



**Tau Maria Franciscan Formation Meditation**

***Marian Consecration***

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**M Meditation – Marian Consecration**

***A New Day Dawns for Marian Consecration***

A divine exclamation point to a passionate plea came in the form of an image of the Blessed Mother crashing to the floor. Last June, [2010] in a talk to Marian novices, Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC, confessed that his devotion to Mary Immaculate had gotten "dry" and needed a "jumpstart."

"The prayers of novices are powerful, so please pray for me," he requested. It had been a long day. He sensed that some of the novices were getting fidgety.

"Guys," he said, "this is *serious*." At that moment, an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe that had hung for years on a wall of the retreat house on Eden Hill where they were meeting, fell with a crash and broke. The novices gasped.

Point taken.

They must have dedicated many prayers for Fr. Michael's intentions because a month later, while attempting to take some much-needed days off, he woke up with a fully formed idea of how to inspire (as well as jumpstart) Marian devotion to a degree he had never imagined. He spent that entire day writing, the evening reading and researching, and slept very little. He spent the following nine days on an identical schedule.

The result is the *new* book by Marian Press titled *33 Days to Morning Glory: A Do-It-Yourself Retreat in Preparation for Marian Consecration*.

Though he jokes that the prayers of the Marian novices "ruined" his vacation, Fr. Michael says writing the book has already resulted in many graces, including reviving his own Marian zeal and firing up "other tepid souls to a greater love for Mary."

In the simplest of terms, by means of Marian consecration, we give ourselves to Mary to be formed into the image of her Son, Jesus.

"This is why we're encouraging so many of our Marian Helpers to consecrate themselves to Mary, because she brings us most intimately into that encounter with Jesus," says Fr. Michael, the director of the Association of Marian Helpers and author of the critically acclaimed book *Consoling the Heart of Jesus* (Marian Press). "The Association of Marian Helpers is dedicated to knowing and proclaiming the mercy of God, and the key ally, the key person to help us, is Mary Immaculate."



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Saint Louis de Montfort (1673-1716), author of the seminal book on Marian consecration, *True Devotion to Mary*, described total consecration to Jesus through Mary as "the surest, easiest, and most perfect means" to becoming a saint. Long an enthusiastic promoter for Marian consecration, Fr. Michael says his book updates and modifies the 33-day regimen typically followed to prepare for such a blessing — the de Montfort Fathers' esteemed Preparation for Total Consecration.

"Updated, because since St. Louis de Montfort's death there have been even more insights into Marian consecration by great contemporary saints of Marian consecration, namely St. Maximilian Kolbe, Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and Blessed John Paul II," says Fr. Michael. "So it's an updated version of the consecration preparation, because it includes these other three Marian giants who have most dramatically added to the beauty and richness of consecration spirituality."

Also, instead of what can seem like a "33-day marathon" of litanies and prayer, Fr. Michael's book prescribes 33 days of "spiritual reading and prayerful pondering." The book is broken down so that readers spend seven days each on the Marian consecration teachings of St. Louis de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Blessed Mother Teresa, and Blessed John Paul II. Then the final five days are for review before reciting the Prayer of Consecration (preferably after receiving Holy Communion).

Why the phrase "morning glory" in the title?

"Because the act of consecrating oneself to Jesus through Mary marks the beginning of a gloriously new day," says Fr. Michael, "a new dawn, a brand new morning in one's spiritual journey. It's a fresh start, and it changes everything."

In writing the book, Fr. Michael says he grew in his appreciation for the special calling given by God to the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception, who have been entrusted to spread devotion to Mary Immaculate and the message of The Divine Mercy. As the Marians' efforts to spread Divine Mercy continue to reach millions around the world, Fr. Michael says his new book marks an "opening volley" in the Association of Marian Helpers' efforts to re-emphasize the spirituality of Mary Immaculate and her powerful role in salvation history.

Check out this book when doing you annual renewal of your own consecration to Jesus, through Mary. It is a joy to experience!