

News from Our Lady of Lourdes Village

Militia Immaculata

Vernon, BC, Canada

Preparation for Consecration to Jesus through Our Lady

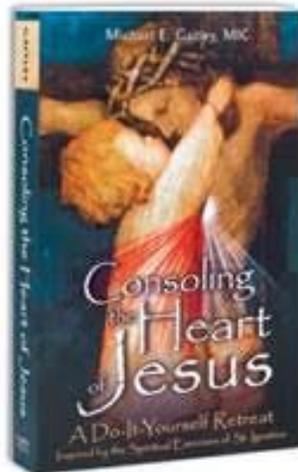
An important goal of MI is to bring as many as people possible to Our Lady. With this in mind, over time our village was promoting consecration to Jesus through Mary using the approach of St. Louis de Montfort which unfortunately was quite arduous. About four years ago, Father Michael Gaitley, MIC has published a method of preparation for Marian consecration which was modernized, easy to understand and live out. He took the best Marian teachings of St. Louis de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Blessed Mother Teresa, and St. John Paul II and presented them very simply and clearly. His retreat approach “33 Days to Morning Glory” was introduced into the parishes of St. James, Our Lady of the Valley and St. Benedict in Vernon area with the support of our parish priest Fr. Dale Normandeau. The retreat became an instant success with over 100 people going through it over a period of two and half years.

With Our Lady’s Help, Developing a Personal Relation with Jesus

The next retreat in Fr. Michael’s plan was specifically focused on building a personal relationship with Jesus. The retreat is ten weeks long and is called “Consoling the Heart of Jesus”. It is inspired by the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius. In simple terms, the retreat develops into an intimacy with Christ as a personal path to holiness. The retreat was first organized eighteen months ago within our MI Village and found to be very spiritually significant. An important feature of this retreat, as well as the previous one was the sharing aspect in groups. Participants were quite eager to share their spiritual experiences in a friendly setting. The word got out to the parish and then the retreat was offered last year to the faithful at large. To-date 35 faithful completed this retreat. The feedback in general from participants who went through it was that they experienced deep spiritual growth on a journey responding to the call to embrace more fully Divine Mercy of Our Lord.

These retreats have now been integrated into the regular parish spiritual calendar and will be offered on a regular basis annually. In general, participants who have taken the retreat once have a strong desire to keep renewing them on a regular basis. After each renewal additional spiritual benefits are experienced by each participant in their path to holiness.

Mark Lopianowski
May, 2015



Does Devotion to Mary take attention from the Son of God?

It's not that I would diminish reverence for Our Blessed Mother," Alfonse said to Maximilian, "but it seems to me that with the attention you give to the Virgin we are in danger of obscuring the role of Christ in the procuring of our salvation." "Not at all, Brother," Maximilian responded. "If we honor Mary, we honor Christ. How could we esteem Mary the Mother of Our Lord, without at the same time paying homage to her Son?" "Of course, this is correct," Alfonse answered, "but when you regard our practice and our prayer, I've the feeling that the reverence for Mary commands much more of our attention than does our meditation directed toward Jesus."

Maximilian said "Alfonse, Alfonse! How can you not perceive that when we elevate Mary we also elevate Christ. Mother and Son are not rivals for our attention and devotion. Our friary, Niepokalanow, (City of the Immaculate) is so named because of Mary's unique relationship with the Trinity. When we worship the Father, don't we also worship the Son and the Holy Spirit? When we worship the Father, don't we at the same time worship the first and third Persons of the Divine Trinity? When we honor Mary, we honor her as the Mother of God for she is the instrument by whom the Godhead chose to incarnate *The Word*. She is, in her role as the Mother of God, different from every other human being. The Holy Spirit is her spouse, and her intimate and unfathomable union with the Trinity makes her worthy of our reverence, and this reverence leads us into closer union with her Son. We never give more honor to Jesus than when we honor His mother, and we honor her simply and solely to honor Him all the more perfectly. We go to her only as a way leading to the goal we seek - Jesus, her Son. You need to read Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort.

He pointed out that we should be totally dedicated to Mary, and that we should be able to say with all the ardor of our heart, *Totus Tuus* (totally Thine). Louis Marie wrote, that *if devotion to Mary alienated us from Jesus, it must be rejected as a diabolical temptation*. He insisted that *the Son of God became Man for our salvation, but only in Mary and through Mary*, and that, therefore, reverence for her does not alienate us from Christ but rather leads us into deeper intimacy with the Savior. In giving of ourselves to Jesus through Mary's hands, we imitate God the Father who gave us His Son *only through Mary*, and *Who imparted His graces to us only through Mary*. God assembled the waters of the earth and called them seas. He culminated all His graces and called them Mary. *It was through the Blessed Virgin that Christ came into the world, and it is through her only that He must reign in the world*. Read Louis de Montfort and you'll gain a greater appreciation of Our Lady.

The Holy Father, Leo XIII, said, *As grace and truth come through Jesus Christ, and thus no one comes to the Father but through the Son, so no one comes to Christ except through Mary.*" *Mary's Knight* by Claude R. Foster pg.315-316.

A question that many Catholics and non-Catholics ask is whether devotion to Mary takes attention from her Son Jesus. The conversation below took place between St. Maximilian Kolbe and his brother Alfonse Kolbe, who was also a Franciscan friar with him at the same monastery in Poland.

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