



Marian Consecration: Theological Foundations

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We can consecrate ourselves only to the one to whom we belong, and therefore, to God before all others. Consecration is nothing other than giving back to God what already is his by the Creation and Redemption.

Why, then, can we talk about consecration to the Immaculate? Because, in addition to God, we belong to her, for several reasons:

- Because she is the Mother of God, all creation is subject to her, as St. John Damascene says;
- Because she is our Mother and, because Mother, Coredeptrix and Mediatrix of all graces;
- Because she is, united to and under Jesus, the cause of all creation. That is to say, when God created the entire universe, he had in his mind a sublime model in view of which all was made. This model was the Word Incarnate, Jesus, and His Mother, the Virgin Mary. Every created beauty reflects their beauty in some way.

Consecration to the Immaculate rests on these pillars. Father Gabriele Roschini wrote that consecration to Our Lady is possible because Mary is Queen of heaven and earth; she is the Queen of all creation:

Mary is Queen by natural right, because all things were created for her glory as well as for the glory of Christ. Therefore, Mary, together with Christ, is the final cause, the *raison d'être* of all created things. In a word, she is the Queen of creation.

Moreover, Mary is Queen by right of conquest, because the human race has been redeemed, not only by Christ, the principal cause [of the Redemption], but also by

Marian Consecration opens the soul to all the beauty of creation and to the singular purpose God had in mind when he said "let there be light!" Within that light is the refulgence of Jesus and Mary who are revealed in time, so that mankind may aspire to a life imaging the Father's hallowed design. With Mary, the soul is perfected in Christ and is so loved by God in a measure otherwise unattainable.



Belle Verrière, 12th century, Our Lady as Queen of Heaven and Seat of Wisdom, Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Chartres, France. Courtesy of Fr. Lawrence Lew, O.P.

Mary, its secondary cause. The Blood of Christ and the tears of Mary Core-demptrix constituted, by divine will, the regenerating wave of humanity.

In addition, Mary Most Holy has been established by God as Dispensatrix of all divine graces. By virtue of these dogmatic prerequisites, one can rightly speak of consecration to the Immaculate. Through it we come to know of our belonging to her by reason of the above-mentioned titles, giving ourselves to her as if we belonged to ourselves (and not to her) in the first place, beseeching her to be pleased to receive from us what already, in fact, belongs to her.

The Byzantine theologian, Nicholas Cabasilas, sees in the most holy Virgin the span of the universe, when he writes: "The cause for which we exist and are men is to be found in the Most Blessed Virgin... To the Virgin is owed the existence of all created things—the heavens, the earth, the sun, everything that exists."

Now, to complete the picture of these theological foundation stones of consecration to the Immaculate, it is well to reflect upon Mary as exemplary cause—always subordinate to Christ—of the whole work of creation. We belong to Mary also for this reason, because we reflect the perfection of the Immaculate in our very person, our very being. This consideration brings to mind a beautiful page from the writings of Fr. Marciano Ciccarelli:

When the Almighty said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper



Bourton-on-the-Hill Church, Gloucestershire, UK, north aisle, triptych reredos by C E Bateman, painted panels by Sidney H Meteyard, 1935: detail - Annunciation. Courtesy of Rex Harris via Flickr

fit for him"—while he gave life to Eve, associate of Adam and mother of all the living in the natural order, he had in mind Mary, Associate of Jesus and Mother of all the living in the order of grace.

The Man and Woman who are the types, the models, the exemplars by which we have been created, are not Adam and Eve, from whom we have descended

according to flesh and blood; rather, they are Jesus and Mary, from whom we have that life by which we are born of God: the life of grace.

It goes without saying that Jesus and Mary are not equal. Jesus is the Masterpiece of the Father; He is perfect in Himself. But, from all eternity, the Virgin Mary has been united to Jesus in the mystery of one and the same decree of predestination. Therefore, her predestination is independent of all other creatures and depends only on that of Jesus. She is—with Him, and subordinate to Him—the exemplary and final cause of all creation.

Prior to angels and men, independently of sin, the love of the Creator looked upon these two—Jesus and Mary—the type of every perfection and cornerstone of all God's works *ad extra*. Prior to any other created thing, God willed and decreed Jesus Christ and His most Holy Mother. Or rather, God willed to create all things in Christ and Mary, as the end of their

existence. And so, before all created things, God willed the Mother and the Son.

All creatures are like so many mirrors, or voices, that reveal the goodness and beauty of Jesus and Mary. Blessed are we if we know how to read this great book of creation and discover the Immaculate, the spotless Flower that blossomed upon this earth, and Jesus, the blessed Fruit of her womb.