

## INTRODUCTION TO TOTAL CONSECRATION

To consecrate is to set aside for a holy purpose. Total Consecration is the complete giving of oneself to Jesus through Mary in imitation of Our Lord. It is an act that is entirely dependent on the free will of the individual. It is a choice that one makes at a point in one's life based on one's experience of God's Love. In fact, to consecrate is an appreciation of God's love; a reciprocation of His love as far as humanly possible. It was His love which prompted Him to create man in His own image, out of nothing and of His own freewill, the same Love which made Him to die to redeem man, this same love has made Him a prisoner in all the Tabernacles of the world and in our hearts, where He awaits to nourish and transform us through His real presence in the Holy Eucharistic.

Total Consecration was formalized by St. Louis Maria De Montfort in the early 1700's. After his experience of God's Love, he sought the best way to thank God and found that imitating the entire life of Our Lord was the best means. In essence, becoming another Jesus; from His conception, his hidden life, through His death, resurrection, and ascension. In fact, he saw that Our Lord came to teach us to live like Him as a perfect means to give glory to the Eternal Father. Thus, He said "learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart: and you shall find rest to your souls..." (St. Matthew 11:29). Rest for our souls is God's chief priority. In the entire life of Our Lord, Our Lady was at the center. For it was she who conceived Him, bore Him, nourished Him, reared Him and sacrificed Him for our salvation. Thus, De Montfort called this consecration a "True Devotion to Mary". Our Lord was so devoted to His Mother, Mary, that they formed a bond. De Montfort referring to this bond said it would be easier to separate heat from fire than to separate Jesus from Mary.

This consecration takes place on a specific day, but the preparatory exercise is for 33 days. De Montfort made it 33 days to show the years Our Lord spent on earth with Mary and to emphasize that we are to grow into the "fullness of the perfect age of Our Lord".

There are three categories of souls who make this consecration: First, those who understand the importance of true devotion to Mary and see De Montfort's preparatory exercise as a means to purify and attain the proper disposition necessary for consecrating to Jesus through Mary. The second are those who learn true devotion to Mary by joining the preparatory exercise and through the Grace of God and their necessary sacrifices, they are able to attain that disposition. The others attain that disposition after participation in 2 or more preparatory exercises and then decide to freely give themselves in consecration to Mary.

The disposition necessary for this consecration is that of humility. It is a state where one sees everything as a special gift from God and deserving nothing. The Montfort calls it a state of Holy Slavery. The image that portrays this devotion is that of Jesus in the womb of Mary. After the annunciation, He became utterly dependent on her for everything. Another image used by the Montfort is that of Mary as the mold of God. He said that in order to mold man into God, he has to allow himself to be molten and poured into Mary (the mold).

To attain this disposition, one needs prayer and spiritual exercises. To help facilitate the understanding of the devotion and the acquiring of the necessary disposition, it is recommended to read/study these two books written by De Montfort: first, "Secret of Mary" and second, "True devotion to Mary".

Finally, this Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary is an **EASY, SHORT, PERFECT AND SURE** way of becoming like Jesus. It is a Spiritual Magnet that attracts the Holy Ghost in our lives if we are well prepared.

Let us pray and make the necessary sacrifices in great anticipation

Ad Jesum per Mariam (To Jesus through Mary)

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