

DAY 31: Saint Mother Teresa

Three words summarize what we learned from Blessed Mother Teresa: (1) Thirst, (2) Heart, and (3) Covenant. Let's ponder each one in turn.

THIRST

... [Our Lady] was the first person to hear Jesus' cry "I Thirst" with St. John, and I am sure Mary Magdalen. Because Our Lady was there on Calvary, she knows how real, how deep is His longing for you and for the poor. Do we know? Do we feel as she? Ask her to teach Her role is to bring you face to face, as John and Magdalen, with the love in the Heart of Jesus crucified. Before it was Our Lady pleading with Mother, now it is Mother in her name pleading with you — "listen to Jesus' thirst."

Let us try in a special way to come as close as the human heart can come to the Heart of Jesus and try to understand as much as possible Jesus' terrible pain caused to him by our sins and His Thirst for our love. Thank God our Lady was there to understand fully the thirst of Jesus for love. She must have straight away said, "I satiate Your thirst with my love and the suffering of my heart."

So let us ask Our Lady to help us understand.

HEART

A key to Mother Teresa's understanding of consecration is "heart," specifically, the Immaculate Heart. Recall her two prayers to Mary, "Lend me your heart" and "Keep me in your most pure heart." Also, recall the importance of our imitating Mary's pondering heart. Let's start with the two prayers and then review Mary's heart-pondering attitude.

Lend me your heart. By this prayer, Mother Teresa was asking Our Lady to give her the love of her heart. In other words, she says "Mary, help me to love with the perfect love of your Immaculate Heart." Remember, Mother Teresa's passionate desire was to satiate the thirst of Jesus for love, and she wanted to do this in the best possible way. What better way to love Jesus than with the perfect, humble, immaculate heart of his mother? Here, Mother Teresa found the secret to living out her vocation to the full: "Mary, lend me your Immaculate Heart."

Keep me in your most pure heart. Or, stated more fully, one prays, "Immaculate Heart of Mary, keep me in your most pure heart, so that I may please Jesus through you, in you, and with you." This part of Mother Teresa's consecration to Mary is the most profound. She's not just asking for Mary's heart to be in her but for her to be in Mary's heart! So, this is a prayer to love Jesus through Mary, in Mary, and with Mary. This is something more than simply having Mary lend us her heart. To understand this and live it requires a loving

dependence and profound union with Mary. This is expressed more fully in the next section "covenant."

Pondering heart. Mother Teresa developed an "attitude of gratitude" by following the example of Mary who was always "pondering in her heart" the "good things" that God was doing in her life (see Luke 2:19, 51). Specifically, Mother Teresa followed this example through her fidelity to the examination of conscience. In other words, at the end of each day, she would ponder in her heart all the good things God had done for her that day and would reflect on how she was or was not fully responding to his love.

COVENANT

Moved by an ardent desire to live in the closest union with you [Mary] possible in this life, so as to more surely and fully arrive at union with your Son; I hereby pledge to live the spirit and terms of the following Covenant of Consecration as faithfully and generously as I am able.

MARY'S DUTIES

1. To give of her spirit and heart.
2. To possess, protect, and transform me.
3. To inspire, guide, and enlighten me.
4. To share her experience of prayer and praise.
5. Responsibility for my sanctification.
6. Responsibility for all that befalls me.
7. To share with me her virtues.
8. To provide for my spiritual and material needs.
9. Union with her heart.
10. To purify me and my actions.
11. Right to dispose of me, of my prayers and intercessions and graces.
12. Total freedom in and around me, as she pleases in all things.

MY DUTIES

1. Total gift of all I have and am.
2. Total dependence on her.
3. Responsiveness to her spirit.
4. Faithfulness to prayer.
5. Trust in her intercession.
6. Accept all as coming from her.
7. Imitate her spirit.
8. Constant recourse to her.
9. Remembrance of her presence.

10. Purity of intention; self-denial.
11. Right to avail myself of her and her energies for the sake of the kingdom.
12. Right to enter into her heart, to share her interior life.

Today's Prayer:

Spend the day pondering Teresa's Marian teaching as it is summarized by these three words: Thirst, Heart, and Covenant.