What is Marian consecration?

Consecration is the act of dedicating something to a sacred purpose. Marian refers to Mary, the most Blessed Virgin, and Mother of God. When we put the two terms together, we understand that Marian Consecration is the act of entrusting our souls to Mary. We look to Mary as our spiritual Mother and ask for her guidance to grow in holiness and deepen our relationship with Him.

Origin

People have long looked to Mary to grow closer to Jesus. In Jesus' last words on the cross, he told the disciple John to look to Mary as his Mother. Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "*Woman, behold, your son*." Then he said to the disciple, "*Behold, your mother***.**" And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. -John 19: 25-27

Jesus, in his final moments, points us to Mary. He showed us that through entrusting ourselves to Mary and allowing her to clothe us in her immense love, we might grow closer to Him.

Why consecrate yourself to Mary, Our Mother?

Many people will ask, why not just consecrate yourself to Jesus? Marian consecration is consecrating oneself to Jesus through Mary. Through Marian consecration, we know Jesus more fully through Mary's love for Him and the entire world.

Mary's intercession

As our Blessed Mother, Mary is our refuge, guide, and nurturer; she intercedes on our behalf so that we might live more like Christ and grow in holiness. Mary inspires us to fully say "yes" to God's will, no matter what each day brings. As St. Josemaría Escrivá said, "Love our Lady, and she will obtain abundant grace to help you conquer in your daily struggle."

As Scott Smith writes, "When we consecrate ourselves to Mary, we give her our entire lives as well as the merits of all our prayers. We give Mary all our works in order to belong more fully to Jesus. We also do this so that Mary can do far greater things with our small offerings. We give Mary *everything*, so she can present it all to Jesus."

Marian consecration is a commitment to Mary, Our Mother, to lead our hearts fully to Jesus. Mary, however, already has you wrapped in her love, well before you decide to prepare for the Act of Consecration formally.

How to pray in preparation for Marian consecration

1. **Make the Sign of the Cross.**

"*In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit*."

2. **Ask the Holy Spirit to help you pray.**

"*Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and kindle in them the fire of Thy love. Send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.*"

3. **Examine your conscience.**

Where have you noticed God in your life? Where might you need His mercy and grace?

4. **Meditate with Scripture or theological writings.**

You can use the readings of the day, stories of saints, or the text included on the parish website: www.stpaulviparish.org

5. **Let the closing prayer wash over you.**

"*Hail, O Star of the ocean, God's own Mother blest, ever sinless Virgin, gate of heav'nly rest.*"
(Ave Maris Stella prayer)

6. **Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.**

"*In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*"

Total Consecration
A Nine-day Preparation

DAY ONE- September 22

St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit
Breathe in me O Holy Spirit that my thoughts may all be holy;
Act in me O Holy Spirit that my works, too, may be holy;
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit that I love but what is holy;
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit to defend all that is holy;
Guard me then O Holy Spirit that I always may be holy.

Reading: Luke 1:26-38
In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing is impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Commentary
The Incarnation takes place in Mary's womb; the greatest event of history occurs when the Holy Spirit visits Mary at the Annunciation. The angel greets Mary with beautiful names and tells her she will be the Mother of the Messiah! Mary's generous response sets the tone of her whole life with Jesus. She is the first and best Christian, our example of giving an unqualified "yes" to God without knowing exactly what the future holds.

Reflection
By Christ's direct command from the Cross, "Behold your Mother," we are given the gift of Mary as our own mother who will lead us to her son, Jesus. Our consecration to her

confirms that we want her to be our guide to him! Our commitment makes us conscious of our responsibility to evangelize the world and imitate Mary.

As Scripture has it, Jesus remains the Mediator with God, but we go to Jesus and then to God with Mary, and with the whole Church. Thus, Mary continues her nurturing motherhood in every member of the Church!

The Words of St. Maximilian (Journal reflection: "Our Purpose," August 1940)
The aim of creation, the end of man himself, is the love of God, Creator and Father, an ever greater love, the divinization of man, his return to God from whom he came, union with God, a fruitful love. So that love for the Father might become even more perfect, infinitely more perfect, the love of the Son Jesus, made itself manifest. But so that love for the Son might burn more intensely and thus enkindle a still more ardent love for the Father, there has come to help us the united love of the Holy Spirit and of the Immaculata, the mother full of mercy, the Mediatrix of all graces, an earthly creature like ourselves, who strongly attracts hearts to herself and to her motherly heart.

The love of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit flames eternally; the love of the Father, Jesus and the Immaculata knows no imperfection. Only man (not always and not in all things) responds imperfectly to this love with his own love. To arouse that love for the Immaculata, therefore, by enkindling it in one's own heart, to communicate this fire to those who live close to us, to set on fire with this love all souls and each one in particular—those who live now and those who will live in the future, to make this flame burst forth ever more intensely and without restrictions in ourselves and all over the earth: such is our purpose. Everything else is just a means.

An effect resembles the cause that produced it. Consequently, every creature shows in itself some resemblance to God, the more perfect the creature is the more evident is this resemblance.

Even if we could establish thousands and thousands of degrees, each more perfect, each more spiritually pure than the last, there would still remain an infinite distance between even the most elevated of these degrees and the Source of Love itself. God bends down to his own creature and joins himself to it with a love that annihilates that whole infinite space; he counts his creature as part of his family, makes it one of his own offspring.

The soul is regenerated in the sacred waters of Baptism and thus becomes God's child. Water, which purifies everything over which it runs, is a symbol of her who purifies every soul that draws near to her. It is a symbol of the Immaculata, of her who is without stain. Upon one who is washed in this water the grace of the Holy Spirit descends. The Holy Spirit,

the divine Spouse of the Immaculata, acts only in her and through her; he communicates supernatural life, the life of grace, the divine life, the sharing in divine love, in divinity. The child of God, as a member of the divine family, has God the Father for father and the Mother of God for mother. Then one has the Son of God for brother and becomes God's heir and is joined to the Persons of this divine family through love. Nor is that all. The Son of God selects spouses from among souls; he unites himself with them in a conjugal love, and through him they become the mothers of many, many other souls.

Miraculous Medal Prayer

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all who do not have recourse to you, especially the enemies of the Church and all those recommended to you.

DAY TWO- September 23

St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit
Breathe in me O Holy Spirit that my thoughts may all be holy;
Act in me O Holy Spirit that my works, too, may be holy;
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit that I love but what is holy;
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit to defend all that is holy;
Guard me then O Holy Spirit that I always may be holy.

Reading: Luke 1:39-56
During those days Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." And Mary said: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever. Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

Commentary
Mary sets out on her first mission of evangelization—to her own family. The Holy Spirit, leads Elizabeth, as the text reads, to proclaim Mary "blessed" and the unborn John the Baptist to stir in her womb at Jesus' presence. Mary, deeply rooted in the Scriptures of Israel, joins her personal praise of God with the Jewish scriptures she knows so well. She identifies herself as one of God's "little ones," who humbly depend on God to defend and provide for them. Mary is the best example of all believers who trust God absolutely on their spiritual journey.

Reflection
Without any arrogance, but with a divinely inspired revelation, Mary predicts that all generations to come will call her "blessed," just as her cousin, Elizabeth, did. Her glory was

not of her own making, but God's gift. Her shrines at Czestochowa, Guadalupe, Lourdes, Fatima, Kibeho, and elsewhere testify to our human need to show love to our Mother.
It is a mistake to think that the purpose of the building of shrines is simply to glorify her; she who has already received the maximum glorification from God in heaven needs no glory from us! Rather, we need to venerate her as a model and celebrate her mysteries as companions to the mysteries of Jesus Christ.

The Words of St. Maximilian (Magazine article: "The Secret of Strength and Power," September 1925)
Sometimes one hears people complain: "I would like to correct myself; I would like to be better, but I just can't!" In history we read about great leaders and conquerors who were not capable of dominating their own evil inclinations. One such, for instance, was the celebrated Alexander the Great, who died a premature death because of his licentious living. When we look about us, we observe the disappearance of all morality, which is really frightening, especially among the young. Indeed, truly diabolical associations are being formed which include crime and debauchery in their program.

How can we counteract this? In such circumstances it might seem to be a sign of humility to recognize one's own powerlessness, just as when people say: "I can't correct myself!" But in reality, there is a secret sort of pride hidden there. All this shows is that they count on their own strength exclusively and think that they can do this or that, relying solely on their powers.

This is not true; it is a lie, because with our own strength alone, all by ourselves, without divine help, we are not capable of doing anything, absolutely anything (cf. Jn 15:5). What then should we do? Place ourselves totally, with unlimited trust, in the hands of divine mercy, of which Our Lady is by God's decree the personification. We must not trust in ourselves at all. We should fear ourselves yet entrust ourselves to her without restriction and turn to her like a child to its mother whenever we feel ourselves incited to evil. Then we shall absolutely not fail. The saints affirm that whoever turns to her in trust during all his life will certainly be saved.

(Magazine article: "More Thinking!", November 1925)
Of course a heart corrupted by sin is fearful of eternity and hence avoids thinking about it. What can one do, then? Refusing to think about reality does not make it go away, so we have to think about it.

Well, now, we have a mother in heaven, the personification of divine mercy, the Immaculata. So then, if the thought of your past life and former sins torments you, if you do not have the courage to look at what is awaiting you beyond the grave, consecrate yourself

totally and unreservedly to her. Entrust to her the whole problem of your salvation, your life, death and eternity. Confess your sins sincerely and trust fully in her. Then you will know what peace and happiness really are, a foretaste of paradise. And you will begin to yearn for it.

If you have never experienced all this, try it—see whether it is true or not—and you will find out.

Miraculous Medal Prayer
O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all who do not have recourse to you, especially the enemies of the Church and all those recommended to you.

DAY THREE- September 24

St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Breathe in me O Holy Spirit that my thoughts may all be holy;
Act in me O Holy Spirit that my works, too, may be holy;
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit that I love but what is holy;
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit to defend all that is holy;
Guard me then O Holy Spirit that I always may be holy.

Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him "Emmanuel," which means "God is with us." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.

Commentary

The sacred writer is careful to point out the virginal state of Mary by relating Joseph's experience with the angel, as well as quoting the ancient prophecy of Isaiah (7:14) about the "virgin with child." As head of the family, Joseph was brought into the mystery of Jesus' birth. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus is conceived in Mary; through Joseph, Mary's earthly spouse, Jesus is given his name, passed down through the ages. Meanwhile Mary keeps silence, despite the anguish she must have suffered, and trusts God to explain her situation to her husband.

Reflection

Right after the Gospels were written, the first Fathers of the Church stressed Mary's virginity as a keystone of Christian theology. St. Ignatius of Antioch, who was martyred in 116 AD, wrote in his Letter to the Ephesians that Mary's virginity, along with Jesus' birth and Passion, were the three great mysteries crying out to be proclaimed. Mary's story is part of the Good News!

The Words of St. Maximilian (Journal reflection: "The Immaculata is Yours—You are Hers," August 1940)
This is why the Immaculata is our mother:
1. This is the common conviction, the belief of the faithful.
2. Jesus gave her to us.
3. She is the mother of the Church's Head, that is, Jesus, hence the mother of his members.
4. She is mother of divine grace, the grace of the Holy Spirit; she is the Mediatrix of Graces, mother of the life of grace, of the spiritual life.
5. She is the mother of the Redeemer, hence also mother of the redeemed, Co-redemptrix.
6. She is the mother of the Creator, hence the Mother of all creatures as well (angels, men, and so forth).

So you, my child, must love her as your mother with all the generosity of your heart. She loved you enough to sacrifice God's Son for you. In the Annunciation she welcomed you with all graciousness as her child. She will make you like herself, will make you ever more immaculate, will nourish you with the milk of her grace. Just let yourself be guided by her; let yourself be ever more willingly shaped by her. Watch over the purity of your conscience; purify it in her love. Do not get discouraged, even if you sin seriously, repeatedly. An act of perfect love will purify you again. You belong to her as her property. Let her do with you what she wishes. Do not let her feel herself bound by any restrictions flowing from the obligations a mother has towards her own child.

Be hers—her property. Let her make free use of you and dispose of you without any limits for whatever purpose she wishes. Let her be your owner, your Lady and absolute Queen. A servant sells his labor. You, on the contrary, offer yours as a gift: your fatigue, your suffering, all that is yours. Beg her not to pay attention to your free will, but to act towards you always as she desires in full liberty.

Be her child, her servant, her slave of love in every way and under whatever formulation yet devised or which can be devised now or in the future. In a word, be all hers. Be hers to the point of being her soldier, so that others may become ever more perfectly hers, like you yourself and even more than you; so that all those who live and will live all over the world may work together with her in her struggle against the infernal serpent. Belong to the Immaculata so that your conscience, becoming ever purer, may be purified still more; become immaculate, as she is for Jesus, so you, too, may become a mother and conqueror of hearts for her.

Miraculous Medal Prayer

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all who do not have recourse to you, especially the enemies of the Church and all those recommended to you.

DAY FOUR- September 25

St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Breathe in me O Holy Spirit that my thoughts may all be holy;
Act in me O Holy Spirit that my works, too, may be holy;
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit that I love but what is holy;
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit to defend all that is holy;
Guard me then O Holy Spirit that I always may be holy.

Reading: Luke 2:22-40

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord," and to offer the sacrifice of "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons," in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord. Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying: Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel. The child's father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted (and you yourself a sword will pierce) so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer. And coming forward at that very time, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

Commentary

Mary and Joseph faithfully adhere to the Jewish law and consecrate Jesus to the Lord. The Holy Spirit shows the mystery of Jesus as Simeon holds Him and proclaims the presence of the light of the world and glory of Israel. Mary, he predicts, will be directly linked to the

suffering of the Messiah; she will be pierced by a sword. By the prophecy of Simeon the Holy Spirit prepares Mary to enter deeply into the redemptive process alongside her Son.

Reflection
John's Gospel often uses individuals as symbols of whole groups or even of all human beings. In the dialogue with "the Mother of Jesus" and "the disciple whom Jesus loved," John makes the disciple stand in for all the world and the Church. By Jesus giving Mary to John as his mother, she becomes the mother of the Church and the world.

As a daughter of Israel, Mary had the pain of seeing her homeland overrun by the Romans. As a child of God, she suffered from seeing her nation's leaders too concerned about ceremony and status. After Jesus left home, she had the uncertainty of poverty and fear for her Son's life. Then she saw her Son die horrifically but also enjoyed His resurrected presence for forty days. Following this, she witnessed the martyrdom of the early believers, the children of the Church of which she was the Mother. Yet she continued to press the work of evangelization, becoming the prime source of knowledge for the events of Jesus' life, keeping His memory alive, and strengthening the disciples.

The Words of St. Maximilian (Magazine article: "Purpose of the Militia of the Immaculata," December 1937)
Strictly speaking, the mission of the Militia of the Immaculata is the same as that of the Immaculata herself. As Co-redemptrix, in fact, she desires to extend to all humanity the fruits of the redemption effected by her Son and to do all she can to win back to Christ heretics, schismatics, Freemasons, Jews, etc. The sole desire of the Immaculata is to lift the level of our spiritual life until it reaches the height of sanctity. She does not expect to bring about these goals of apostolic activity directly, in person. Rather, she seeks to involve us in them. Consequently the essential condition that every member of the Militia of the Immaculata should effectively realize is self-offering to the Immaculata as her own.

We can consecrate ourselves to the Immaculata by making use of any formula, as long as we renounce our own wills and adhere to her orders, which are made known to us in the commandments of God and of the Church, in the duties of our state in life, and in internal inspirations. This activity of the Immaculata will be all the more effective the more that we for our part seek to deepen our spiritual formation. Consecration to the Immaculata, therefore, implies the necessity of working for the perfection of ourselves and of our inclinations. Only when we are perfectly obedient to the Immaculata shall we become worthy instruments in her apostolic hands. We shall be apostles by the example of our lives, apostles by offering others the help of our actions.

Miraculous Medal Prayer

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all who do not have recourse to you, especially the enemies of the Church and all those recommended to you.

DAY FIVE- September 26

St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Breathe in me O Holy Spirit that my thoughts may all be holy;
Act in me O Holy Spirit that my works, too, may be holy;
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit that I love but what is holy;
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit to defend all that is holy;
Guard me then O Holy Spirit that I always may be holy.

Reading: Luke 2:41-52

Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man.

Commentary

As devout Jews, the Holy Family makes the Passover pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but Mary and Joseph lose track of Jesus on the way home. Mary's heart sinks when she finds the Boy in dialogue with the religious teachers; she wonders whether this is the time He must leave home to begin His ministry—and she knows she must let Him go. She does not grasp His answer about His "Father's house." But she accepts the guidance of her Son and returns home, keeping the event in her memory and pondering it in her heart. How hard it must have been for Mary to know that her Son would have to leave her to suffer!

Reflection

Three times in the Infancy Narrative of Luke, Mary is said to reflect on the events in Jesus' life: the Nativity, the Presentation, and the Finding in the Temple. Mary is presented to us as the model of the Church's prayer life, and of living by the instruction of Jesus. After the pattern of Mary, the Church reflects on Jesus and cherishes what He said and did. After His being found in the Temple, Jesus is said to grow in wisdom and grace and age. It is obvious

that Mary also grew spiritually throughout her life. No doubt Mary taught her Son how to be a more effective person on the human level, how to relate with women in His ministry, how to express feelings of mercy and tenderness and compassion. Jesus in turn taught her, as His chief disciple, how to understand the Jewish Testament about His own life's work. He fully prepared her to surrender her mother's rights and let go of Him, and even to enter the mystery of His Passion at His side. Thus, God involved Mary in His design, His "secret plan" hidden for ages, but revealed in Christ in the fullness of time. We, too, are called to search out God's plan and Mary's share in that mystery of salvation. We do not choose her as mother or queen; God has already chosen her. We are simply the recipients of the gift of Mary's presence in the Church and in individual souls. By our total consecration, what begins in our lives as obedience to God's inspiration ends with joy and peace that we have made such a commitment!

The Words of St. Maximilian (Journal reflection: "The Immaculate is Yours—You are Hers," August 1940)

You are hers, so let yourself be guided by the Immaculata.

1. Feel sure that she permits whatever does not depend on your will for your own good, even if it arises from another evil will. She is the one who wants this to happen to you.
2. Meet a difficulty: a) by not paying attention to it as long as it neither helps nor hinders you in achieving your aim of drawing closer to her, of loving her, Jesus, and the Father, b) by making use of this circumstance—going along with it—if it can help you, or c) by opposing it, if it is an impediment to you. She wants you to act in this way.
3. In what religious obedience prescribes, her will, that of her Son, and that of the Father is obvious. Hence it must be infinitely wise, prudent, powerful and good, even if by the light of your reason you are not able to realize this, since your mind is limited and fallible.
4. By putting her will into practice you show genuine, substantial love for her, for Jesus and for the Father. You become holy.
5. Whatever the Father wills, the Son and the Holy Spirit will likewise. Jesus and the Immaculata will it, too; their wills never contradict each other.
6. In those matters where neither necessity nor obedience decides, act as you wish, seeking to please her. "Love, and do what you will," as St. Augustine said.
7. Keep your conscience pure; be careful not to fall. But if you do fall, hasten to rise again.
8. She will keep you from falling if you place your trust in her, not relying at all on yourself—if you do on your part what you can, not to fall, with her help.
9. The reason for a fall is over-confidence in one's own strength. The truth is that by ourselves we are nothing and can do nothing. Without her, the Mediatrix of Grace, we cannot keep from falling.
10. If you do fall, offer yourself to her right away, with the whole sorry business of your fall,

and beg for pardon. “Dearest ‘Mom,’ pardon me, and ask Jesus to pardon me, too.” Try to perform your next action in such a way as to give the greatest possible joy to her and to Jesus. Be sure that this act of love will completely wipe out your fault. In your next confession accuse yourself of that fault—but she, Jesus and the Father will already have forgotten it.

11. Love with your whole being, your whole will, your whole heart. But if you feel yourself dry and cannot elicit feelings of love, do not be concerned; this does not belong to the essence of love. If your will desires only to accomplish her will, be at peace, for you truly love her, Jesus and the Father.

12. Do not forget that holiness consists not in extraordinary actions, but in performing well your duties toward God, yourself and others.

13. No one, and not even the holiest state of life, can guarantee that you will sanctify your soul if you neglect the duties proper to that state. Try to discover in these duties the certain will of the Immaculata. By fulfilling this you will demonstrate your love for her and in and through her for Jesus and the Father. Indeed, prayer, penance, and other works, even though good in themselves, are of no value in her eyes if they hinder you in the proper carrying out of your duties. In these alone you find her will.

14. You can, without hesitation, use expressions like “I desire to fulfill the Immaculata’s will,” “May the Immaculata’s will be done,” “The Immaculata wanted it this way,” because she wills what Jesus wills, as Jesus wills what his Father wills. Thus her will differs in no way from that of her Son and of the Father.

Indeed, the very act of yielding yourself unreservedly to her will not only shows that you love the will of God, but also proclaims the truth that her will is so perfect that it deviates in nothing from the will of God. Thus you will give glory to God the Father and the Son, both for creating a creature as perfect as she is and for having made her his own mother.

Miraculous Medal Prayer

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all who do not have recourse to you, especially the enemies of the Church and all those recommended to you.

DAY SIX- September 27

St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit
Breathe in me O Holy Spirit that my thoughts may all be holy;
Act in me O Holy Spirit that my works, too, may be holy;
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit that I love but what is holy;
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit to defend all that is holy;
Guard me then O Holy Spirit that I always may be holy.

Reading: John 2:1-11
On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you." Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told them, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it. And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from (although the servers who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

Commentary
This text relates the first of Jesus' public signs, or miracles, which led to His disciples' believing in Him. He appears to move up the time of his charismatic ministry at the insistence of His Mother. Her motive is so human, so down-to-earth: to save a groom embarrassment at a time when he was scarcely thinking of his guests! Jesus adds His special touch to the party; He provides not just any wine, but a choice vintage. Jesus and Mary always bring joy and harmony to all our mundane activities if we give them access to our lives!

Reflection
Generally, John's Gospel mentions significant persons by name, but at Cana and Calvary, he simply uses the title, "Mother of Jesus." He alone records that Jesus addresses Mary as "woman," a title of respect in a formal situation. It was as if Jesus was formally denoting the place of Mary in the believing community for all time. In fact, He both opens and closes His public life with a dialogue with her: at Cana and Calvary. This surely indicates her

importance at critical junctures of human life, because the Gospels have significance for all times and all persons, beyond the simple narration of Jesus' personal history.

At Cana Mary does not ask for anything in particular, but just tells her Son about the lack of wine at the party, knowing He will take care of the need. At Calvary she accepts John and all of us as her children, once more without asking anything.

Will she do less for us today who wish to call her Mother? Does Jesus refuse her anything when she makes known our needs? Her only command in the Scriptures is, "Do whatever He tells you." She leads us to obey Christ. She does not judge us, but simply receives us.

When Jesus told us to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect, He must have meant for us to love others unconditionally and forgive—because who but God can forgive sins? So, Mary loves us unconditionally and forgives us when we forget her or turn away. But she is interested, as is God himself—for their wills are the same—in making us more worthy of grace.

Our ideal, then, as we consecrate ourselves totally, is to deepen that love relationship with her and carry the message of her power and mercy to everyone we know. First to our family and friends and co-workers, then to our parish and community and neighborhood, and finally we carry the message to all nations and all hearts.

The Words of St. Maximilian (Magazine article: "On the MI," December 1936)
The ideal of those who join [the Militia of the Immaculata] is to belong to the Immaculata, to be her servant, child, slave, property—in a word, to be hers under whatever title which love for her has ever thought of or will be ever capable of thinking to belong to her in all aspects during one's whole life, death, and eternity: to be hers without any restriction, irrevocably and forever hers; to become ever more totally hers, more perfectly hers, more like her, more one with her; to become in some fashion her very self; so that she may take possession of our souls more fully, may master them entirely, and in them and through them may think, speak, love God and others, and act. Such is the ideal: to become hers, to be "of the Immaculata."

Whoever becomes her possession in an increasingly perfect manner, in this fashion will exercise an ever greater influence in the milieu in which he is placed and will spur others on to know the Immaculata ever more perfectly, to love her ever more ardently, to draw ever closer to her, and to consecrate oneself to her to the point of becoming totally and without any limitation her very self. A soul of this kind, totally possessed by the Immaculata, will conquer an increasing number of souls for her, using every legitimate means, and will become not only her property, but her knight, a soldier of the Immaculata!

Miraculous Medal Prayer

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all who do not have recourse to you, especially the enemies of the Church and all those recommended to you.

DAY SEVEN- September 28

St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Breathe in me O Holy Spirit that my thoughts may all be holy;
Act in me O Holy Spirit that my works, too, may be holy;
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit that I love but what is holy;
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit to defend all that is holy;
Guard me then O Holy Spirit that I always may be holy.

Reading: Genesis 3:14-20

Then the Lord God said to the serpent: Because you have done this, you shall be banned from all the animals and from all the wild creatures; On your belly shall you crawl, and dirt shall you eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will strike at your head, while you strike at his heel. To the woman he said: I will intensify the pangs of your childbearing; in pain shall you bring forth children. Yet your urge shall be for your husband, and he shall be your master. To the man he said: Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree of which I had forbidden you to eat, Cursed be the ground because of you! In toil shall you eat its yield all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to you, as you eat of the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face shall you get bread to eat, Until you return to the ground, from which you were taken; For you are dirt, and to dirt you shall return. The man called his wife Eve, because she became the mother of all the living.

Commentary

This text provides the first promise of the Savior to come, the only salvation for the curse brought upon us by Adam and Eve. The snake, the symbol for Satan, will be crushed under the heel of Eve's offspring, who we know will be Jesus Christ, of course. The Church has also applied this passage to Mary, who is the enemy of Satan. Since we are Mary's children by adoption and consecration, the warfare is carried on today by us, her "offspring."

Reflection

Humankind's capacity for good was not entirely destroyed by original sin, only impaired. God made several covenants with the chosen people in the Old Testament and finally through Christ with the Church. The possibility of a sacred relationship with God flowered most perfectly when, in the fullness of time, Mary conceived the Savior. Her fullness of grace reversed the triple alienation of our first parents from God, one another, and nature itself. She has made it possible to restore paradise even on earth to those who establish harmony and reason in their own relationships.

Some Christians, hesitant in their commitment to Mary, point out that she appears in only a few passages of the Gospels, only once in the Epistles, and only mysteriously in Revelation. Yet it is not the number of passages, but their significance that counts. The New Testament is not a detailed biography of Jesus as such, but rather His Good News as proclaimed by the first believing community. That community recorded Mary's role at the significant times of Jesus' life, her modeling as the "ponderer" of sacred events, her consent to the Incarnation, her presence at the Cross and on Pentecost, her hearing the Word of God and keeping it, her symbolizing the perfect discipleship.

The totally consecrated person likewise ponders the Christian mysteries and joins his or her life to that of Jesus and Mary. Total consecration is also a "covenant" made by an act of the will. It does not lie in feeling, but in action.

The Words of St. Maximilian (Magazine article: "The First Condition," May 1922)
The aim of the Militia of the Immaculata is so difficult to achieve, that if we relied only on natural energy, activity, and effort, we could with reason doubt about the possibility of achieving it. Daily experience, in fact, teaches us that the Church's enemies have more abundant natural means, and often, as Christ has told us, they are wiser in their own ways than the children of light. Further, to obtain the conversion and sanctification of souls, grace is needed, whereas corrupt nature tends by its own inclination towards sin. Consequently, we can count solely on help from on high.

In this area the easiest and surest help is, by God's Will, the most holy Virgin Mary. To her the Church applies the words of the Holy Scripture: "She shall crush your head" (Gn 3:15), that is, of the infernal serpent. Of her the Church sings: "You have overcome all heresies in the whole world" (Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary).

Furthermore, history teaches that no conversion ever has taken place without a particularly evident presence of Mary's hand (all the saints have entertained a special devotion towards her), while Pope Leo XIII affirms in an encyclical on the Rosary: "It can be said that by a divine disposition nothing can be communicated to us from the infinite treasure of grace except through Mary. Thus just as no one can draw near to the Father save by means of the Son, so too ordinarily no one can draw near to Christ except by means of his mother."

Can we, therefore, set about our task of fulfilling the purpose of the Militia of the Immaculata in any other way than by consecrating ourselves unreservedly, totally, and forever to the most Blessed Virgin Mary Immaculate, to be instruments in her hands so that she herself may act in us and through us? A consecration of this kind, therefore, constitutes the essence of the Militia of the Immaculata.

Miraculous Medal Prayer

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all who do not have recourse to you, especially the enemies of the Church and all those recommended to you.

DAY EIGHT- September 29

St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit
Breathe in me O Holy Spirit that my thoughts may all be holy;
Act in me O Holy Spirit that my works, too, may be holy;
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit that I love but what is holy;
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit to defend all that is holy;
Guard me then O Holy Spirit that I always may be holy.

Reading: Mark 3:31-35
His mother and his brothers arrived. Standing outside they sent word to him and called him. A crowd seated around him told him, "Your mother and your brothers (and your sisters) are outside asking for you." But he said to them in reply, "Who are my mother and (my) brothers?" And looking around at those seated in the circle he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. (For) whoever does the Will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

Commentary
The family of Jesus interrupts His teaching. He remarks that even the closest physical kinship must give way to the spiritual kinship He is generating with his listeners. As the Mother of God, Mary must give up her primary place in His life so that others can know and follow Him. Her willingness to share and give her Son to everyone is a model for saying yest to God and living unselfishly.

Reflection
We cannot approach the mysteries of Mary without the illumination of the Holy Spirit, who scrutinizes all matters, even the deep things of God (1 Cor 2:10). If she seems remote, an untouchable figure on a pedestal, it may be because we have not striven to know her, talk with her in prayer, see how she combined an obscure humdrum life with great sanctity.

Surely Jesus continues His respect and love for her even in heaven and accepts her intercession for clients! Mary was without equal her obedience. She was the greatest and most gifted person as Virgin and Mother, but she was the most perfect disciple and co-worker because she pondered God's Word and lived by its implications. The totally consecrated person will strive to do the same.

The Words of St. Maximilian ("Who is She?" Sketches for a book, 1940)
Of herself, Mary is nothing, even as all other creatures are; but by God's gift she is the most perfect of creatures, the most perfect image of God's divine being in a purely human creature.

She comes, then, from the Father, through the Son and the Holy Spirit, as from her Creator who, out of nothing, calls into being creatures made in His own image. These creatures are limited; yet God likes to find in them the image of Himself which they bear. These beings, endowed with reason and free will, know and acknowledge that they come from God and receive everything from Him: what they are, what they can do, what they possess moment by moment. In return, they show Him their love, both on account of what they receive from Him, and because he, God, the infinite perfection, is worthy of infinite love.

The Immaculata never knew the slightest stain; in other words, her love was always full, without flaw. She loved God with all her being, and from the first instance of her existence her love united with God so perfectly that on the day of the Annunciation the Angel could say to her, "Full of grace! The Lord is with thee!" (cf. Lk 1: 28) She is, then, God's creature, God's image, God's child, and in all these respects she is all this in the most perfect manner possible among the ranks of mere creatures.

She is God's instrument. With full consciousness and total willingness, she allows God to govern her; she consents to his will, desires only what he desires, and acts according to his will in the most perfect manner, without failing. She makes perfect use of the powers and privileges God has given her, to fulfill always and in everything whatever God wants of her, purely for love of God. Her love for God brings her to such a level of union with him that she becomes the Mother of God. The Father confides to her his Son; the Son descends into her womb; and the Holy Spirit fashions out of her perfectly pure body the very Body of Jesus.

Miraculous Medal Prayer

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all who do not have recourse to you, especially the enemies of the Church and all those recommended to you.

DAY NINE- September 30

St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit
Breathe in me O Holy Spirit that my thoughts may all be holy;
Act in me O Holy Spirit that my works, too, may be holy;
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit that I love but what is holy;
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit to defend all that is holy;
Guard me then O Holy Spirit that I always may be holy.

Reading: John 19:16-28
Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus in the middle. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus the Nazorean, the King of the Jews."

Now many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that he said, 'I am the King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four shares, a share for each soldier. They also took his tunic, but the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top down. So they said to one another, "Let's not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it will be," in order that the passage of scripture might be fulfilled (that says): They divided my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots. This is what the soldiers did. Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, Woman, behold, your son. Then he said to the disciple, Behold, your mother. And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. After this, aware that everything was now finished, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, I thirst.

Commentary
The statements of dying persons tend to voice their important insights and final messages. In his last moments Jesus gives His Mother to all the world in the person of John. Then He "realizes everything was complete." Mary is His last blessing for us. He leaves her to instruct and pray for the Church which is being born out of His side on Calvary. Mary continues to echo, "Let it be done with me as you say."

Reflection

Some believers have difficulty in understanding Mary's mediation because the Bible mentions only one mediator, Christ. As we examine the double mystery of Jesus and Mary in redemption, we can use this formulation to make it clear: our spiritual journey to the Father is not so much a way of going from Mary to Jesus to the Father, but a way of going to Jesus with Mary to reach the Father.

It was Jesus' choice to associate his Mother with salvation; it is our choice to accept this relationship. Even now Mary continues her role to accompany us on the way of salvation; the easiest means of reaching the kingdom of heaven is to join Mary and to introduce her to others. She repays even the smallest reverence to her a hundredfold.

The Words of St. Maximilian ("During her Earthly Life." Taken from an undated manuscript for a book planned on Mary.)
And, so one day, the hour had come for her appearance in this world. She was born into this world in an unknown, hidden and poor home in a Palestinian village. Even the books of Scripture say little about her. We see her in the Scripture at the Annunciation, that moment when she became the Mother of God. We follow her journey to Bethlehem and there we marvel at the advent of God Made Man in a humble stable. Once again, full of concern, we see her on the way to Egypt, consider the difficulties of that voluntary exile, and finally the return to Palestine. We take note, too, of the careful search for the Child Jesus and his finding in the Temple at Jerusalem. Once again at the side of her Son, we find her in Cana of Galilee at the wedding feast, where, for the benefit of the newly married couple the Lord works his first miracle. Jesus goes out to preach and teach; she remains in her little home, worried about the fate that will be his. Mary appears again to accompany Jesus on his journey to Calvary and to the Cross and there, on Golgotha, she is near him at the hour of his death. It is she who holds close to her heart the wounded Body taken down from the Cross. We see her still again when the Holy Spirit is poured out upon her and the Apostles in the Upper Room, as she remains with the followers of her Son as a loving and good Mother, seeing to their preparation. Long decades pass before we can think of her passage into heaven. Though documents may be lacking for many of these years, we know that she spent many years at the side of the Beloved Disciple John.

Miraculous Medal Prayer
O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all who do not have recourse to you, especially the enemies of the Church and all those recommended to you.

October 1 at the Consecration

Prayer of Total Consecration by St. Maximilian Kolbe

O Immaculata, Queen of heaven and earth, refuge of sinners and our most loving Mother, God has willed to entrust the entire order of mercy to you. I, N..., a repentant sinner, cast myself at your feet humbly imploring you to take me with all that I am and have, wholly to yourself as your possession and property. Please make of me, of all my powers of soul and body, of my whole life, death and eternity, whatever most pleases you. If it pleases you, use all that I am and have without reserve, wholly to accomplish what was said of you: "She will crush your head," and, "You alone have destroyed all heresies in the world." Let me be a fit instrument in your immaculate and merciful hands for introducing and increasing your glory to the maximum in all the many strayed and indifferent souls, and thus help extend as far as possible the blessed kingdom of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus. For wherever you enter you obtain the grace of conversion and growth in holiness, since it is through your hands that all graces come to us from the most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

V. Allow me to praise you, O sacred Virgin.
R. Give me strength against your enemies.