

Marians of the Immaculate Conception and EWTN presents

The Divine Mercy Cenacle



LESSON TWELVE

Mary, Mother of Mercy

1. Mary and the Congregation of Marians of the Immaculate Conception

The Congregation of Marians of the Immaculate Conception was founded by Fr. Stanislaus of Jesus Mary Papczynski in Poland in 1673. In their devotion to the Blessed Mother, the Marians focus, in a special way, on the mystery of her Immaculate Conception. They began to promote this truth concerning Our Lady some two hundred years before the official proclamation of the dogma! The Venerable Servant of God, Father Stanislaus, wrote, "I believe everything that the holy Roman Church believes...but first of all I proclaim that the Most Holy Mother of God, Mary, was spotless from original sin, from the moment of conception."

The privilege of the Immaculate Conception was precious to Fr. Stanislaus. He talked and wrote about it. He placed great confidence in the Immaculate Mary's powerful intercession. He obtained extraordinary graces for many with his prayer. Especially efficacious was his short invocation to the Immaculate Lady: May the Virgin Mary's Immaculate Conception be our health (salvation) and our protection. Like a knight of old who pledged to defend the honor of Our Lady, Fr. Stanislaus made a vow of blood to lay down his life, if necessary, in honor of Mary's Immaculate Conception. History shows that he kept his vow, not only in the living of his life, but in the founding of a religious order dedicated to promoting the Immaculate Conception. The Congregation of Marians of the Immaculate Conception was the first men's religious order founded in Poland and the first men's community in the Church dedicated to the Immaculate Conception. If you wish to know more about Fr. Stanislaus and his community, the Marians of the Immaculate Conception, you may visit www.marian.org.

2. Mary's role in St. Faustina's life

St. Faustina had a very tender and personal relationship with Our Lady from her youth. Mary was her special Mother. She entrusted all her needs to her, knowing that she always hears our prayers and responds to us with grace given by her Son. Inspired by our Lady, and in imitation of her "yes" to God, St. Faustina desired only to do God's will, as she records in her Diary "From today on my own will does not exist" (372).

Christ and His sufferings borne out of love for us and for our salvation, was at the heart of St. Faustina's life and spirituality. Yet Our Lady's life of love of Her Son and her willing participation in His sufferings, was also a constant source of inspiration for St. Faustina. She frequently meditated on Our Lady's life, especially those moments reflected in the seven sorrows (Simeon's prophesy - Lk 2:32, the flight into Egypt - Mt 2:13-14, the loss of Jesus in the temple - Lk 2:43-45, the meeting of Jesus and Mary on the road to Calvary, the Crucifixion - Jn 19:25-27, the taking down of Jesus' body from the

Cross, and His burial). By remaining close to our Lady, St. Faustina wished to learn from her how to love Jesus, how to behold Him, how to live in His presence, and how to share willingly in His sufferings.

Our Lady was St. Faustina's constant companion and guide. Often she appeared to her with words of instruction and encouragement, inviting her to have a deeper trust in God, to pray without ceasing, to remain humble and faithful in all things. On one occasion in the evening Our Lady appeared to St. Faustina and said, "Your lives must be like mine: quiet and hidden, in unceasing union with God, pleading for humanity and preparing the world for the second coming of God" (Diary, 625).

St. Faustina strove to incorporate these requests of Our Lady into her life. In her deep trust, unceasing desire to remain in union of love with God, and her great charity toward all people, especially the needy, St. Faustina can be a wonderful role model for Eucharistic Apostles, as we strive to trust in God and live lives of mercy.

3. Our Lady's role in our formation

Our Lady is our loving and merciful Mother that brings us to Christ her Son. She knows us and wishes to be there for us. She desires to assist us on our journey to heaven by her powerful intercession and grace flowing from her Son. She longs to console us with a message of hope when despair overwhelms us, and encourages us to pray, to persevere and love when trials abound. She always leads us to her Son, so that we may find true healing and forgiveness. We can never be afraid that by coming to Mary and seeking her intercession we diminish our trust in God. The hearts of Jesus and Mary are so united that they are one in love and one in God's holy will. The more we love our Lady, the more we love Jesus, her Son, for her whole life was totally dedicated to Him and to the Father's Will. We see in Scripture how Jesus loved her. He seems to even hurried up the "hour of salvation" at Cana and performed His first miracle at His mother's request, even after telling her that it was not yet time (Jn 2:1-11).

4. How can we love Our Lady more?

We can show deep love for Our Lady when we love her Son and are faithful to Him. We can also show our love by praying to her, seeking her intercession, especially that we may love her Son more each day. We can likewise show our love for our Lady by consecrating and entrusting ourselves to Her, so that we may receive her special motherly assistance and protection. Finally, we can express our love for her by emulating her life of love of Jesus and trust in the Father's Will. We can apply her life of faith and trust, her actions of love and service, and her attitude of kindness to our own life. Everyone, especially those in greater need of God's protection and mercy can receive great grace when they imitate Our Lady and respond to God in trust saying: "Let it be done to me according to Your word."

5. Why is Mary considered the Mother of Mercy?

Mary, in being preserved from the original sin from the first moment of her conception by God's singular gift of grace in view of the merits of Christ Jesus, and in being chosen to be the Mother of Divine Son, is the fullest recipient of God's infinite and

incomprehensible mercy. For this she proclaims the greatness and mercy of God in her Gospel canticle (Lk 1:46-55). Our Lady is the Mother of Jesus, our Merciful Savior. He is the Divine Son and the incarnation of Divine Mercy. In the Diary Jesus proclaims: "I am Love and Mercy Itself" (1273). So, as the Mother of Jesus, who is Mercy Itself, Our Lady is also the Mother of Mercy. In the tenderness of her merciful heart Mary hears the cries of all who are broken by sin and in pain, and she offers them the healing balm of her Son's mercy and forgiveness.

To learn more about The Divine Mercy message and devotion, the Marians of the Immaculate Conception, and Eucharistic Apostles of The Divine Mercy visit us online at www.thedivinemercy.org or call 1-800-462-7426.