

My Catholic Roots: Special Edition

What is Consecration to Mary? (2 of 3)

St. Maximilian Kolbe & the Cross

"Planted and built up in Jesus Christ, firm in the faith." Col. 2:7

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Michelangelo's *Pieta* by MI Teen, Matthew, age 15



“She, who was without sin, on Calvary ‘experienced’ within her own being the suffering of sin her Son had taken upon himself to save mankind.”

WYD PILGRIMAGE

Behold Your Mother!

Pope John Paul II, WYD Message, 2003

My dear young people... Before his death, Jesus entrusted to the apostle John what was most precious to him: his Mother, Mary. These are the final words of the Redeemer, and therefore they take on a solemn nature and could be regarded as his spiritual testimony.

The angel Gabriel's words in Nazareth: "Hail, full of grace" (Lk 1,28) also cast light on the scene at Calvary. The Annunciation comes at the beginning, the Cross signals the fulfillment. At the Annunciation, Mary gives human nature to the Son of God within her womb; at the foot of the Cross, she welcomes the whole of humanity within her heart in the person of John. She was Mother of God from the first moments of the Incarnation, and she became the Mother of humanity during the final moments of the life of her Son Jesus on earth. At the foot of the Cross on which was dying the One whom she had conceived at the moment of her "yes" at the Annunciation, Mary received, as it were, a "second annunciation": "Woman, behold, your son!" (Jn 19,26).

The Son upon the Cross can pour out his suffering into his Mother's heart. Every child who suffers experiences that need. You too, my dear young people, are faced with suffering: loneliness, failures and disappointments in your personal lives; difficulties in inserting yourselves in the adult world and in professional life: the separations and losses in your families; the violence of war and the death of the innocent. Know, however, that in difficult times, which everyone experiences, you are not alone: like John at the foot of the Cross, Jesus also gives his Mother to you so that she will comfort you with her tenderness.

My dear young people, you are more or less the same age as John and you have the same desire to be with Jesus. Today, it is you whom Jesus expressly asks to receive Mary "into your home" and to welcome her "as one of yours"; to learn from her the one who "kept all these things, pondering them in her heart" (Lk 2,19) that inner disposition to listen and the attitude of humility and generosity that singled her out as God's first collaborator in the work of salvation. She will discharge her ministry as a mother and train you and mould you until Christ is fully formed in you.



YOUR QUESTIONS GOD'S ANSWERS

What is Consecration to Mary? (2)

St. Maximilian Kolbe and the Cross

Fr. James McCurry, OFM., Conv.

Like St. Maximilian, when we consecrate ourselves to Mary we participate in her Christ-like work of love and discover that we must share deeply in this Marian attitude of "readiness" to give even our lives in love for others.

Consecration leads us to identify with Mary's capacity to suffer out of love. Kolbe once indicated that life has three stages: preparation for the work we do, the work itself, and suffering willed out of love, which is the most important stage. Consistently, at Niepokalanow the infirmary was considered the most important "work-place." By their suffering offered in love to God through Our Lady, the sick and elderly would carry out the more fruitful and spiritually effective work. Suffering supports the work and gives it the ring of authenticity. Anybody can do "good work" if the circumstances are favorable. But when the storms beset us, if we can still offer our sufferings in love, will them to be offered, and not just tolerate them, but thank God for them... how much more fruitful will all the works of the Church be!

Calvary and Consecration

By sharing in Mary's attitude of suffering willed out of love, we are enabled to participate in her stance of total consecration to Christ and to the Father on Calvary. Marian consecration, in fact, ultimately leads us to Calvary, to the Mass at which the sacrifice of the Cross is re-enacted in an unbloody way.



Sunday, February 16, 1941

1 day before St. Maximilian's arrest

“Crosses may overwhelm us, but the grace of God, having warmed our hearts, will inflame them with such love that we will burn with the desire for suffering, for limitless suffering, for mortification, for mockery and abandonment. Thus we'll demonstrate how we love the Father and our best friend Jesus and His dearest Immaculate Mother, for suffering is the school of love. Saint John of the Cross wrote: *'We experience love when we bring love to that place where no love exists.'*”



⇒ A multi-layered consecration took place on Calvary and continues to this day. The perfect and preeminent consecration is that of Jesus to his heavenly Father. In his Last Supper discourse to the Apostles, Jesus prays to the Father: "Consecrate them by means of truth... As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world; I consecrate myself for their sake now, so that they may be consecrated in truth" (Jn 17:17-19). Consecration in its deepest biblical sense is Christ's consecration of Himself to his Heavenly Father. Consecration literally means "the setting of something or someone aside for a sacred purpose." Christ on Calvary sets Himself aside totally, for the sacred purpose of the Father's plan for our salvation. He consecrates Himself so that we can be consecrated as well to his Heavenly Father. However, Christ "needs" a first successful consecrant. He wants one human person to be perfectly consecrated to the Father as a result of his own self-consecration. Who would be this first person whom Jesus would invite to participate in his consecration? "Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother..." (Jn 19:25).

DIG DEEPER

Scripture & Tradition

[Jn 17:17-19, Jn 19:25-30](#)
[CC#964, CC#618, CC#306-308, CC#970](#)
[WYD Message](#)

Our Lady consecrated herself to Christ on Calvary, and through Him to the Father. Christ's consummation on Calvary is his total consecration to God the Father. Mary's compassion on Calvary is her total consecration through Christ to the Father. Her total consecration completes Christ's consecration.

John, upon Jesus' invitation, was drawn into Mary's consecration so that she could draw him to Jesus, and through Him to the Father. All the other disciples, gathered around Christ's Cross down the centuries, are invited to do the same: to follow John; that is, to consecrate ourselves to Mary. Thus, with and through her, we can participate in Christ's consecration to the Father.

"I Thirst"

The Gospel writer describes Jesus' death saying that he handed over his spirit. This expression has a double meaning. It means that he died (breathed his last) and that He imparted his Spirit upon Mary, John, and his Church. On Calvary Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit. Until the end of time, the mission of the Holy Spirit with Our Lady, his Spouse, is to draw more and more souls into the same consecration. The Evangelist records also Jesus' final words on Calvary: "I thirst." What was He thirsting for? He was thirsting for us -- for us to thirst back for Him. On Calvary a thirsting Christ met a thirsting Mary. His thirst was quenched by her thirst for Him, her response of love for Him, which she gave on behalf of us all.

In order to confirm that we are responding to Jesus' thirst for our love, which led Him to the Cross, Our Lady invites us to make our consecration explicitly to her, so that she can gather us into her ecclesial response of love and thirst for Him.

The full scriptural and Catholic understanding of Marian consecration is a participation in Mary's consecration to Christ which allows her to gather us into a deeper relationship with Christ, as He consecrates Himself back to our Heavenly Father. With this goal before us, let us live each day in love, faith, and hope, so as to enter that Home where we will eternally live with the Mother, in the family of God.✝

Mary Ponders All These Things in Her Heart



Michelangelo's *Pieta* by MI Teen, Matthew, Age 15

Reflection Activity Introduction

Many of us go through our days with many concerns weighing on our hearts and minds: family qualms, relationship uncertainties, worries of other people's impressions or expectations, concerns about mistakes of the past, fears about the future, etc... For the most part, you cannot solve these problems on your own, and being anxious about them may prevent you from recognizing the graces God makes available to help you through. Allow Our Lady to carry your burdens with you, just as she did with Jesus on Calvary.

Directions

In the next 5 minutes, briefly list the major worries and concerns that often run through your mind. These might relate to school, work, family, finances, Church, your social life, your fears, illness, or loss of someone you love. Feel free to use space on the back, if needed. Then, seal it in the envelope and place it at Our Lady's feet.

Mary Knows Your Heart by St. Maximilian

"Is there any more careful and loving gaze than that of a mother? What can be said, therefore, about our Heavenly Mother who watches over us all with forethought we cannot even imagine? What attracts her is not as much our behavior but our heart: She turns Her gaze upon the entire world, towards each person, in their hearts, and She knows the thoughts and the desires of each of us. She looks into our hearts to perceive each manifestation of love, each attitude of fervor, even the smallest, in the aim of, in exchange, filling them with graces and taking them with Her after death." [SK 1122]

**"Like John at the foot of the cross, Jesus also gives his Mother to *you* so that she will comfort you with her tenderness."
*John Paul the Great***

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Now, let go of these problems or concerns and hand them over to Mary, who "Ponders all these things in her heart." [Lk 2:51] Your Heavenly Mother knows your needs even before you can know them for yourself. Allow her the opportunity to carry your worries for you as you concentrate on growing closer to her Son and being charitable towards others who may be struggling.