

## **WORLD-PRAYER-CONGRESS FOR LIFE**

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„Mary, We Entrust You with the Cause of Life" (H.H., Pope John Paul II., *Evangelium Vitae*, #105)

### **Conference Nr. 15**

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### **Consecration to God through the Immaculate Heart of Mary.**

*Guide for the formation of leaders*

Saint Augustine, Father of the Church and Teacher of the West, would teach that the road to God has three steps, in ascending order, without which is impossible to reach Him. They are: Knowledge of God, Love of God and Service to God. The same lesson applies to Mary Most Holy. To reach her we first must know her, then love her and finally serve her.

#### **1. Knowledge of Mary**

Who is Mary? Mary is a real person, defined by her triple role in the history of salvation.

- A. MOTHER OF CHRIST
- B. MOTHER OF THE CHURCH
- C. MODEL OF PERFECTION

#### **A. MOTHER OF CHRIST**

She was chosen by the Father to be the wife of the Holy Spirit, the work of God being done unto her. Mary conceived Christ, the only Son of the Father, in her MATERNAL HEART, on behalf of us all, through her joyous and loving acceptance of the will of God. In her "LEI IT BE DONE UNTO ME ACCORDING TO THY WORD" Mary restores the proper relationship between creature and Creator. The creature voluntarily becomes "THE HANDMAID OF THE LORD". Mary yields to the Creator her free will out of love. Essentially, it's love for the Lord that transforms the face of the earth that makes the once rebellious creation pleasing to God. Mary will forever be glorified by all the generations for bringing the child of God into this world. She conceived God in her womb, in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, to make the Word made Flesh a reality. CHRIST, THE WORD OF GOD, WAS MADE MAN, TO INTERCEDE FOR US WITH GOD THE FATHER, AND THUS BUILDING A ETERNAL BRIDGE THAT PUTS US IN TOUCH WITH GOD AND MAKES US IN HIS IMAGE.

THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM THE MYSTERY OF MARY. The promised Messiah comes to his people, establishes himself in the centre of Israel, accepts its way of life, traditions and culture and makes him accessible to all. He heals

all, educates and enlivens. But he does it from his condition of MAN-GOD. Mary is His partner in this “history of salvation”, She does not participate in it as a mere witness, but as Mother, Teacher, and first to be redeemed, thus becoming THE NEW EVE, FIRST CITIZEN OF THE NEW ALLIANCE BETWEEN GOD AND HIS PEOPLE, HUMANITY.

## **B. MOTHER OF CHURCH**

Saint Paul would teach that the Church is similar to a human body. Christ is the Head, and the faithful make up the Body of Christ himself says as much on the cross. He gave her to us through John, his most beloved disciple, and the Church has since understood THE SPIRITUAL MOTHERHOOD OF MARY OVER MANKIND. The Acts of the Apostles confirm this role of Mary in dealing with the disciples of the Lord. The disciples waited for the promised coming of the Holy Spirit in holy prayer around Mary.

In that first hall of prayer, the Mother was present with her spiritual sons. On Pentecost Sunday, the Spirit of God was spread over the Church, which was born then, and on that birth of the Church of Christ the Mother was found. Her praying heart contributed to the illumination of the New Gathering of the faithful. Who better than the First believer as the procreator of new spiritual sons in the image of Christ!

## **C. MODEL OF PERFECTION**

Mary was conceived without original sin, that is, without men’s weakness for sin which became his legacy after the fall of Adam. Mary is that who has freely and completely dedicated her to Christ’s mission of salvation: PLANTING CHRIST IN OUR HEARTS, MAKING US IN HIS IMAGE. The Holy Scriptures calls her “The Favoured Loved One”. Correspondingly, Mary has consecrated herself to serve Our Lord. In doing that she teaches us the real meaning of love. Her existence is a constant searcher for ways to please God with the conviction of one who has fully understood the essence of the cosmos, the relationship between God and his creation.

Mary is a model of perfection with her continuous and dedicated fulfilment of her daily duties, accepting God’s will with the courage of one fighting to improve what can be changed and accepting what can’t, and the wisdom to know the difference. Her existence is one of total trust in God which leads her to practice her evangelical virtues with great joy and inner happiness. Mary is a collaborator of Our Lord, a “participating partner” of His immense wealth.

To know the essence of Mary, that which makes who she is, is to enter into the mysteries of her Immaculate Heart, which was revealed in Fatima as a lesson in sanctity, a refuge in times of need, and a way to God himself. Therefore, to know Mary carries with it the responsibility of penetrating the Heart of the Mother, a heart that reveals itself in all its pristine glory through the Fatima apparitions. Fatima, Pontevedra and Tuy are fundamental for the true children of Mary, imitators of her virtues and soldiers for her Son, Jesus Christ, and who will not be conformed to a simple and superficial intellectual knowledge of Mary. The knowledge we seek is, above anything else, one of trust in one we know, and of walking hand in hand with She who is a MODEL OF PERFECTION.

Our Lady, in opening her Heart in the Message of Fatima shows us the window through which the light of Christ reaches us helping us to grow in faith, hope and love. As Pope Paul

VI said: “He who finds Mary can’t help but find Christ”. And St. Mathew in his Gospels (Mt. 2,11) shows us THE CHRIST Jesus along with his Mother, Mary.

### **Where else can we find Christ so easily?**

If we really get to know Mary, we will find that we will improve our relations with other people. Mary is always ready to help her fellowmen (Luke 1, 28) even at her own cost.

## **2. LOVE OF MARY**

Who can love the Son without loving the Mother? The love of Mary is above all reflection of the Love of God. We love Mary with the special “hyper-dulia” (unique public veneration for the First among all creatures) because in her we find the will of God, the one “blessed...among the women”, and because in her God did “great things” and “all the generations will call her blessed”. Who can separate him from love, when she is the one favoured by the Holy Spirit and in her womb THE WORD BECAME MAN?

St. Augustine taught us that charity is the perfect love, ordered in, with and for God himself, and is the donation. Christian love is the synthesis which overcomes the dialectic clash between the “agape” and “eros”. On the one hand, charity inspires us to get rid of the “ancient man” and his worldly deeds, abandoning our egotism for altruism in an imitation of Christ. On the other hand, charity leads us in an anxious search for an understanding of God within ourselves. This concerns an intimation of the sublime driving force that makes man discover God within him, the ineffable guest of the human heart, a perfect and loving God that even though He transcends the souls, still lowers Himself to live within them. In the intimacy and privacy of the individual heart, we find the ineffable contact between the sublime and the goodness of its transformed power. God is made immanent, and with his intimate action he rewards us with a unique friendship which constitutes the historical drama of the greatest importance on the life of individuals. Thus, the individual human conscience becomes nothing less than the stage for the epiphany of the Lord; making our total soul one natural theopany, and opening it to the suffering all according to his loving intention thus saving those who break his law, leading hungry souls towards fulfilment.

It is Christ, who as THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE, offers order, sense, and coherence to human existence, which would otherwise break up, divided by its own inadequacy and sin. Nobody understood these truths in her heart as Mary did (Luke 11, 51). That is why the Church proclaims correctly, that the love for Mary makes way for the love of Jesus, and from Jesus to God the Father.

## **3. SERVICE TO MARY**

Serving Mary can be understood as a way of serving Christ. “DO AS HE SAYS” reverberates in our hearts reminding us that the mission of Mary as co-saviour consists of moulding Christ in our hearts until we also can be “other Christs” engendered by her maternal spiritual action. And serving Mary is not a small thing for he who serves the one who is “the handmaid of the Lord” obtains from her maternal Heart the unique grace of becoming “like flowers placed by

her at the feet of the Lord's throne" (as Mary said to Lucia). That is why the proverb: "A servant of Mary will never die", is not only true, but a servant of Mary will be like John, the beloved disciple, the favourite of the Lord. But this special gift which the Lord gives his children is not cause for ostentation, but on the contrary, it is a compromise and responsibility that invites us to search more sincerely and profoundly the plenitude of the Gospel in our daily lives.

## **"TO KNOW MARY IS TO LOVE HER, TO LOVE MARY IS TO SERVE HER"**

The Message of Fatima is the Message of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This is the Soul of Fatima, its essence. Our Blessed Mother revealed "the secrets of her Immaculate Heart" to mankind, secrets which constitute a lesson in sanctity available to all authentic seekers of Truth. As Pope John XXIII stated: "Fatima is the centre of all Christian hope". And the venerated Pope Paul VI said of Fatima: "The Message of Fatima represents the setting and updating of the Gospel for mankind". Through this message, our Lady appeals directly to our conscience asking: Are we really living the Gospel day by day?

The Message of Fatima is of unexcelled importance not only to the Church but to humanity in general. This is so because Fatima offers:

1. A profound analysis of the historical moment we are living at the present. As Pope John Paul II said: "The message of Fatima is now more urgent than when it was first announced". This is so because Fatima represents today the best interpretation available of the moral, spiritual and religious crisis affecting the world. At present, we are living those eschatological times announced at the Apocalypse, Chapter 12, when the forces of evil – the red dragon – confront the forces of the Woman dressed in Sun – and the Woman's children – in the decisive battle – the City of God versus the city of the world. At present, we are living the moment of true in such confrontation. Will the forces of evil be able to overcome the City of God? Certainly not. Our Lady, victorious conqueror of all battles in God's name, promised her triumph – when every other means have failed, when Christian unity seems to end in despair, when confusion and malice seems to conquer human heart, the Immaculate Heart of Mary will convoke "an army" of humble, simple, unaffected and trustworthy souls that will serve as docile instruments in God's hand, in order to transform corrupted structure impeding the enhancement of God's Kingdom.

2. Fatima offers us the opportunity to become protagonists in "the Drama of the Century". We shall not remain as mere spectators since we have the tools Our Lady provided in Fatima as to accelerate by our own vigorous, innovative and personal contribution the coming of the Sacred Hearts reign:

- a. Through the meditative prayer of the daily rosary, we will be able to discover the best "spiritual direction" available through the reflections on the life and circumstances of Jesus and Mary, learning from them how to apply their own way of living to our personal circumstances and lifestyles. This will deeply develop the practice of MENTAL PRAYER, so much needed in order to overcome spiritual stupidity and indifference toward a more fervent attitude in life, while at the same time making it possible for ardent souls to come closer to perfection. As Paul said: "It is no longer myself in that lives in me, it is Christ himself that lives in me". And precisely, it is Mary herself who excels in the process of modelling Christ

in our own hearts, it is she that pretends us to become “ALTER CHRISTUS” her own spiritual children...

b. Through the spirit of PENANCE, understood in its double significance as:

(1) Bearing our own personal cross, conforming our souls with that of Christ's himself; by patiently accepting God's will – including suffering in the same lifestyle attitude exhibited in Mary's “FIAT” (“I am the handmaid of the Lord...”).

(2) Offering our own personal mortifications and privation of goods as to exercise ourselves in “the art of renunciation” so that we can also become his disciples, as to strengthen our will in the pursuit of true love, CHARITY. It is through this well ordained love that we will pursue those objectives of actual value in life, accordingly to God's hierarchy in creation. Fatima is especially useful today in clarifying our own scale of values, following not human logics, so different to that of man “that is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of the needle than for a rich man to enter into God's Kingdom”.

c. REPARATION in its purest theological sense is presented by Our Lady through the most ardent devotion to Christ in the Eucharist. The great promise of Her Immaculate Heart through the Five First Saturdays Devotion emphasises on the importance of the Blessed Sacrament as fundamental pillar for Christian life, stressing “the revelation of the marvels of Her Heart” in the dual promise of salvation to those faithful apostles practising it, while they will become children object of the same love of predilection bestowed by Jesus to his disciple John, thus becoming like “flowers put By Our Lady's hand to adorn the throne of our Almighty Father”.

d. Through the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, our spiritual life is enhanced as to transform our souls from mere servant to close, intimate friends and partners of Jesus Christ. The consecration to Her Heart is not merely one of Mary's richest devotions but mainly it is CONVERSION, a radical change in lifestyles, abandoning “the old state of sin” in order to become “a new creature” having Christ as centre of our lives. The consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary has a three-fold significance; each one a gradual step toward sanctity:

1. Firstly, it is a renewal of our baptismal promises as to embrace divine grace, while “the old creature” in ourselves – that is, the worldly spirit – dies;

2. Secondly, through consecration we learn how to renounce our own personal liberty as to seek God's will, even in its slightest details, transforming ourselves into “other Maries” in her joyful acceptance of God's will. This can be done by participating into the Lord's intimate circle as partners in the common enterprise of salvation, as it was portrayed by Jacinta, “full of an ardent fire in her heart eager to be communicated to others” in order to seek the conversion of sinners, while at the same time, consecration may be lived as a way to console the Good Lord, offended by humanity's crimes, blasphemies, and ingratitude, being portrayed this aspect of consecration by Francisco, eager to discover his solitude within God's presence, as to share the Lord's grief and sorrows in meditation.

3. Thirdly, through the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary – a consecration always directed to our Heavenly Father – her spiritual motherhood over mankind is revealed in all its richness. By way of her spiritual graces and favours, our souls can learn to walk to Jesus

Christ serving her Heart as fortress and consolation, “the safe path conducting to God” as in Lucia.

Mary, Mother of Christ, the Saviour, is also Mother of the Church. In Fatima, her most precious concern for mankind was revealed. Let us become docile instruments of her desires, of her plans, resting ourselves in the hands of our Mother of divine Providence. Only through the narrow road of perseverance will our hopes be fulfilled. May we all rest in peace in the Immaculate Heart of Mary, revealed at Fatima in all marvellous splendour, thus becoming apostles of our times.

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