

## Consecration to Mary, Our Holy Mother (1 May 2020)

As we suffer the effects of Covid-19 pandemic, **the Episcopal Conferences** of the US and Canada invite us to participate, on May first, in a special liturgy of **consecration of both nations in the care of our Holy Mother.**

What does it mean to consecrate both countries to Mary? What does it accomplish and why do we do it? The fact that we Catholics are Marian does not justify such an act. There is something deeper and it has to do with the value and meaning of the Virgin Mary in the history of salvation and in the life of the church.

### Mary in the history of salvation

In several texts of the Old Testament it is manifest that a plan is underway for the coming of Christ into the world as Redeemer and Savior. (Gn 3.15) "A maiden will conceive and give birth to a Son ..." (Is 7.14). The fullness of time of which the apostle Paul speaks (Gal 4,4-5) was made possible by the acceptance of this extraordinary woman. As one of us the plan of human salvation found in Mary a new protagonist permanently linked to her Son, the Lord of life and history. Filled with the Holy Spirit, her "yes" is inextricably linked to the Paschal and redemptive mystery of her Son.

The life of Jesus of Nazareth unfolds with Mary ever present. **She accompanies him from birth to the cross. Her permanent union with her Son makes her indefatigable associated with his work of humankind's salvation.**

### Mary in the life of the Church

The mother of Jesus is inseparably united too with the disciples of her Son. At the foot of the cross a bond of spiritual motherhood is established between Mary and the disciples: "there you have your mother" (Jn 19: 26-27). Later Mary was joined with the disciples to implore the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:14). The Blessed Virgin Mary remains united to the life of the Church, because she is part of the Church and because she fulfills a maternal function in the Church.

**With her assumption of heaven**, she is once again united with Christ eternally. In her assumption, she is recognized by the Father as his **favorite daughter--glorified in body and soul--and becomes the ambassador of humanity before God.**

### Mary: hope and comfort for all humanity

In Mary's assumption into heaven we can recognize our future. By living as the Mother of Jesus, full of grace, she shows us our vocation to holiness in the fullness of the Father's grace. Although touched by contradictions, pains, doubts, helplessness and anguish, our lives find in Mary the confirmation that the grace of God—arising from the salvific act of Christ's own death and resurrection—can overcome all and so fill a creature of flesh and blood like her that she could be called "full of grace".

Therefore, **we can turn to her to find the consolation of a mother** because despite the difficulties she encountered in her life, she remained faithful with complete openness, acceptance and commitment to the word of God. In this sense, recognizing her intimate communion with God, her intercession is effective before the Father. That is why we can feel accompanied and comforted by her.

### How do we live this consecration of Canada and the United States to the Virgin Mary?

Through this consecration and re-commitment to the "yes" of Mary, **we ask for her maternal intercession before the Father.** We trust in her effective action, knowing that she always leads us to her Son. **We recognize who we are before God**—with all our pains, concerns, doubts and uncertainties—and **we recommit ourselves to live as Mary lived:** ever faithful and trusting in the Father and his plan for our salvation, and living a commitment of service to those who need it most in these times: the sick, the elderly, families in need, etc. In short, do our part to build a more just and peaceful world.