

Mary calls, the Popes answer

In successive years, a few Popes answered to this appeal of the Virgin.

In the apparitions of July 13, 1917, Our Lady, at Fatima, expressly asked the consecration of Russia to Her Immaculate Heart.

In 1938 Pius XII consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary: *“To You, to Your Immaculate Heart we, in this tragic hour of human history, entrust, place once more, consecrate, not only the Holy Church, but also the entire world torn by ferocious divisions.”*

In 1952, while the war raged in Korea, he repeated the consecration of the world and of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Paul VI, in the pilgrimage to Fatima on May 13, 1967, invited *“all the children of the Church to personally renew their consecration to the Immaculate Heart of the Mother of the Church and to live this most noble act of cult with a life ever more conformed to the Divine Will.”*

John Paul II, hospitalized at the Policlinico Gemelli, reflecting on the attempted assassination of May 13, 1981, understood that the event was tied to Fatima and was convinced that *“a hand, that of the attacker, had fired and another hand had deviated the bullet.”* He wanted to understand the third secret of Fatima and immediately thought of the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. He wrote a prayer that he defined “Act of Entrustment,” to be celebrated in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, in Rome, on June 7 1981.¹

In occasion of his visit to Fatima, **May 13, 1982**, he said: *“Consecrating the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary means to draw near, through the intercession of the Mother, to the same fount of life, bursting forth on Golgotha...it means returning to stand beneath the cross of the Son. More still: it means consecrating this world to the wounded Heart of the Savior, bringing again to the same fount of its Redemption...Consecration to Mary’s Heart means to get to Jesus by the shortest way, to the Son through the Mother, to be able to live with Him a personal experience of friendship and of love.”*

On March 25, 1984, in Saint Peter’s square, the Pope, in spiritual union with all the Bishops of the world gathered together, once again entrusted man and the people to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This solemn and universal act of consecration was considered by Sister Lucia, in a letter of November 8, 1989, corresponding to the will of Our Lady.

¹ Solemnity of Pentecost, day chosen to remember the 1600th anniversary of the first Council of Constantinople and the 1500th anniversary of the Council of Ephesus.

Benedict XVI, May 13, 2010, the anniversary to the first apparition, had entrusted the world to Mary. His is this splendid reflection:

“With the human family ready to sacrifice its most holy ties on the altar of egoisms of nations, race, ideologies, groups, individuals, came our blessed Mother from Heaven, offering herself to place in the heart of all who entrust themselves to her, the Love of God that burns in hers.”

In the prayer of the entrustment of priests, he prays:

“Mother of the Church, we priests wish to be pastors that don’t pasture themselves, but give themselves to God for their brothers, finding in this their happiness. Not only by words, but with life, we wish to humbly repeat, day by day, our “here I am” ...²

² Complete version. Cfr. *Act of entrustment*, Fatima, May 13 2010

Pope Francis solemnly opened on **October 12 2013**, the Marian Day in Saint Peter’s square, in front of the statue of Our Lady, that came from Fatima.

Why does the Virgin ask us to entrust ourselves to her Immaculate Heart? Her Heart, under which she carried the Son of God, **is the symbol and sign of total love**, on the example of the love of Christ.

Mary asks that we entrust ourselves to her Immaculate Heart because only God and his Word are in it, as we can see from the *Magnificat*, that is a mosaic of texts taken from the Old Testament. ⁴ None of the verses is original. The texts are multiple, but not chosen at random. That which could be considered a limit-in the sense that Mary doesn’t speak her own words-becomes a proposal for us: Mary prays and sings God with His words! The song of the *Magnificat* reveals the great familiarity of the mother of Jesus with the Scriptures.

When a person speaks, what is borne in the heart is spoken. So, when Mary speaks she doesn’t discuss about the faith, nor useless intellectual talk, but tells of her experience with God, that is, what God did in her life and that of his people. ²

We entrust ourselves to her Heart to repeat with Her our “Here I am” and with enthusiasm turn to the Mother with these words:

“O Mary, you who are all immersed in God, beg from God, for us, a totally renewed heart, that loves God with all its strength and that serves humanity as you did.”

Let us be guided by Mary.

May her Immaculate Heart be our refuge and the way that she leads us to Christ.

³ The event, that is part of the Year of Faith, coincides with the last apparition at Fatima, October 13 1917.

⁴ Cfr. 1 Sam 2: 1-10; Ez 15, 1ss, and many others.

⁵ Meaningful to this, is the reflection that Benedict XVI offers us in the post synodal apostolic exhortation *“Verbum Domini”*, n. 28, pgs. 59-60.

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