

RENEWING THE CONSECRATION DAILY AND YEARLY

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at

Our Lady of Peace Church
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by

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Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom, pray for us!

St. Louis Marie de Montfort, pray for us!

Definition of the word *Consecration*

The online Catholic Encyclopedia defines the word *Consecration* as “an act by which a thing is separated from a common and profane to a sacred use, or by which a person or thing is dedicated to the service and worship of God by prayers, rites, and ceremonies.”¹

Consecration in St. Louis Marie de Montfort

By consecrating ourselves to Mary—we—become the *thing* consecrated. We become *set apart* in a unique way. Our Marian *Act of Consecration* is not a mere, as Father William Most says, “**pious gesture.**”² This Act of Consecration, says Father William Most again, “**takes the word ‘consecrate’ in a very literal and strict sense; it means to give oneself *entirely and permanently* to the service of Jesus through Mary.**”³ The same author further says:

St. Louis de Montfort loves to describe this consecration as “slavery” to Jesus through Mary. This description is very helpful in bringing us to realize that by it we propose to live in the closest dependence on Mary our Queen, considering ourselves as her property, so that our body and soul and our possessions, even our spiritual goods, belong to her and cannot be used or disposed of except according to her will But by this consecration we add a new title to our slavery: we do not merely acknowledge our natural condition, but we make ourselves slaves by *love*.⁴

In short, by our Marian Consecration we become Mary’s exclusive property, which, in turn, also makes us Jesus’ exclusive property. Now it is important to know that one who makes this Marian Consecration does not profess a Vow, properly speaking, as, for example, a Religious who professes the three traditional Vows recognized by the Catholic Church and which are typically common to all professed Religious, namely, *Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience*. To use myself as an example—I, as an IVE Priest (as with all of our IVE members and even our Sisters), in addition to having professed the three traditional Vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience—have also made a fourth (4th) Vow of “**consecration to Mary.**”⁵ We have not only consecrated ourselves to Mary according to the method of St. Louis de Montfort, but we have done so at the level of a Vow. A Vow is, according to the Code of Canon Law, “**a deliberate and free promise made to God, concerning some good which is possible and better.**”⁶ The *Catholic Bible Dictionary* compares a Vow to an *Oath*; and an

¹ <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04276a.htm>.

² From his book *Mary in Our Life*, Chapter XVIII: St. Louis de Montfort’s Consecration to Mary. This is an online version of the book taken from: <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/most/getchap.cfm?WorkNum=213&ChapNum=20>. Hereafter *Mary in Our Life*. All following quotations from this book will also be taken from the above website.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Quoted from an English PDF version of our IVE Constitutions, Article 5: Consecration to Mary, no. 82. Hereafter *IVE Const*. All following quotes from the Constitutions will be taken from the above PDF version of the Constitutions.

⁶ Can. 1191. http://www.intratext.com/IXT/ENG0017/_P4C.HTM.

Oath contains **“a conditional self-curse.”**⁷ Hence, consecrating oneself to Mary by Vow is serious business and not something to be taken lightly; greater obligations and responsibilities are at stake because of the greater good involved in a Vow. The Consecration to Mary, though it is not a Vow, properly speaking, is nonetheless a genuinely deeper act of entrustment to Mary that will certainly change one’s Spiritual Life, for the better, if one tries to live it out faithfully. Father Armand Plessis, a Montfort Priest, in his book entitled *Commentary on the Treatise on the True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin* explains that **“for the one who has pronounced his consecration, the practices are imposed by virtue of fidelity to the given word, and under pain of deriving no fruit from this form of devotion.”**⁸

Therefore, in order to derive the greatest fruit possible from our Marian Consecration we must do our best to, as our IVE Constitutions say to its members and which could also be applied to you: **“‘marianize’ life”**⁹, which, in practice, means to do, as St. Louis de Monfort says, **“everything THROUGH Mary, WITH Mary, IN Mary and FOR Mary.”**¹⁰ But in order to live our Consecration well we must know beforehand *why* renewing our Consecration is so important for our spiritual lives. You need to be convinced of the necessity of constantly renewing your Consecration to the full; otherwise without this conviction your Consecration will make no sense, you will not enter into its depths, and you will not experience its life-changing power for your spiritual life. Our entrance into the full depths of this Consecration will not happen overnight; our Consecration will go through periods of highs and lows. But Mary, however, does expect us to grow gradually in our understanding of the implications and depths of our Consecration. This method of Consecration is very deep; and that is why one has to reread the *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin* over and over again to penetrate into its depths. Even St. Pope John Paul II, as brilliant as he was, said himself: **“I read and reread this precious little ascetical book.”**¹¹ We, too, should read and reread, in a spirit of study and devotion, the *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*; the more we do this the more we will benefit.

Reflections and Illustrations

The normal process in human learning is to progress from what is *confusing* to what is *distinct*, from what is *abstract* to what is *particular*. We do not grow in knowledge by studying different subjects all at once; we grow in knowledge when we repeatedly study the same subject over and over again. When we do this over a particular subject we will find ourselves eventually, over time and effort, “understanding” the particular subject we are studying. Things begin to make sense. Repetition in studying is crucial because repetition strengthens one’s memory. Father John Hardon, S.J. explains:

Memorization is the practice of remembering past experience. Behind memorization is the will. We remember only what we want to remember Our minds can remember the truths embodied in the words we memorized There is a close relationship . . . between these two forms of memorization, called verbal memorization and mental memorization. We cannot separate these two because we cannot expect to have ideas on the mind unless we first have some sense experience, something we hear, touch or see.¹²

Renewing our Marian Consecration has an effect on our *Memory* because renewing our Consecration not only helps us to remember the promises we made to Mary on our Consecration day but it also helps to strengthen our will by reinforcing our desire to fulfill those obligations we promised on our Consecration day. Renewing the

⁷. Scott Hahn (General Editor), *Catholic Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 2009), 658.

⁸. Fr. Armand Plessis (Montfort Father), *Commentary on the Treatise on the True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin* (Casimir Vallla, 2014). Taken from my Kindle e-version of the above book.

⁹. *IVE Const.*, no. 85.

¹⁰. *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*, no. 257. This book came from *God Alone, The Collected Writings of St. Louis Marie de Montfort* (Bay Shore, NY: Montfort Publications, 2008), 371. Hereafter all quotes from St. Louis Marie de Montfort’s works will be taken from the above book, unless otherwise noted. Hereafter *TD* and the corresponding number from *TD* and the page number from the above book. Also cf. *IVE Const.*, no. 85-89.

¹¹. *Address of the Holy Father to the Participants in the 8th Mariological Colloquium*, no. 1. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/2000/oct-dec/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20001013_8-colloquio-mariologia.html.

¹². http://www.therealpresence.org/archives/Education/Education_010.htm. Corrections mine.

Consecration consists in verbally reciting a prayer formula that concludes with formally signing and dating the Act of Consecration. These concrete actions, though apparently insignificant at first glance, are actually like throwing pieces of wood into a fire. The more wood you put into a fire the bigger and more consuming the fire becomes; likewise, the more you renew your Consecration the more your Devotion to Mary will be rekindled. Renewing your Consecration keeps the fire of your Marian Devotion burning, as it were. We need to remember, though, that *Devotion*, unlike what people typically understand Devotion to be, is not *Emotion*. *Devotion* is not *Emotion*. Rather, *Devotion*, is simply, as St. Thomas Aquinas says, the **“will to give oneself readily to things concerning the service of God.”**¹³ The more you renew your Consecration the more you will desire to God’s Will more faithfully. Our whole sanctity depends on our faithfulness in doing God’s Will. If, then, when you renew your Marian Consecration, whether that be *daily* or *yearly*, and recite it by focusing on the meaning of each word with attention your Consecration should then naturally produce positive effects upon your memory and in turn upon your will. The highest kind of attention in vocal prayer is that which, in the mind of St. Thomas Aquinas, goes beyond just saying words; this kind of attention rather focuses on *who* we are praying to through the words we recite and the *thing* we are praying for.¹⁴ By verbally renewing your Act of Consecration you recall to mind *what you did in the past* in order to learn *what you ought to do now*, and, perhaps, better. You link the past to the present in order to advance, with greater resolve, towards the future. And moving forward in the Spiritual Life means wanting to look ahead with Hope towards the future, even when your past haunts you or the present is filled with unbearable sufferings and trials of all kinds. One way to know if you are really benefiting from the renewal of your Consecration is if you find yourself more, as St. Louis de Montfort says, **“trustful,”**¹⁵ that is, in Mary, and especially in your sufferings and trials. This characteristic for St. Louis de Montfort is one of the marks of a genuine devotion to Mary. In the lives of many of the Saints their Devotion to Mary was amazing and inspiring to say the least. St. Faustina, for example, it is said when she was 19 years old and **“first arrived in Warsaw to pursue her vocation as she had been instructed to do by Jesus,”**¹⁶ and **“not knowing which way to turn, she prayed to Our Lady to whom she had great devotion. Our Lady spoke to her heart.”**¹⁷ St. Faustina then describes that **“immediately I heard these words within me telling me to leave the town and go to a nearby village where I would find a safe lodging for the night. I did so and found in fact that everything was just as the Mother of God told me (Diary, 11).”**¹⁸ Mary knows our needs even before we do; as we see her anticipating the needs of the couple in the Wedding at Cana. In another instance in St. Faustina’s life when she was going through some suffering, the Blessed Mother appeared to her carrying the Child Jesus and said: **“I know how much you suffer, but do not be afraid. I share with you your suffering, and I shall always do so’ (Diary, 25).”**¹⁹ Then, it is said **“Our Lady smiled warmly at St. Faustina and she received a grace since her strength and courage were immediately restored.”**²⁰ Also in the life of St. Thérèse of Lisieux she recounts a particular incident when she, bedridden, suffered from some strange illness which she attributed to the Devil; and, in which, she was also miraculously healed by Our Lady when she, Thérèse, turned to a statue of our Lady asking to be healed. As Thérèse describes:

All of a sudden the Blessed Virgin appeared *beautiful* to me, so *beautiful* that never had I seen anything so attractive; her face was suffused with an ineffable benevolence and tenderness, but what penetrated to the very depths of my soul was the *“ravishing smile of the Blessed Virgin.”*²¹

Thus, since that incident, this statue has been called **“Our Lady of the Smile.”**²² As amazing as these incidents of Marian Devotion are we have to remember that real Devotion to Mary does not seek after *Signs* and *Visions*

¹³ *Summa Theologica* II-II, q. 82, a. 1. <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/3082.htm>. Hereafter *ST*.

¹⁴ *ST* II-II, q. 83, a. 13. Cf. <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/3083.htm#article13>.

¹⁵ *TD*, 107, pg. 322.

¹⁶ <http://www.thedivinemercy.org/library/article.php?NID=144>.

¹⁷ *Ibid*.

¹⁸ *Ibid*.

¹⁹ *Ibid*.

²⁰ *Ibid*.

²¹ *Story of a Soul*, ed. 3, trans. John Clarke, O.C.D. (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1996). Taken from my Kindle e-version of the above book.

²² http://www.piercedhearts.org/mother_adela/ol_smile_prayer.htm.

or emotional *Ecstasies* and *Consolations*. St. Louis de Montfort rather says, in his fourth mark of “**authentic devotion to our Lady**,”²³ that if one, as he says, “**loses all taste and feeling for devotion, he is not at all upset because a good and faithful servant of Mary is guided in his life by faith in Jesus and Mary, and not by feelings.**”²⁴

Why do Married couples renew their Marriage Vows, for example? It is not to rekindle emotional fervor lost; if the main purpose for renewing Marriage Vows were simply that, then, the noble dignity which Marriage possesses by nature would be trivialized and undermined, and I would add, cheapened. The purpose why Married couples renew their Marriage Vows is not to expect to “feel” what Love they perhaps apparently and mistakenly believe has been lost; or to expect or even demand that the “Honeymoon” stage which they probably experienced in the beginning of their Marriage *must* return in order to “prove” that they still love each other. The reason why Married couples renew their Marriage Vows *is* and *should be* instead to bring again to their memories the Vows they publicly made to one another in the *past* so as to express to one another in the *here and now* their willingness to continue committing all their strength and efforts to faithfully live out their Marriage Vows towards one another, and with a renewed sense of dedication. Let us consider and apply this example to our Marian Consecration. We renew our Marian Consecration to express the desire of our will to once again live out with greater Fidelity and Love the promises we made to Mary on our Consecration day, even if we get no emotional satisfaction from it. If we really try to live out our Consecration, not expecting to receive emotional sweetness from it, we will receive special Graces; but these Graces will vary by degrees according to how faithfully and intensely we freely choose to live out our Consecration. St. Louis de Montfort explicitly points this out by saying that:

as this devotion essentially consists in a state of soul, it will not be understood in the same way by everyone. Some—the great majority—will stop short at the threshold and go no further. Others—not many—will take but one step into its interior. Who will take a second step? Who will take a third? Finally who will remain in it permanently? Only the one to whom the Spirit of Jesus reveals the secret.²⁵

St. Thomas Aquinas says that one of the four wounds inflicted upon our souls on account of Original Sin is the wound upon our faculty known as the intellect or reason. Since, as Aquinas says, “**reason is deprived of its order to the true, there is the wound of ignorance.**”²⁶ Because of Original Sin it is now difficult for our minds to arrive at the *Truth* let alone cling to it wholeheartedly and perseveringly; our minds, without God’s Grace, easily incline towards ignorance if we don’t exercise it through constant study of the *Truth*, which counters *Ignorance*. We tend to forget our dignity as Children of Mary and Children of God; this is typically the reason why we commit Sin. *We forget*; and when we forget we end up *doing* what we should not do or *not doing* what we should do. It is like what St. Paul says in his Letter to the Romans: “**The willing is ready at hand, but doing the good is not. For I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want,**”²⁷ Ignorance affects our decisions; because our will follows upon what is presented to the intellect. The doctrines of our Catholic Faith are so rich and profound; and this is why we constantly need to review its teachings in the Catechism. That our Catholic Faith is true is what makes it so beautiful; for the *Truth* is *Beautiful*. You can never exhaust the beauty of *Truth*, which the Catholic Church possesses in all its fullness because of its Founder, Jesus Christ, who is *Truth* Incarnate Himself. Renewing one’s Consecration helps to frequently dispel the mind’s tendency towards ignorance of the truths of our Catholic Faith, which is the Faith we initially received at our Baptism. And “**Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit**”²⁸ (CCC 1213), the Catechism tells us. St. Louis de Montfort in his book *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin* affirms this too saying that “**perfect consecration to Jesus is but a perfect and complete consecration of oneself to the Blessed Virgin . . . or in other words, it is the perfect renewal of the vows**

²³. *TD*, 109, pg. 323.

²⁴. *Ibid*.

²⁵. *TD*, no. 119, pg. 326.

²⁶. *ST* I-II, q. 85, a. 3. <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/2085.htm#article3>.

²⁷. Romans 7:19. <http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/ PYV.HTM>.

²⁸. http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p2s2c1a1.htm.

and promises of holy baptism.”²⁹ Renewing our Consecration to Mary is thus a powerful means of helping us better fulfill our Baptismal Promises; because in giving up ourselves completely to Mary we place ourselves and all our Baptismal Promises under Her Maternal Mantle. St. Faustina once had a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary during one of her meditations on August 15, 1937 in which she says that towards the end of the ceremony the Blessed Virgin Mary covered all the sisters of the Congregation with, as St. Faustina says, **“Her mantle.”**³⁰ St. Faustina then says: **“With Her right hand, She clasped Mother General Michael to herself, and with Her left hand She did so to me, while all the sisters were at Her feet, covered with Her mantle.”**³¹ Through our Consecration we are assured of Mary’s special and powerful intercession which far surpasses the intercession of all the Angels and Saints. The Second Vatican Council’s document *Lumen Gentium* explains that:

all the salvific influence of the Blessed Virgin on men originates, not from some inner necessity, but from the divine pleasure. It flows forth from the superabundance of the merits of Christ, rests on His mediation, depends entirely on it and draws all its power from it. In no way does it impede, but rather does it foster the immediate union of the faithful with Christ.³²

Father William Most, quoting the exact Latin phrase Pope Benedict XV uses to describe Mary, that is, **“omnipotentia supplex”**³³ or **“suppliant omnipotence”**³⁴ in English, explains that this phrase means, with respect to Mary, that **“whatever God can do by His own inherent power, she can obtain by asking Him.”**³⁵ St. Pope John Paul II, in a General Audience in the year 1979, also uses this same Latin phrase when he says that **“the revelation of the divine power of the Son by means of the Resurrection is at the same time the revelation of the ‘omnipotence of intercession’ (*omnipotentia supplex*) of Mary with regard to this Son.”**³⁶ St. Louis de Montfort follows upon this same line of thought in his *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*, for he says that Mary, as an **“advocate,”**³⁷ is **“so powerful that she is never refused anything.”**³⁸ Mary is, as *Lumen Gentium* calls her: the **“Mediatrix.”**³⁹ And, in Mary, as St. Bernardine of Siena says, **“all gifts, virtues and graces of the same Holy Spirit are administered by her hands to whomever she desires, when, in what manner, and to what degree she wishes.”**⁴⁰ In light of all this we can see that the more often we explicitly renew our Consecration to Mary the more Mary can sanctify us; because the very act of renewing our Marian Consecration places us more under the influence of Mary’s powerful intercession and protection. Again, it is like placing ourselves under Her Mantle. We hide *in* Mary; and in doing so She is able to protect us from the World, the Devil, and the Flesh, who have no power over Mary, who is Queen of Heaven and Earth. The very act of renewing our Consecration is like a prayer of petition to Mary. Each prayer of petition is a singular action, and repeated actions form habits, and habits make actions easier to do. Hence, the more we renew our Consecration the more habitually, which means the more easily, we will be able to do Mary’s Will, which, ultimately, is God’s Will. It has been asked: **“How can a mother nourish a child who puts up resistance to her? The more perfectly entrusted to her we are, the more docile we are in her hands, the more perfectly can she nourish us with the milk of divine grace.”**⁴¹ St. Maximilian Kolbe, whose Marian Spirituality very closely resembles that of St. Louis de Monfort’s, asks: **“How can we dispose ourselves so as to receive the**

²⁹ *TD*, no. 120, pg. 327.

³⁰ *Diary*, no. 1244. http://www.prayforsouls.org/library/references/diary_passages.php.

³¹ *Ibid*.

³² The Second Vatican Council’s Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, no. 60.

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html.

³³ Fr. William Most, *The Epistles of John*. <https://www.ewtn.com/library/SCRIPTUR/1EPISTJN.TXT>.

³⁴ From his article *Eternal Mother*. <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/most/getwork.cfm?worknum=121>.

³⁵ *Ibid*.

³⁶ No. 2. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19790502.html.

³⁷ *TD*, no. 150, pg. 335-336.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 336.

³⁹ No. 62. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html.

⁴⁰ *Mariology, A Guide for Priests, Deacons, Seminarians, And Consecrated Persons* (U.S.A.: Seat of Wisdom Books, 2007), 442. This quote in the book has a footnote, no. 50, attributing it to one of St. Bernardine of Siena’s homilies: *“Homily on the Nativity of the B.V. Mary, chapter 8, cit. by M.J. Scheeben, Mariology, vol. II (New York: B. Herder Book Co., 1947), p. 271.”*

⁴¹ . <http://marianapostolate.com/theology-of-total-consecration-to-mary/>.

greatest possible influx of grace? Let us consecrate ourselves to the Immaculata....This is the most perfect means, the one Jesus prefers, and the one that will afford us the most abundant fruits of grace.”⁴²

Renewing Our Consecration to Mary Daily and Yearly: In Practice

*How does one practically live out renewing his or her Consecration to Mary on a daily and yearly basis? To answer this I will quote from a very good book entitled *Mary in Our Life* (which I quoted from a few times earlier in this talk) written by a distinguished Catholic Theologian and Biblical Scholar, Father William Most (whom I also quoted at length earlier). Father Most, in one of the chapters in his book dedicated specifically to St. Louis de Montfort’s Consecration to Mary, explains that*

there are two phases to this consecration. The first phase consists in the act of consecration itself, by which we actually make a gift for once and all of everything that we are *able* and *free* to give to Mary for her Son. The second phase consists in the actual living out of all the implications of the original gift. Thus it can be seen that the two phases are really integral parts of one and the same thing.⁴³

This second phase pertains to our daily renewal of our Consecration.

Daily:

*How do you renew your Marian Consecration daily? St. Louis de Montfort suggests saying the following simple prayer each day: “**I am all yours and all I have is yours, O dear Jesus, through Mary, your holy Mother.**”⁴⁴ One should say it upon waking up. But I want to challenge you to try and renew your daily Consecration even further by renewing it not just once each day but throughout the whole day. Each day is made up of a combination of seconds, minutes, and hours—in other words, of different moments—and all these different moments are wonderful opportunities to perform all your actions *through, with, in, and for* Mary. There is sufficient Grace in each of these moments for you to practice doing these actions *through, in, and for* Mary; but you need to freely cooperate with these Graces. If you were to add up all of the individual, insignificant moments throughout the day in which you acted through, with, in, and for Mary, even if imperfectly, you would probably be astonished if you saw the degree of Merit you amassed in just one day for simply doing all your actions, some of them being perhaps apparently trifling actions such as sweeping the floor or washing the dishes, according to the requirements of your Consecration. It has been said that in our Consecration practicing the “**‘through’ and ‘in’**”⁴⁵ aspect is what is really essential. As it has been said, doing all things *through* Mary can be practiced by making, before each action, 1) “**a general act of donation to Mary ‘by one glance of the mind’, that is to say, by a rapid elevation of thought, to say to Mary, without words or with words: ‘I renounce myself, I give myself to thee, my dear Mother,’**”⁴⁶ and 2) by frequently repeating this act of donation, as it is said, “**from time to time, either during the action, or even after the action.**”⁴⁷*

Father William Most gives some practical advice that I think explains very well how one can practice renewing his or her Marian Consecration on a *moment-by-moment* basis throughout the day. It is not easy; but if you persevere in it you will certainly become holier.

⁴². Ibid.

⁴³. *Mary in Our Life*, Chapter XVIII: St. Louis de Montfort’s Consecration to Mary. This is an online version of the book taken from: <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/most/getchap.cfm?WorkNum=213&ChapNum=20>.

⁴⁴. *TD*, no. 233, pg. 364.

⁴⁵. Fr. Armand Plessis (Montfort Father), *Commentary on the Treatise on the True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin* (Casimir Vallla, 2014). Taken from my Kindle e-version of the above book.

⁴⁶. Ibid.

⁴⁷. Ibid.

Thoughts, Words, and Actions

Regarding one's *thoughts, words, and actions*, he says:

We should try to perform all our actions in a spirit of union with Mary. One of the most helpful means to accomplish this is to cultivate an habitual, loving consciousness of Mary's presence. Of course, it is not possible for a person in any walk of life to keep the thought of Mary explicitly before him at all times: it will often recede into the background, or even disappear for a time. But we can think of her often, and try never to let the thought of her be far from us. It will help if we speak often to her in an informal conversational way, telling her what we are doing, what is going on around us, asking her help, thanking her for everything. The development of this frequent and habitual awareness of Mary can come only slowly and gradually: it requires much prayer and persevering effort over a long period of time.⁴⁸

Holy Mass

Regarding *Holy Mass*, he says:

The question of the application of the Mass presents a few special problems. We do not refer to the case of one who merely assists at Mass; whatever spiritual values he may obtain are covered by this consecration, just as are other good works. We consider here the case of the priest who offers Mass. It is a matter of divine law that the priest who offers the Mass must determine the intention for which it is applied. Hence in no case may the celebrant *directly* allow Mary to determine the purpose for which the Mass is to be applied. He himself must make that determination. When he is bound by a stipend or other means, such as the command of a religious superior, he must simply make the application as directed. But whenever he is offering a Mass of which he is free to dispose, he may, if he wishes (though he is not obliged to do so by this consecration), *indirectly* allow Mary to determine it. For he is permitted to offer Mass "for a special intention" when someone so requests. This means that the priest determines the application of the Mass as being for the intention which the giver of the stipend has in mind. The priest himself thus determines the application, even though, as is usually the case, he does not ask what purpose the donor has in mind. He may do similarly with regard to Mary, unless, as was said, he is bound by stipend or other obligation; he may offer a Mass for the intention or intentions for which Mary wishes to have it offered. In view of the above-mentioned provision of divine law, however, he is not strictly obliged to allow Mary to determine it thus *indirectly* even when he is free to do so. What of a person who has made this consecration and now wishes to have a Mass offered for a definite purpose-e.g., for the soul of his father? In view of the provision of divine law mentioned above, he has a choice: he may merely request a Mass for his father, making no mention of Mary; or he may ask the priest to say a Mass for the intention for which Mary wishes it said, and then turn to Mary and ask that it be for his father-and he may be entirely confident that Mary will grant the request. Of course, someone who is merely transmitting Mass offerings given by other persons is not free to use this second method: he must comply with the request of the donors, without making any modification whatsoever.⁴⁹

⁴⁸. <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/most/getchap.cfm?WorkNum=213&ChapNum=20>.

⁴⁹. Ibid.

Supplement: This Devotion at Holy Communion⁵⁰

Before Holy Communion

266. 1) Place yourself humbly in the presence of God.
- 2) Renounce your corrupt nature and dispositions, no matter how good self-love makes them appear to you.
- 3) Renew your consecration saying, “I belong entirely to you, dear Mother, and all that I have is yours.”
- 4) Implore Mary to lend you her heart so that you may receive her Son with her dispositions. Remind her that her Son's glory requires that he should not come into a heart so sullied and fickle as your own, which could not fail to diminish his glory and might cause him to leave. Tell her that if she will take up her abode in you to receive her Son - which she can do because of the sovereignty she has over all hearts - he will be received by her in a perfect manner without danger of being affronted or being forced to depart. “God is in the midst of her. She shall not be moved.”

Tell her with confidence that all you have given her of your possessions is little enough to honour her, but that in Holy Communion you wish to give her the same gifts as the eternal Father gave her. Thus she will feel more honoured than if you gave her all the wealth in the world. Tell her, finally, that Jesus, whose love for her is unique, still wishes to take his delight and his repose in her even in your soul, even though it is poorer and less clean than the stable which he readily entered because she was there. Beg her to lend you her heart, saying, “O Mary, I take you for my all; give me your heart.”

During Holy Communion

267. After the Our Father, when you are about to receive our Lord, say to him three times the prayer, “Lord, I am not worthy.” Say it the first time as if you were telling the eternal Father that because of your evil thoughts and your ingratitude to such a good Father, you are unworthy to receive his only-begotten Son, but that here is Mary, his handmaid, who acts for you and whose presence gives you a special confidence and hope in him.

268. Say to God the Son, “Lord, I am not worthy”, meaning that you are not worthy to receive him because of your useless and evil words and your carelessness in his service, but nevertheless you ask him to have pity on you because you are going to usher him into the house of his Mother and yours, and you will not let him go until he has made it his home. Implore him to rise and come to the place of his repose and the ark of his sanctification. Tell him that you have no faith in your own merits, strength and preparedness, like Esau, but only in Mary, your Mother, just as Jacob had trust in Rebecca his mother. Tell him that although you are a great sinner you still presume to approach him, supported by his holy Mother and adorned with her merits and virtues.

269. Say to the Holy Spirit, “Lord, I am not worthy”. Tell him that you are not worthy to receive the masterpiece of his love because of your lukewarmness, wickedness and resistance to his inspirations. But, nonetheless, you put all your confidence in Mary, his faithful Spouse, and say with St. Bernard, “She is my greatest safeguard, the whole foundation of my hope.” Beg him to overshadow Mary, his inseparable Spouse, once again. Her womb is as pure and her heart as ardent as ever. Tell him that if he does not enter your soul neither Jesus nor Mary will be formed there nor will it be a worthy dwelling for them.

⁵⁰. This title and the following all taken from: <http://www.fisheaters.com/totalconsecrationbook9.html>. This is the *Supplement* in St. Louis de Montfort's book *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*.

After Holy Communion

270. After Holy Communion, close your eyes and recollect yourself. Then usher Jesus into the heart of Mary: you are giving him to his Mother who will receive him with great love and give him the place of honour, adore him profoundly, show him perfect love, embrace him intimately in spirit and in truth, and perform many offices for him of which we, in our ignorance, would know nothing.

271. Or, maintain a profoundly humble heart in the presence of Jesus dwelling in Mary. Or be in attendance like a slave at the gate of the royal palace, where the King is speaking with the Queen. While they are talking to each other, with no need of you, go in spirit to heaven and to the whole world, and call upon all creatures to thank, adore and love Jesus and Mary for you. "Come, let us adore."

272. Or, ask Jesus living in Mary that his kingdom may come upon earth through his holy Mother. Ask for divine Wisdom, divine love, the forgiveness of your sins, or any other grace, but always through Mary and in Mary. Cast a look of reproach upon yourself and say, "Lord, do not look at my sins, let your eyes see nothing in me but the virtues and merits of Mary." Remembering your sins, you may add, "I am my own worst enemy and I am guilty of all these sins." Or, "Deliver me from the unjust and deceitful man." Or again, "Dear Jesus, you must increase in my soul and I must decrease." "Mary, you must increase in me and I must always go on decreasing." "O Jesus and Mary, increase in me and increase in others around me."

273. There are innumerable other thoughts with which the Holy Spirit will inspire you, which he will make yours if you are thoroughly recollected and mortified, and constantly faithful to the great and sublime devotion which I have been teaching you. But remember, the more you let Mary act in your Communion the more Jesus will be glorified. The more you humble yourself and listen to Jesus and Mary in peace and silence - with no desire to see, taste or feel - then the more freedom you will give to Mary to act in Jesus' name and the more Jesus will act in Mary. For the just man lives everywhere by faith, but especially in Holy Communion, which is an action of faith.

Prayer

Regarding *prayer*, he says:

Whenever we make any prayers, we ought to make them through Mary. This does not mean that we may not speak directly to Our Lord, or to the saints it means that we always ask the aid of the intercession of Mary in obtaining whatever we wish. It is not strictly required that all of our prayers contain an explicit invocation of Mary: our general intention of always praying through Mary will suffice on those occasions when we do not explicitly call on her help. But we ought to aim to be as conscious of this dependence as we can, and we should often express it in our prayers. This dependence will also appear in the fact that in every prayer we have the proviso (at least implicit or understood) that what we ask is subject to the approval of Mary, since we have given to her the right to dispose of all our spiritual goods.

We must not misunderstand this point. It would be incorrect to think that we should not pray for really worth-while intentions-the advance of the glory and kingdom of God, our own salvation and that of relatives, friends, benefactors and even enemies. We also pray for the souls in purgatory. To omit these petitions would be laziness and an evil sort of indifference. Mary loves our dear ones even more than we do, and she recognizes the obligations under which we lie to pray for them. Their needs will not be less well cared for because of this dependence on Mary: rather, we and our relatives and friends will be cared for, not out of our own skimpy spiritual assets, but out of the limitless treasures of the Mediatrix of all graces. In regard to prayer for particular intentions, we should note, however, that many persons pray for mere trifles with little or no relation to salvation-e.g., for victory in a football game. Not only those who

make this consecration, but everyone in general, would do well to pay less attention to such ephemeral things when there are so many great intentions that need prayers.⁵¹

Yearly:

With respect to renewing one's Marian Consecration yearly I won't delve into that here since you are all familiar with how to do this. I will just leave you with some words from a Religious Sister of Blessed Mother Teresa's Religious Order *The Missionaries of Charity* on renewing one's Marian Consecration yearly. She says:

[Mother Teresa] encouraged us to make the Total Consecration to Our Lady with 30-days preparation according to St. Louis de Montfort. We do that very faithfully and renew our total consecration to Our Lady every year ... Mother taught us that when we go to Our Lady with childlike confidence, everything becomes easy. Mother always led us to Our Lady and continually gave Our Lady as an example for everything.⁵²

As we continue moving forward to renew for the first time or again our Marian Consecration, let us remember the following words of St. Pope John Paul II: **“This is the luminous principle expressed by the Second Vatican Council which I have so powerfully experienced in my own life and have made the basis of my episcopal motto: *Totus Tuus.*”**⁵³ We are totally yours Mary; and you are totally ours.

⁵¹. <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/most/getchap.cfm?WorkNum=213&ChapNum=20>.

⁵². Testimony of an M.C. sister. Joseph Langford, MC (2007-10-24). Mother Teresa: In the Shadow of Our Lady (p. 73). Our Sunday Visitor. Kindle Edition. N.B. Cited from Fr. Thomas Steinke's Marian conference, entitled, *The Spirituality of Marian Consecration According to the Teachings of St. Louis Marie de Montfort*, given two Saturdays ago (on October 17th, 2015) from http://media.wix.com/ugd/c7e4a5_0899374495f74519b5bf752ac02ee77b.pdf.

⁵³. Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, no. 15. <https://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/JP2ROSAR.HTM>.