, helper of humanity, uttering:

4a. You are the triclinium
of the Trinity,
and the beginning
of human salvation;
4b. You are the advocate
of sinners,
adorned
with all virtues.

4a. Tu trinitatis
es triclinium
Et humanae salutis
Initium;
4b. Tu peccatorum
es advocata,
Omnibus virtutibus
adornata.¹¹¹

Hymnus 168. De Beata Maria Virgine praises the pious protector of those guilty of sin in these verses:

8. Hail, merciful giver of life,
Enervator of vices,
Hail, merciful and compassionate
Of sinners, without being a sinner.

8. Ave, clemens vitae datrix,
Vitiorum enervatrix,
Ave, clemens miseratrix
Peccatorum, non peccatrix.¹¹²

2.10. Sixteenth-Century Hymns

We have discovered three sixteenth-century hymns that refer to the topic in question:

Hymnus 91. "Sequentia de sancta Maria Virgine" requests the saving protection of the compassionate Virgin for those who have fallen into sin, through these moving expressions:

2a. Hail, morning star,
Sun, dawn, divine light,
Fountain of mercy.

2b. You are the queen of angels,

2a. Salve, stella matutina,
Sol, aurora, lux divina,
Fons misericordiae.

2b. Angelorum tu regina,

The medicine of sinners,
The hope and source of forgiveness.
[...]
9a. Sinners run to you,
O Mary, you are the way,
The gates and the shadow of heaven.
9b. Have mercy on sinners,
Save, Mother, and protect
The Christian people.

Peccatorum medicina,
Spes et vena veniae.
[...]
9a. Ad te currunt, o Maria,
Peccatores, caeli via,
Portas et umbraculum.
9b. Peccatorum miserere,
Salva, mater, et tuere
Christianum populum.¹¹³

Hymnus 103. De Beata Maria Virgine calls for the healing help of Christ's mother, in these stanzas:

3a. O Mary, hope of the guilty,
Comforter of the miserable,
Look upon us with mercy:
3b. Forgive sinners,
And your servants,
Receive my prayers graciously.

3a. O Maria, spes reorum,
Consolatrix miserorum,
Ad nos clementer respice:
3b. Da veniam peccatorum,
Et tuorum famulorum
Preces benigne suscipe.¹¹⁴

Hymnus 78. De Beata Maria Virgine. Tempore Quadragesimali. Ad Vesperas exalts Mary, helper of humanity, in these verses:

1. Glorious Mother of God,
honor of our [human] race,
Glory of the world, hope of the pious,
forgiveness of sins,
Receive our vows with praise,
blot out our crimes.

1. Gloriosa mater Dei,
honor nostri generis,
Decus orbis, spes piorum,
peccatorum venia,
Nostrae laudis sume vota,
dele nostra crimina.¹¹⁵

2.11. Undated Hymns

We have recorded the following seven hymns of unknown date alluding to our topic:

Hymnus 335. Ejusdem festi [de Conceptione beatae Mariae] ad matutinas hymnus raises the protector Virgin Mary with these poetic expressions:

Hail, palace of the word,
Consolation of sinners,
Oh, what a clean shelter!
Mary, take us, hail!

Ave verbi palatium,
peccatorum solatium,
o quam mundum hospitium!
Maria transfer nos ave!¹¹⁶

Hymnus 593. Ad eandem [beatam Virginem Mariam] requests the intercession of the Virgin to obtain eternal life, declaring:

Sweet advocate
Of miserable sinners,
after the course of life
call us back
to the blessed realms
among the choir of angels,
giving us heavenly joys,
so that we may praise you
with gladness.

Miserorum peccatorum
dulcis advocata,
intra chorum angelorum
ad regna beata
post vitae curricula
nos revoca,
dans coelica gaudia,
ut laudare te possimus
cum laetitia.¹¹⁷

Hymnus 23. Alia oratio de Domina praises the Virgin Mary, while calling for her effective help in achieving eternal salvation, in these expressive terms:

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|--|--|
| 1. Hail, Mother of the Savior,
O Mary, flower of honor,
Free from the dregs of sins,
Purify me with your holy prayer.
[...] | 1. Ave, mater salvatoris,
O Maria, flos honoris,
Expers peccatorum faece,
Me tu munda sancta prece.
[...] |
| 4. Be well, garden of the Trinity,
Happy haven of sinners,
O Mary, protect me,
Please grant me the kingdom of heaven.
May I always rejoice with you,
So that I may never part from you. | 4. Vale, trinitatis hortus,
Peccatorum felix portus,
O Maria, me tuere,
Regnum caeli fac habere.
Tecum semper da laetari,
A te nunquam separari. ¹¹⁸ |

Hymnus 41. De beata Maria virgine oratio prima requires the restorative protection of the Queen of Heaven, by manifesting:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4. Be well, governor of the angels
And tamer of the underworld,
Grant me the forgiveness of sins.
And the place of the blessed.
O Mary, compassionate mother,
Save me here on the way. | 4. Vale, rectrix angelorum
Et domatrix tartarorum,
Veniam da peccatorum
Atque locum beatorum.
O Maria, mater pia,
Me tu salva hic in via. ¹¹⁹ |
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Hymnus 140. De Beata Maria Virgine praises the merciful helper of those suffering material and spiritual needs, through these verses:

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|---|--|
| 2a. You are joy in the heart,
Music in the ear,
The supreme healer
of sinners; | 2a. Iubilus in corde,
Tu melos in aure,
Summa reparatrix
Peccatorum; |
| 2b. You are the medicine for the sick,
You are forgiveness for the guilty,
The giver of life to those who follow you. | 2b. Aegris [tu] medela,
Tu reis venia,
Vivificatrix subsecutorum. ¹²⁰ |

Hymnus 144. De Beata Maria Virgine implores the rescuing intervention of the Virgin by stating:

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|--|--|
| 18. Sinners' Ladder
To the kingdoms of heaven,
Guide us along the path of customs
To the choir of light
And joy
With the gift of grace. | 18. Scala peccatorum
Ad regna polorum,
Dono gratiae
Nos per viam morum
Duc ad lucis chorum
Et laetitiae. ¹²¹ |
|--|--|

Hymnus 159. De Beata Maria Virgine acknowledges the intercessory and helpful power of the Redeemer's mother in these rhymes:

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|--|---|
| 4. True health of the sick,
Advocate of sinners,
Comforter of the afflicted,
Sweet Mother of Jesus. | 4. Vera salus infirmorum,
Advocata peccatorum,
Afflictorum consolatrix,
Dulcis Iesu gene[ra]trix. ¹²² |
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3. Synthesis of the Main Hymnographers' Attitudes on the *Refugium peccatorum* and Other Similar Marian Invocations

After this lengthy exposition of fragments of medieval liturgical hymns that poetically rework the belief in the Virgin Mary as mediator, helper, and protector of human beings in their material and spiritual needs, we now turn to summarize the main ideas and feelings that these hymns reveal in this regard. In this sense, we can infer that the almost always anonymous hymnographers who composed these hymns poetically developed a varied array of conceptual statements and emotional expressions when referring to the Virgin Mary as *Salus infirmorum*, *Consolatrix afflictorum*, *Auxilium Christianorum*, and mainly as *Refugium peccatorum*.

Now, from the many and varied poetic formulas with which hymnographers express these privileged functions of Mary, we believe it is possible to synthesize four main types of attitudes *vis-à-vis* Mary, helper of Christians, protectress, and intercessor of humanity, namely reverential, lyrical, apodictic, and supplicatory attitudes. In the following sections, we will present many (but not all) verbal expressions with which hymnographers translate one or another of the attitudes above. As will be seen in each of these four sections, many of the expressions are quite like one another. This fact demonstrates a certain commonality of sentiments and ideas among the different hymnographers and the different periods of hymn writing, undoubtedly the result of all these composers drawing on the same patristic, theological, and liturgical tradition.

3.1. Reverential Attitudes

In the hymns we have recorded, there are several expressions that somehow convey an attitude of reverence, respect, and submission to the Virgin Mary for her sublime privileges as the exalted mother of God, as Queen of Heaven, as a woman of outstanding virtues, or as someone favored by God above all other creatures. In these reverential attitudes we can catalog expressions such as “worthy of the praise of the angels”, “princess and queen of the world”, “queen of the court”, “empress of all”, “empress of great ladies”, “mother of the Father”, “beautiful spouse of God”, “mother and daughter of the Creator of the universe”, “queen of heaven”, “empress of glory”, “pious spouse of Jesus Christ”, “mother of the true God”, “mother of the true Son”, “mother of the Savior”, “Lady of the whole world, whom the armies of the saints praise”, “mother and daughter of the eternal King”, “praise and honor of the church”, “Virgin mother, chosen above all others”, “queen of angels”, “queen of virgins”, “matron of the nurturing King”, “sweet mother of Jesus”.

The flowery statements just summarized allude above all to the fundamental dogma of Mary's virginal divine motherhood. They also reflect the widespread beliefs that consider the mother of Christ to be God's beloved, the close collaborator of the Savior, and the exalted Queen of Heaven.

3.2. Lyrical Attitudes

In the hymns analyzed above, we have also discovered a rich array of metaphors and other poetic figures through which hymnographers embodied the peremptory Mariological beliefs with highly suggestive flourishes. Therefore, composers of liturgical hymns often formulated in lyrical terms the arduous theses of the merciful help, effective protection, and saving intercession of the Virgin Mary on behalf of humanity, as well as those of her divine virginal motherhood, her perpetual virginity, and the sublimity of all her virtues. Of this idyllic tenor are expressions such as “jewel of chastity”, “throne of grace”, “enclosed garden”, “fountain of gardens”, “rose without thorns”, “star of the sea”, “morning star”, “gate of heaven”, “gate of paradise”, “fruitful olive tree and haven of the sea”, “crown of queens”, “beautiful pearl”, “rose unfaded by frost”, “refuge of sinners”, “light of the saints”,

“holy temple of God where the guilty obtain forgiveness of sins”, “conjugal chamber of the supreme King”, “temple of the Holy Spirit”, “haven of the shipwrecked of the world”, “gate of mercy”, “pure lime of malice”, “pool of the grace of God”, “medicine of sinners”, “marriage of love”, “fountain of mercy”, “medicine of the languishing”, “open door of forgiveness”, “instrumental string of the poor”, “straight path of sinners”, “flower with lily”, “habitation of the deity”, “gate of the Prince”, “open fountain of Paradise”, “cypress and Mount Zion”, “lily of chastity”, “sweetness of purity”, “honor of angels”, “happy gate of heaven”, “star of heaven bright as the sun”, “prize of the elect”, “sweet refreshment”, “adornment of heaven”, “entire fountain of grace”, “pleasing form of the just”, “light of angels”, “broad vein of sinners that pours down balms”, “city of safety”, “temple of the Holy Trinity”, “cypress of purity”, “alabaster of ointments”, “health of the sick”, “light of angels who reign over the armies of the elect”, “flowering rose without thorns”, “pool of sinners”, “pearl of heaven”, “light and life of sinners”, “joy of heavens”, “port that carries suffrage”, “crossroads of salvation”, “open door of forgiveness”, “closed door”, “tree whose shade cooled the burnt world”, “triclinium of the Trinity”, “Sun, dawn and divine light”, “source of mercy”, “palace of the word”, “clean shelter”, “flower of honor exempt from the dregs of sins”, “happy port of sinners”, “governor of angels and tamer of hells”, “joy in the heart and music in the ear”, “ladder of sinners to the kingdoms of heaven”.

All the suggestive formulations just listed allude to three crucial Mariological knots: First, and above all, they lyrically verbalize the dogma of Mary’s virginal, divine motherhood. They also figuratively allude to the widespread belief that Mary is necessarily associated with the redemptive and saving function of her divine Son, Jesus. Third, they evoke the sublime sublimity of all the virtues with which she is endowed, which makes her far superior to all other creatures in heaven and earth.

3.3. *Apodictic Attitudes*

In the hymns studied here, we have also collected several series of statements that, in very different forms, categorically affirm the Mariological theses of the help, protection, and mediation of the Virgin Mary on behalf of human beings, especially those most pressed by material and spiritual needs. The hymnographers investigated manifest these apodictic attitudes in statements as resounding as “you purify the stained and give life to the dead”, “you give health to the sick”, “you restore power through virtue”, “comforter of the afflicted”, “liberator from all the danger of sins”, “cause of our happiness”, “the salvation of sinners is with you physically”, “our evil deeds are eliminated by you”, “sweet consolation of the sick”, “comforter of the poor”, “relief of the weak”, “mother of mercy”, “restorer of grace”, “comfort of the poor”, “health of the weak”, “nurturing mother of sinners”, “pious nourisher of converts”, “propitiation of the world”, “hope and salvation of sinners”, “comfort of sinners and glory of the righteous”, “mediatrix of sinners”, “comforter of our grief”, “benign comforter”, “end of misery”, “beginning of grace”, “salvation and refuge of all sinners”, “hope of those who seek forgiveness of sins”, “divine hope of the world”, “advocate of sinners”, “health of the sick and consolation of the miserable”, “hope of the hopeless”, “helper of the unfortunate”, “if you visit me, by visiting me, you will purify me”, “through you the crimes of sinners are forgiven”, “revocation of the exiles”, “liberation of the guilty”, “remission of sins”, “redemption of captives”, “restoration of life”, “comforter of sinners”, “favored of heaven”, “favored of the angels”, “protector of the guilty”, “true light of the saints”, “through you the divine is given to us”, “salvation, peace, and life of the just”, “giver of life”, “the Lord ordained you as the mother of sinners”, “hope of sinners”, “compassionate with the miserable”, “savior of the miserable”, “refuge and salvation of sinners”, “harbor and hope of the desperate”, “comfort and mother of the afflicted”, “merciful reconciler between us and your Son”, “beginning of human salvation”,

“hope and source of forgiveness”, “you are the way, the gates, and the shade of heaven”, “honor of our [human] race”, “glory of the world”, “hope of the pious”, “sweet advocate of miserable sinners”, “supreme restorer of sinners”, “medicine for the sick”, “pardon for the guilty”, “giver of life to those who follow you”, “true health of the sick”, “comforter of the afflicted”, “medicine for diseases”, “opener of the way”, “holy legislator”, “consolation of indulgence”.

All the hymnic expressions just summarized allude poetically to two widely accepted Mariological theses: first, the confirmation of the Virgin Mary’s attribute as helper and protector of humanity in its physical and spiritual needs, to the point of being the consoler of the afflicted (*consolatrix afflictorum*) and the refuge of sinners (*refugium peccatorum*); second, and much more importantly, the thesis that the Virgin is the effective intercessor of human beings before her divine Son, especially at the Last Judgment, thus becoming a facilitator of their eternal salvation (without this meaning to subscribe to the still much-debated thesis that Mary is co-redeemer of humanity).

3.4. Suppliant Attitudes

In the liturgical hymns analyzed in this article, we have also gathered an extensive list of expressions that, with very varied formulations, exhibit the attitude of imploring the merciful Virgin Mary for her help, protection, and intercession for the benefit of humans, especially those most in need of soul and body. These supplicating attitudes are evident in expressions such as “reconcile the guilty with the King of mercy”, “cleanse us and take care of us”, “hear, O Mother of compassion, those who groan for sins”, “have mercy on sinners”, “give us the joys of heaven”, “stretch out now your hand to make your people happy”, “always be propitious for all of us”, “hear us, most compassionate among the compassionate”, “intercede for me with Christ”, “draw us to heavenly joys”, “be our intercessor that we may escape from the face of our enemy”, “I know that I have sinned, have mercy on me”, “break the chains of our sins”, “adorn us with good morals and righteous deeds”, “save us, so that the burden of sins does not oppress us”, “have mercy on me, O Lady, I take refuge under your wings”, “remember the prayers of your children who remember your name”, “deliver us from the bond of sin, from the enemy, from the flesh, from the world”, “blot out the filth of sins from those who praise you”, “look upon those who groan”, “we sigh toward you”, “be our helper in the valley of labor”, “incline your eyes of compassion upon us”, “show us the reward, your blessed Son, so that we may enjoy with the eternal Lord”, “be my protection”, “ask forgiveness for all my sins”, “look upon those who praise you”, “have mercy on sinners and make rebels obey him who rules the universe”, “cleanse the filth of crimes”, “wash, heal with your prayer the wounds of sinners”, “lead us to the heights of heaven”, “have mercy on the miserable now”, “bring victory to yours in the war of vices”, “bring the help we ask so that we may not die in guilt”, “hear those who weep for sins and protect us from evils”, “pray to your Son that after the course of this life he may take us with you to heavenly joy”, “appease us to your Son”, “strengthen your servant to sing you a song”, “do not despise me, merciful”, “bring prayers to your Son that he may not deliver us to punishment”, “have compassion”, “help us quickly so that we are not delivered to the prison of hell”, “open the door for us so that we can become consorts of Heaven”, “open us the gates of Heaven”, “deliver me from the poison of errors and from the chains of sins”, “have mercy on sinners”, “save, Mother, and protect the Christian people”, “forgive sinners and your servants”, “receive my prayers graciously”, “blot out our crimes”, “call us back to the blessed realms among the choir of angels”, “purify me with your holy prayer”, “grant me the kingdom of heaven, that I may always rejoice with you so as never to separate from you”, “grant me the forgiveness of sins and the place of the blessed”, “guide us on the path of customs to the choir of light and

joy with the gift of grace”, “mercifully save us today at the throne of your grace”, “hear us, Mother of mercy, to whom we cry today”, “appease us to your Son”, “grant the hope of salvation to the guilty and the help of virtue to the destitute”.

All these rhetorical expressions in the hymns above emphatically ratify two widely held Mariological beliefs: first, the acceptance of the thesis that the Virgin Mary is the helper and protector of humanity in its material and spiritual needs; second, the thesis of Mary’s role as refuge of sinners and merciful intercessor of human beings before God, especially at the decisive moment of the Last Judgment, in a role that some define as that of “co-redeemer”.

4. Conclusions

The current article begins by remarking that, among the *Litanies of Loreto*, the four invocations *Salus infirmorum*, *Refugium peccatorum*, *Consolatrix afflictorum*, and *Auxilium Christianorum* proclaim the Virgin Mary for her supernatural privilege as helper, protector, and mediator of humanity’s material and spiritual needs.

We note from the outset that, although this Mariological thesis is confirmed in numerous testimonies from Fathers and medieval theologians of the Eastern and Western Churches, we will not dwell here on analyzing these patristic and theological texts but rather concentrate on the study of what medieval liturgical hymns have expressed regarding this thesis. We even emphasize that, in focusing our article on the fragments of liturgical hymns that proclaim the Virgin Mary as the merciful helper and protector of humankind, we have prioritized those that emphasize the Virgin’s protection of sinners, i.e., the invocation *Refugium peccatorum*.

We also underlined that the fragments of liturgical hymns we have studied here involve two complementary attitudes: proclamatory and supplicatory. In the former, the hymnographers praise Mary as helper, mediator, and protector of human beings. In the latter, they express their request for Mary’s help, protection, and intercession to obtain material and spiritual blessings, the forgiveness of sins, and eternal salvation.

Finally, the examination of the fragments of liturgical hymns under scrutiny allowed us to highlight four types of attitudes of the hymnographers toward the Virgin, helper, intercessor, and protector of humanity, namely reverential, lyrical, apodictic, and supplicatory attitudes. In any case, the hymns we have analyzed reveal a diverse array of ideas, feelings, and attitudes with which believers verbalize, in the deeply experiential context of liturgical celebrations, their relationship with the Virgin Mary in her role as pious helper, protector, and intercessor of human beings before God.

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Notes

- ¹ This article is part of the plan of activities of the author, as student in the International Doctorate in Humanities: Language and Culture at the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, Madrid, according to the special form “Compendium of Articles”.
- ² *Hymnus 504. Psalterium Mariae*. Mone, 239. All translations of the Latin texts into English in this article have been performed by its author.
- ³ *Hymnus 527. De s. Maria (troparium)*. Mone, 314.
- ⁴ *Hymnus 97. De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 40, 100.
- ⁵ *Hymnus 78. De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 42, 87.
- ⁶ *Hymnus 350. De s. Maria*. Mone, 41.

- 7 Petrus Venerabilis, *Hymnus* 250. (1.) *Prosa in Nativitate Domini*. AHMA 48, 234.
- 8 Petrus Venerabilis, *Hymnus* 261. (12.) *De Beata Maria Virgine Antiphona ad Magnificat*. AHMA 48, 243.
- 9 Anonymus Noanus, Monachus Cisterciensis, *Hymnus* 289. (2.) *Incipit Speculum Reginae Caelorum*. AHMA 48, 279.
- 10 Anonymus Noanus, Monachus Cisterciensis, *Hymnus* 293. (6.) *Incipit laus et speculum reginae caelorum adversus haereticos*. AHMA 48, 291.
- 11 *Hymnus* 483. *Sequentia de b. virgine*. Mone, 200.
- 12 *Hymnus* 513. *Prosa de beata virgine*. Mone, 289.
- 13 *Hymnus* 126. *De beata Maria V.* AHMA 10, 100.
- 14 *Hymnus* 229. AHMA 20, 176.
- 15 *Hymnus* 141. *De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 42, 133.
- 16 *Hymnus* XVIII. *Psalterium beatae Mariae V. Tertia Quinquagena*. AHMA 35, 268.
- 17 *Hymnus* XVIII. *Psalterium beatae Mariae V. Tertia Quinquagena*. AHMA 35, 270.
- 18 *Hymnus* III. *Psalterium beatae Mariae V. Prima Quinquagena*. AHMA 36, 45.
- 19 *Hymnus* 51. *In Nativitate BMV*. AHMA 37, 54.
- 20 *Hymnus* 77. *De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 37, 77.
- 21 *Hymnus* 136. *De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 46, 182.
- 22 *Hymnus* 374. *Hosanna Gaude virgo De Beata Maria Virgine*. AHMA 47, 365. Published also, with the title *Hymnus* 66. *De Beata Maria V.*, in AHMA 39, 65.
- 23 Anonymus Camberonensis, *Hymnus* 108. (6.) *Rhythmus Sextus*. AHMA 48, 133–134.
- 24 Anonymus Stirpinensis, Monachus Cisterciensis, *Hymnus* 430. (3.) *De Beata Maria V. Super Sanctus*. AHMA 48, 453.
- 25 *Hymnus* 76. *De beata Maria V.* AHMA, 8, 67.
- 26 *Hymnus* 474. *De gloriosa virgine Maria. ad completorium*. Mone, 190.
- 27 *Hymnus* 536. *Oratio de s. Maria*. Mone, 325.
- 28 *Hymnus* 591. *Laudes Mariae v.* Mone, 406.
- 29 *Hymnus* 601. *Hortus rosarum dei genitricis Mariae*. Mone, 416.
- 30 *Hymnus* 89. *De beata Maria V.* AHMA 8, 73.
- 31 *Hymnus* 73. *De Gaudiis BMV*. AHMA 15, 100.
- 32 *Hymnus* 126. *De Nomine BMV*. AHMA 31, 129.
- 33 *Hymnus* XV. *Psalterium beatae Mariae V. Tertia Quinquagena*. AHMA 35, 229.
- 34 *Hymnus* 63. *De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 39, 63.
- 35 *Hymnus* 110. *De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 40, 109.
- 36 *Hymnus* 84. *De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 42, 84.
- 37 *Hymnus* 150. *Ad Beatam Mariam V.* AHMA 46, 201.
- 38 Gualterus Wiburnus, *Hymnus* 417. (1.) *Eucomium Beatae Mariae*. AHMA 50, 633.
- 39 *Hymnus* 468. *Agnus "Salve mater"*. AHMA 47, 404.
- 40 *Hymnus* 4. AHMA 1, 49.
- 41 *Hymnus* 7. AHMA 1, 51.
- 42 *Hymnus* 29. AHMA 1, 68.
- 43 *Hymnus* 101. AHMA 1, 121.
- 44 *Hymnus* 48. *De B. V. Maria*. AHMA 4, 37.
- 45 *Hymnus* 52. *Salutationes BMV*. AHMA 15, 72.
- 46 *Hymnus* 88. *Super Ave Maria*. AHMA 30, 195.
- 47 *Hymnus* VI. *Psalterium beatae Mariae V. Prima Quinquagena*. AHMA 36, 84.
- 48 *Hymnus* VI. *Psalterium beatae Mariae V. Secunda Quinquagena*. AHMA 36, 85.
- 49 *Hymnus* XIV. *Psalterium beatae Mariae V. Tertia Quinquagena*. AHMA 35, 212.
- 50 *Hymnus* 368. *Prosa de virgine Maria*. Mone, 61.
- 51 *Hymnus* 418. *Super cantico Magnificat*. Mone, 127.
- 52 *Hymnus* 484. *De b. v. Maria*. Mone, 202.
- 53 *Hymnus* 490. *De b. v. solemnis antiphona*. Mone, 210. Published also, with the title *Hymnus* 248, in AHMA 20, 186.
- 54 *Hymnus* 498. *Oratio super Ave maris stella*. Mone, 220. Published also, with the title *Hymnus* 11. *Oratio super Ave maris stella*, in AHMA 3, 40.
- 55 *Hymnus* 498. *Oratio super Ave maris stella*. Mone, 221. Published also, with the title *Hymnus* 11. *Oratio super Ave maris stella*, in AHMA 3, 41.
- 56 *Hymnus* 507. *Oratio, quae dicitur crinale beatae Mariae virginis*. Mone, 268. Published also, with the title *Hymnus* 2. *Crinale B.M.V.*, in AHMA 3, 23.

- 57 *Hymnus 510. Ad b. Mariam v. Mone, 286.*
- 58 *Hymnus 511. Salutationes b. Mariae virginis. Mone, 288.*
- 59 *Hymnus 511. Salutationes b. Mariae virginis. Mone, 289.*
- 60 *Hymnus 533. Ad b. V. Mariam. Mone, 321.*
- 61 *Hymnus 558. Oratio ad gloriosam v. Mariam. Mone, 361.*
- 62 *Hymnus 588. De s. Maria. Mone, 403.*
- 63 *Hymnus 590. Ad b. V. Mariam. Mone, 314.*
- 64 *Hymnus 68. De beata Maria V. AHMA 8, 62.*
- 65 *Hymnus 57. De Praesentatione BMV. AHMA 9, 49.*
- 66 *Hymnus 57. De Praesentatione BMV. AHMA 9, 50.*
- 67 *Hymnus 94. In Purificatione B.MV. AHMA 10, 78.*
- 68 *Hymnus 59. De Conceptione BMV. AHMA 11, 41.*
- 69 *Hymnus 51. De Nominibus BMV. AHMA 15, 66.*
- 70 *Hymnus 104. Oratio de V.M. matre Jesu. AHMA 15, 130.*
- 71 *Hymnus 100. Ad B. Mariam V. AHMA 15, 132.*
- 72 *Hymnus 107. Ad B. Mariam V. AHMA 15, 133.*
- 73 *Hymnus 109. Ad B. Mariam V. AHMA 15, 136.*
- 74 *Hymnus 125. De B. Maria V. AHMA 15, 152.*
- 75 *Hymnus 260. AHMA 20, 192.*
- 76 *Hymnus 18. De Beata Maria V. Die Lunae. Prosa 1. AHMA 24, 57.*
- 77 *Hymnus 18. De Beata Maria V. Die Lunae. Prosa 2. AHMA 24, 57.*
- 78 *Hymnus 23. De Conceptione BMV. In 1. Vesperis. Responsoria. AHMA 24, 71.*
- 79 *Hymnus 23. De Conceptione BMV. In 1. Nocturno. Antiphonae. AHMA 24, 71.*
- 80 *Hymnus 97. Super Ave Maria. AHMA 30, 204.*
- 81 *Hymnus 102. Super Ave Maria. AHMA 30, 209.*
- 82 *Hymnus 107. Super Ave Maria. AHMA 30, 215.*
- 83 *Hymnus 109. Super Ave Maria. AHMA 30, 220.*
- 84 *Hymnus 113. Super Ave Maria. AHMA 30, 225.*
- 85 *Hymnus 132. Super Ave Maria. AHMA 30, 247.*
- 86 *Hymnus 140. Super Ave Maria. AHMA 30, 255.*
- 87 *Hymnus 143. Super Ave Maria. AHMA 30, 259.*
- 88 *Hymnus 140. De Partu Virginis. AHMA 31, 141.*
- 89 *Hymnus 181. De X Gaudiis BMV. AHMA 31, 185.*
- 90 *Hymnus V. Psalterium Beatae Mariae V. Prima Quinquagena AHMA 36, 72.*
- 91 *Hymnus V. Psalterium Beatae Mariae V. Secunda Quinquagena. AHMA 36, 76.*
- 92 *Hymnus X. Soliloquium sive Psalterium BMV. XVII. AHMA 36, 135.*
- 93 *Hymnus 78. De Beata Maria V. AHMA 37, 78.*
- 94 *Hymnus 43. In Assumptione BMV. AHMA 39, 49. Published also, with the title Hymnus 68. In Assumptione BMV, in AHMA 42, 79.*
- 95 *Hymnus 44. De Beata Maria V. Infra Octavam Assumptionis. AHMA 39, 49.*
- 96 *Hymnus 77. De Beata Maria V. AHMA 39, 71.*
- 97 *Hymnus 94. De Beata Maria V. AHMA 40, 98.*
- 98 *Hymnus 98. De Beata Maria V. AHMA 42, 101.*
- 99 *Hymnus 112. De Beata Maria V. AHMA 42, 112.*
- 100 *Hymnus 116. De Beata Maria V. AHMA 42, 114.*
- 101 *Hymnus 124. De Beata Maria V. AHMA 42, 119.*
- 102 *Hymnus 157. De Beata Maria V. AHMA 46, 209.*
- 103 *Hymnus 480. De b. Virgine. Oratio. Mone, 195.*
- 104 *Hymnus 484. De b. v. Maria. Mone 1854, 201.*
- 105 *Hymnus 77. Kyrie "O Maria lux". AHMA 47, 141.*
- 106 *Udalricus Wessofontanus, Hymnus 10. Oratio devota de B.M.V. AHMA 6, 55.*
- 107 *Udalricus Wessofontanus, Hymnus 38. Abecedarius XIII. AHMA 6, 132.*
- 108 *Udalrichus Wessofontanus, Hymnus XI. Psalterium Secundum. Quinquagena I. AHMA 38, 150.*
- 109 *Udalrichus Wessofontanus, Hymnus XV. Psalterium "Hymnarius BMV". Proemium. AHMA 38, 196.*
- 110 *Udalrichus Wessofontanus, Hymnus XVII. Psalterium. Quinquagena III. AHMA 38, 234.*
- 111 *Hymnus 134. De Beata Maria V. AHMA 42, 128.*

- 112 Hymnus 168. *De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 46, 215.
- 113 Hymnus 91. “*Sequentia de s. Maria V.*”. AHMA 37, 85.
- 114 Hymnus 103. *De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 40, 104.
- 115 Hymnus 78. *De Beata Maria V. Tempore Quadragesimali. Ad Vesperas.* AHMA 43, 51.
- 116 Hymnus 335. *Ejusdem festi [de Conceptione b. Mariae] ad matutinas hymnus* Mone, 21. Published also, with the title *Hymnus 36. In Conceptione Beatae M. V. Ad Nocturnas*, in AHMA 52, 41.
- 117 Hymnus 593. *Ad eandem [b.v. Mariam].* Mone, 407.
- 118 Hymnus 23. *Alia oratio de Domina.* AHMA 29, 26.
- 119 Hymnus 41. *De beata Maria virgine oratio prima.* AHMA 29, 31.
- 120 Hymnus 140. *De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 42, 132.
- 121 Hymnus 144. *De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 46, 193.
- 122 Hymnus 159. *De Beata Maria V.* AHMA 46, 211.

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- Hymnus* 7. AHMA 1, 51.
- Hymnus* 11. *Oratio super Ave maris stella*. AHMA 3, 40–41.
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