

CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

In an age that grows darker and more dangerous with each passing day, with the threat of nuclear war, among other disasters, always hanging over us, we find ourselves worried for the future - both for ourselves, and those whom we love. Is there any safe and secure haven to which we can entrust ourselves? Is there any person, group, or organization that will shield us in every danger? Yes, there is – Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is the solution to this crisis. Those who do this – be they individuals, cities, or even whole nations - are preserved from countless dangers, no matter how grave, dire, or desperate the situation may be. But does proof exist that those who consecrate themselves are actually protected? The answer is yes, and it can be found in the pages of history less than a century ago.

On May 13, 1931 the bishops of Portugal consecrated, in a solemn and public ceremony at Fatima, their entire country to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This consecration, at which 300,000 faithful attended, was done specifically to place Portugal formally under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary. What had Portugal to be concerned about in 1931? The diabolical scourge of Communism, which had spread from Russia into Europe and was ravaging all in its path, was practically on Portugal's doorstep. Only five years later, under the lying mask of a 'civil war' in Spain, this infernal and atheistic ideology wrought a devastation as horrific as any war. Most agreed that it was only a matter of time before the Communist carnage in Spain would spread into the defenseless neighboring country of Portugal.

But shortly after the outbreak of the war in Spain in 1936, the Portuguese bishops vowed to the Blessed Virgin, that if She would preserve their nation from the barbarities of the Communist invasion in Spain, then they would renew the national consecration as a public gesture of their gratitude. On May 13, 1938, they once again gathered publicly - this time to renew the consecration of Portugal to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. They kept their part of the agreement, for Mary had kept Hers.

In addition, Portugal would later be spared the horrors of an even larger conflict - World War II. In a letter written February 6, 1939, Sister Lucy of Fatima explained to Msgr. da Silva (her bishop) that **“In this horrible war, Portugal would be spared because of the national consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary made by the bishops.”** And in a letter to Pope Pius XII on December 2, 1940, she further explained that **“Our Lord promises a special protection to our country in this war, due to the consecration of the nation, by the Portuguese prelates, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary; as proof of the graces *that would have been granted to other nations, had they also consecrated themselves to Her.*”** (emphasis added)

It should also be pointed out that, even in the heart of the gruesome Spanish 'civil war,' Our Lady's power would still shine forth. Of the 1.5 million Catholic lives that were slaughtered in that vicious anti-Catholic invasion, **not a single death occurred within the Diocese of Seville - because the Archbishop of Seville had formally consecrated his diocese to Mary's Immaculate Heart.**

And in 1945, yet another example proves the powerful protection which our Heavenly Mother bestows on those who trustfully invoke Her protection. At 8:15 AM on August 6, 1945, the atom bomb was detonated above the city of Hiroshima, Japan. History has already recorded the unprecedented annihilation - over 70,000 people killed *instantaneously*, and almost as many more would die from burns and radiation sickness. **And yet, only 8 blocks from the epicenter of the blast, the Jesuit rectory and church of Our Lady's Assumption, though damaged, remained standing. And in even greater defiance of the laws of science, the four Jesuit priests who were assigned to the church were still alive.** Not only did they miraculously survive the searing explosion, but they would live the rest of their lives without ever suffering any effects of the nuclear radiation. More than 200 scientists examined the survivors over time, and yet they were unable to explain *scientifically* why these Jesuits had lived unscathed. The explanation comes to us in the words of one of the survivors, Father Hubert Shiffner, **“In that house the Rosary was prayed every day. In that house, we were living the message of Fatima.”** Praying the Rosary daily, and making acts of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary are an integral part of living the message of Fatima.

These examples are all astoundingly miraculous. And in the case of Portugal, consider the magnitude of shielding an entire nation from two wars - both of which were catastrophic in scope and fatalities. Need we look further for proof of the protection that Our Heavenly Mother gives to those who entrust themselves to Her care?

The question now becomes, how can one consecrate oneself to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart? There are several formulas available, as well as different practices that help prepare one to make the consecration. St. Louis de Montfort created the most popular and renowned method of both preparing for, and making, this consecration. If you have the time, a scheduled and prayerful preparation is a wonderful foundation to consecrating yourself to Our Lady. In his "*True Devotion to Mary*", St. Louis de Montfort spells out the various prayers and meditations that help make the consecration fruitful. Consecration to Mary does not require a priest to participate.

But while a thorough preparation is beneficial, it is not necessary - and **the key to consecrating yourself to our Blessed Mother is your sincerity and intention. This can be accomplished with a long and beautiful prayer, or a simple fervent one.** Visit the URL at the bottom of this page for a selection of consecration prayers.

And once you have given yourself to Mary, it is helpful to remind yourself and Her of this dedication, by renewing it with short, sincere and even daily aspirations. Another fruitful reminder of your consecration is if there is a certain special picture or statue of Our Lady that you display in your home or room once you have made the consecration. Or perhaps if you have a medal of our Blessed Mother to wear around your neck, or a chain to wear on your wrist - anything that can frequently serve as a visual reminder that you have given yourself to our Heavenly Queen, and that you enjoy Her special intercession and protection.

One of the many examples of the success of consecrating *even others* to Mary's powerful and maternal Immaculate Heart comes from the life of Hermann Cohen - one of the most illustrious converts from Judaism to the Catholic Faith in the 19th century. As a Carmelite monk - Fr. Augustine Mary of the Blessed Sacrament - he was renowned for his great love and devotion for Jesus in the Holy Eucharist and for the Blessed Virgin Mary. Though he converted many in his family to the One True Church, his mother steadfastly refused. In his great love for his mother, he prayed constantly to the Mother of God for her conversion. But when she died on December 13, 1855, she had not become Catholic.

Later Fr. Augustine confided to St. John Vianney his anxiety about his mother's death and eternal salvation. "Hope!" said the holy Cure of Ars, "Hope! You will one day, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, receive a letter which will be very consoling to you." These words were nearly forgotten, when on December 8, 1861, six years after his mother's death, a letter was handed to him by a Jesuit priest. It was recently written to Fr. Augustine by a mystic nun who had since died in the odor of sanctity. She had been shown the details of his mother's death and judgment.

As Madame Cohen was dying and Jesus about to pass sentence against her, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared and exclaimed: ***'Grace, mercy, O my Son! For this soul that is about to perish. Another moment and it will be lost, lost for all eternity! . . . The soul of his mother is what is dearest to him; a thousand times he has consecrated it to me; he has confided it to the tenderness, to the solicitude of My heart. Can I allow it to perish? This soul is Mine; I want it, I claim it as a heritage, as the price of Thy Blood, and of My sorrows at the foot of Thy Cross.'***

Instantly a strong and powerful grace burst forth from the Heart of Jesus and penetrated the woman's soul. She at once repented, embraced the Catholic Faith, desired It's Baptism and thus saved her soul. Our Lord then told the mystic: ***'Make this known to Father Augustine; it is a consolation that I wish to grant to his long sufferings, in order that he may everywhere bless and cause to be blessed the goodness of My Mother's heart and Her power over Mine.'***

A SHORT FORM OF CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

I (your name), a faithless sinner - renew and ratify today in Thy hands, O Immaculate Mother, the vows of my Baptism; I renounce forever satan, his pomps and works; and I give myself entirely to Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Wisdom, to carry my cross after Him all the days of my life, and to be more faithful to Him than I have ever been before. In the presence of all the heavenly court, I choose Thee this day for my Mother and Queen. I deliver and consecrate to Thee, as Thy servant, my body and soul, my goods, both interior and exterior, and even the value of all my good actions, past, present, and future; leaving to Thee the entire and full right of disposing of me, and all that belongs to me, without exception, according to Thy good pleasure, for the greater glory of God, in time and in eternity. Amen.

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