

Total Consecration to Jesus Through Mary

Saint Louis deMontfort

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Introduction from Sr. Miriam James Heidland, Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity

Over the next thirty-three days, we will ask for Mary's help to give our hearts more completely over to her Son, and I cannot wait for us to experience her beautiful heart. Mary is a mother who loves us and who is attentive and who is kind and who knows us and who is attuned to what we need and what we desire and what we're afraid of. And she's attuned to all the parts of us, and she receives every single one of us, every single one of us as her children.

Perhaps you've already done this before, so maybe once or even several times. But if this is your first time, you might be wondering what total devotion to Jesus through Mary means. Well, in the Catholic Church, we call this a consecration. And since it is through Mary that we are journeying closer to Christ, we call this a Marian consecration. A Marian consecration is the act of entrusting oneself, our bodies, our souls, our possessions, our works, our entire life to the protection, guidance, and intercession of the Blessed Mother with the end goal of total devotion to her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

And who doesn't need that? And she dedicated herself to watch over Jesus. And so surely, she can take care of you and me. And you know what? We don't ever outgrow the need for a mom. We don't ever outgrow the need to be taken care of by a kind woman who is good to us and who brings us closer to Jesus. We all, we all, need that. We all ache for that. And so, this practice of Marian consecration actually dates back to the seventeenth century, yet even before Marian consecration became a formal devotion, there was a long-standing tradition in the Church of dedicating oneself, even one's cities, regions, and time, like we do within the month of May, to Our Lady. And by doing so, we imitate Jesus who entrusted himself completely to Mary in his Incarnation. So, we're going to follow Jesus who, from the Cross, said to the beloved disciple, behold your mother.

Overview of the Marian Consecration

The Marian Consecration is 33 days of prayers and readings that form the preparation. The 34th day will be your day of consecration.

St. Louis de Montfort divides the 33 days into different sections, each with its own prayers to complement brief daily readings from Sacred Scripture, The Imitation of Christ by Thomas à Kempis, and Montfort's own work, True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin. This is how the days will be divided:

- 12 Day Preparation – Days 1-12

- First comes a 12 day preparation period that consists of emptying oneself of the spirit of the world in penance and mortification.
- For these 12 days, we pray the Veni Creator, the Ave Maris Stella, the Magnificat, and the Glory Be.
- Week One – Days 13-19
 - The first week focuses on offering up our prayers and devotions for the purpose of coming to understand ourselves and our sins. Humility is the key.
 - For this week, we pray the Litany of the Holy Ghost, the Litany of Loreto, and the Ave Maris Stella.
- Week Two – Days 20-26
 - During the second week, we ask the Holy Ghost to help us better understand the Blessed Virgin.
 - We pray the Litany of the Holy Ghost, the Litany of Loreto, the Ave Maris Stella, the prayer to Mary by St. Louis de Montfort. We also add 5 decades of the Holy Rosary each day for assistance.
- Week Three – Days 27-33
 - During the third week, we seek to better understand Christ through meditation
 - We pray the Litany of the Holy Ghost, the Ave Maris Stella, and the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus, Montfort's prayer to Jesus, and the prayer, O Jesus Living in Mary.
- Consecration Day – Day 34
 - Don't just read the readings, internalize them. Don't let your lips just mouth the prayers; truly pray them. Just saying the words won't work; it's not a magic incantation.
 - You may feel less motivated or less focused some days, but persevere. You may even miss a day. Keep going. Keep trying.

Today is the 15th day of the Consecration, but one is welcome to begin at any time using the book with the accompanying prayers. Even if you listen to the Hallow sessions with Sister Mariam, it is worth going to the book to read over what Sister said aloud on the podcast.

For our session today, we will review a few sessions to motivate us for our faith formation for dedicating our lives To Jesus Through Mary. These sessions include scripture readings and passages from noted books such as *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas a Kempis and *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary*.

Day 1

Examine your conscience, pray, and practice renouncement of your own will. This mortification results in purity of heart.

This purity is the indispensable condition for contemplating God in heaven, to see Him on earth and to know Him by the light of faith. The first part of the preparation should be employed in casting off the spirit of the world which is contrary to that of Jesus Christ. The spirit of the world consists essentially in the denial of the supreme dominion of God. This denial is manifested in practice by sin and disobedience. Thus, it is principally opposed to the spirit of Christ, which is also that of Mary.

Reading: The Gospel of Matthew 5:1-19

This is Matthew's chapter on the Beatitudes. Rather than reflecting on this familiar passage, here is the rest of the reading:

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt lose its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is good for nothing any more but to be cast out, and to be trodden on by men. You are the light of the world. A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that it may shine to all that are in the house. So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Do not think that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For amen I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle shall not pass of the law, till all be fulfilled. He therefore that shall break one of these least commandments, and shall so teach men, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But he that shall do and teach, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Day 4

Reading: The Gospel of Matthew 7:1-14

Jesus said: "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."

"Do not give dogs what is holy; and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under foot and turn to attack you."

"Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to

him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.”

“Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”

Day 8

Reading: Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis, Book I, Chapter 13

For as long as we live in this world, temptations and tribulations will be our constant companions. As it is written in Job, "Man's life on earth is a temptation." Otherwise translated, “Man’s life on earth is warfare.” This war requires that every man be on guard about his temptations and watchful in prayer. Or else, the devil, who never sleeps but is always prowling about and seeking to devour, will deceive him and catch him.

No man is so perfect and holy as to be wholly free of temptation. Nevertheless, temptations are very profitable to man when we wrestle with them. Though troublesome and painful they may be, temptations humble, purify, and instruct us. All the Saints who now wear crowns in Heaven wrestled through many tribulations and temptations and were purified by them. Those who surrendered, who could not bear to wrestle with their temptations, fell away and are now Hell’s prisoners.

Many seek to flee temptations and fall worse into them. Instead of cleaving to Christ, they fall into the devil’s embrace. This battle cannot be won by fleeing the battlefield. Only with patience and true humility, we overcome our enemies.

Little by little, however, with patience, fortitude, and God's grace, you will sooner overcome temptations than by relying on your own strength and gritted teeth.

Day 11

Reading: Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis, Book I, Chapter 15 – “On the Fervent Amendment of our Whole Life”

There was once an anxious man, who often wavered between hope and fear and doubted whether he was in a state of grace. The man threw himself to the ground

in prayer before one of the altars in the church and said "Oh, if I only knew if I will persevere in virtue until my death."

That very instant the man heard within him a heavenly answer: "And if you did know this, what would you do? Do now what you would do then, and you will be saved."

The man was immediately comforted, and he committed himself wholly to the Divine Will. From then on, his anxious thoughts ceased. His curiosity no longer dwelled over what would happen to him. Instead, he spent his energy discerning God's will for his life. He sought to begin and end each of his deeds to the pleasure of God.

"Trust in the Lord and do good deeds," says the Prophet David. "Inhabit the land, and you shall feed from its riches."

There is one thing in particular that stops many men from progressing in the spiritual life and amending their lives. It is the false worldly fear of the pain and labor which is needed in the struggle to win virtue. Those who strive the most manfully to overcome their most difficult vices will most quickly advance in virtue. A man profits most and wins the most grace when he tackles those things in which he most has to overcome himself.

All men do not, indeed, have equal difficulties to overcome. Some men have greater passions than others. Nevertheless, a zealous lover of God, even if he has stronger passions, will also make a stronger advance in virtue. The man of great passion will make greater progress than he of little passion, who is less fervent toward virtue.

The First Week: Knowledge of Self

All that you do this week: prayers, examinations, reflection, acts of renouncing our own will, acts of contrition for our sins, acts of contempt of self. All these should be performed at the feet of Mary.

Imagine yourself putting all these things at Mary's precious feet. We pray that we will come to know ourselves in her light, who is the immaculate reflection of Jesus. Near her, we will be able to behold the abyss of our miseries without despairing.

Day 14

Reading: Imitation of Christ by Thomas á Kempis, Book III, Chapter 13, "Of the Obedience of One in Humble Subjection, After the Example of Jesus Christ"

My son, says the Lord Jesus Christ, he who endeavors to withdraw himself from obedience, withdraws himself from grace [ref. Matt. 16:24]. He who seeks possessions for himself, loses those which is given to all.

If a man doesn't cheerfully and freely submit himself to his superior, it is a sign that his flesh is not yet perfectly obedient to him. Such a man's flesh kicks and murmurs against him. Therefore, if you truly desire to overcome yourself and make your flesh obedient to your spirit, learn first to obey you superiors.

The outward enemy is sooner overcome if the inner man – the soul – is not feeble and weak. There is no greater or more troublesome enemy to the soul than you, if your flesh is not in harmony with your spirit. You must, therefore, develop a contempt for yourself, if you desire to prevail against your flesh and blood. To the same degree you love yourself inordinately, you will fear to resign yourself to another's will.

Is it so great a matter for a man, who is but dust from nothing, to subject himself to another for God's sake, when I, the Almighty and the Most High God, who created all things from nothing, humbly subjected Myself to man for your sake? I made myself the humblest and lowest of all men (Luke 2:7; John 13:14), that you might overcome your pride with My humility.

O dust! Learn to be obedient. Learn to humble yourself, who are but earth and clay. Learn to bow down under the feet of all men for My sake. Learn to break your will and to be subject to all from the heart.

Veni Creator

Come, Holy Spirit, Creator blest,
and in our souls take up Thy rest;
come with Thy grace and heavenly aid
to fill the hearts which Thou hast made.

O comforter, to Thee we cry,
O heavenly gift of God Most High,
O fount of life and fire of love,
and sweet anointing from above.

Thou in Thy sevenfold gifts are known;
Thou, finger of God's hand we own;
Thou, promise of the Father,
Thou Who dost the tongue with power imbue.

Kindle our sense from above,
and make our hearts o'erflow with love;
with patience firm and virtue high
the weakness of our flesh supply.

Far from us drive the foe we dread,
and grant us Thy peace instead;
so shall we not, with Thee for guide,
turn from the path of life aside.

Oh, may Thy grace on us bestow
the Father and the Son to know;
and Thee, through endless times confessed,
of both the eternal Spirit blest.

Now to the Father and the Son,
Who rose from death, be glory given,
with Thou, O Holy Comforter,
henceforth by all in earth and heaven.

Amen.

The Magnificat

(Lk 1:46-55)

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior f
or he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel
for he remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children forever.

Amen.

The Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Litany of Loreto)

Lord Have Mercy on us; *Lord Have Mercy on us*

Christ, have mercy on us.; *Christ have mercy on us*
Christ, hear us; *Christ graciously hear us*

God, the Father of heaven; *Have mercy on us.*
God, the Son, Redeemer of the world; *Have mercy on us.*
God, the Holy Ghost, *Have mercy on us.*
Holy Trinity, One God, *Have mercy on us.*

Holy Mary, *pray for us.*
Holy Mother of God, *pray for us.*
Holy Virgin of virgins, *pray for us.*
Mother of Christ, *pray for us.*
Mother of divine grace, *pray for us.*
Mother most pure, *pray for us.*

Mother most chaste, *pray for us.*
Mother inviolate, *pray for us.*
Mother undefiled, *pray for us.*
Mother most amiable, *pray for us.*
Mother most admirable, *pray for us.*
Mother of good counsel, *pray for us.*
Mother of our Creator, *pray for us.*
Mother of our Savior, *pray for us.*
Virgin most prudent, *pray for us.*
Virgin most venerable, *pray for us.*
Virgin most renowned, *pray for us.*
Virgin most powerful, *pray for us.*
Virgin most merciful, *pray for us.*
Virgin most faithful, *pray for us.*
Mirror of justice, *pray for us.*
Seat of wisdom, *pray for us.*
Cause of our joy, *pray for us.*
Spiritual vessel, *pray for us.*
Vessel of honor, *pray for us.*
Singular vessel of devotion, *pray for us.*
Mystical rose, *pray for us.*
Tower of David, *pray for us.*
Tower of ivory, *pray for us.*
House of gold, *pray for us.*
Ark of the covenant, *pray for us.*
Gate of Heaven, *pray for us.*
Morning star, *pray for us.*
Health of the sick, *pray for us.*
Refuge of sinners, *pray for us.*
Comforter of the afflicted, *pray for us.*
Help of Christians, *pray for us.*
Queen of angels, *pray for us.*
Queen of patriarchs, *pray for us.*
Queen of prophets, *pray for us.*
Queen of apostles, *pray for us.*
Queen of martyrs, *pray for us.*
Queen of confessors, *pray for us.*
Queen of virgins, *pray for us.*
Queen of all saints, *pray for us.*
Queen conceived without original sin, *pray for us.*
Queen assumed into heaven, *pray for us.*
Queen of the most holy Rosary, *pray for us.*
Queen of peace, *pray for us.*

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, *Spare us o Lord.*

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, *Graciously hear us O Lord.*

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, *Have mercy on us.*

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:

Grant, O Lord God, we beseech Thee, that we Thy servants may rejoice in continual health of mind and body; and, through the glorious intercession of Blessed Mary ever Virgin, may be freed from present sorrow, and enjoy eternal gladness. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.