



Tau Maria Franciscan Formation Meditation

***Tau Maria Franciscan
Rule of Life***

M Meditation – Marian Consecration

***I, _____, state your full name
vow and promise to Almighty God, to the Blessed Virgin Mary,
to Our Holy Father St. Francis, to all the saints and to you _____,
to observe for all the days of my life, the Rule of Tau Maria Franciscans, striving for
holiness by a life of total consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary, in prayer, penance,
poverty and loving service according to my state of life.***

Although our group is clearly a Marian association, the only mention we have of our Total Consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary, according to the form of St. Louis de Montfort is in our vow. This certainly does not betray a lack of affection or appreciation for Our Lady, after all we pray the Holy Rosary everyday; consecrate ourselves, our homes, and our fraternity to her everyday; and we say her name every time we identify ourselves as Tau Maria Franciscans.

We actually had to make a change to our vow to include the Total Consecration, and didn't get around to doing this until our 2011 Chapter, officially. How do we form ourselves in this consecration? What distinguishes us as "Marian Franciscans"? How does a Marian consecration form us into better Franciscans? After all, aren't all Franciscans, and for that matter all good Christians, Marian?

We all need to reflect on our own lives to answer this question. Yet, if our response is not as clear and obvious as we would like, perhaps we can go to the experts and see what it should look like.

*St. Louis de Montfort 33 day preparation: Theme for the Week—**Knowledge Of Self***

Prayers, examinations, reflection, acts of renouncement of our own will, of contrition for our sins, of contempt of self, all performed at the feet of Mary, for it is from her that we hope for light to know ourselves. It is near her, that we shall be able to measure the abyss of our miseries without despairing.

We should employ all our pious actions in asking for a knowledge of ourselves and contrition of our sins: and we should do this in a spirit of piety. During this period, we shall consider not so much the opposition that exists between the spirit of Jesus and ours, as the miserable and humiliating state to which our sins have reduced us. Moreover, the True Devotion being an easy, short, sure and perfect way to arrive at that union with Our Lord which is Christ-like perfection, we shall enter seriously upon this way, strongly convinced of our misery and helplessness. But how attain this without a knowledge of ourselves'?

Bi-monthly confessions, nightly examinations of conscience, or simple reflection on how well we "renounce our own will" are ways that our Rule of Life makes the first week of preparation a welcome friend rather than a gloomy stranger.



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O Lord Jesus Christ who said, "greater love than this no man has that a man lay down his life for his friends," through the intercession of St. Maximilian Kolbe, whose life illustrated such love, we beseech You to grant us our petitions(mention them here).

Through the Knights of the Immaculata movement, which Maximilian founded, he spread a fervent devotion to Our Lady throughout the world. He gave up his life for a total stranger and loved his persecutors, giving us all an example of unselfish love for all men --- a love which was inspired by true devotion to Mary.

Grant O Lord Jesus, that we too may give ourselves entirely without reserve to the love and service of our Heavenly Queen in order to better love and serve our fellowman in imitation of your humble servant, Maximilian. Amen. (Say 3 Hail Marys and a Glory be....)

This prayer of consecration, from the *Militia Immaculata*, which echoes our own and so many other expressions of love and devotion to Our Blessed Mother, reminds us that we are not in any way unique. Our Queen has chosen to draw us to her Son through Tau Maria Franciscans and we can rejoice in her affection.

[John Paul II in Crossing the Threshold of Hope, Arnoldo Mondadori Editori, 1994]

"Totus Tuus. This phrase is not only an expression of piety, or simply an expression of devotion. It is more. During the Second World War, while I was employed as a factory worker, I came to be attracted to Marian devotion. At first, it had seemed to me that I should distance myself a bit from the Marian devotion of my childhood, in order to focus more on Christ. Thanks to Saint Louis of Montfort, I came to understand that true devotion to the Mother of God is actually Christocentric, indeed, it is very profoundly rooted in the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity, and the mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption".

St. John Paul the Great was a great example, teacher, and prophet for the Total Consecration. We are blessed to have lived through his pontificate and seen the importance he put on his personal entrustment to the Blessed Virgin. It has been said that St. Louis taught of us the simplicity of the Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary; St. Maximilian taught us that we should choose and cherish this path to Our Heavenly Father, and St. John Paul II taught us that this is the path that the Father has chosen for all persons.

How blessed are we to have such a Mother, who would accept the gift of our prayers, penance, poverty, lives, loving service, and the merits of all our good works. Our Queen takes these gifts, the gifts of our little band of TMF's, puts them on the silver platter of her love and presents them to the Great King.