

Ongoing Formation (5)

Reflection on last month's resolution:

Topic Devotion to Mary



To embrace Mary, as Francis did, with an inexpressible and indescribable love and trust. Because of this love and trust, Francis made Mary the Advocate and Queen of our Order. To hold Mary in the highest esteem as our Queen and Mother. (Padre Pio Centre)

Rule: Chapter Two Rule 9

The Virgin Mary, humble servant of the Lord, was open to his every word and call. She was embraced by Francis with indescribable love and declared the protectress and advocate of his family. The Secular Franciscans should express their ardent love for her by imitating her complete self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently.

Constitutions: Article 16.1, 16.2

1. *Mary, Mother of Jesus, is the model of listening to the Word and faithfulness to vocation; we, like Francis, see all the gospel virtues realized in her. The brothers and sisters should cultivate intense love for the most Holy Virgin, imitation, prayer and filial abandonment. They should manifest their own devotion with expressions of genuine faith, in forms accepted by the Church.*
2. *Mary is the model of fruitful and faithful love for the entire ecclesial community.*

Secular Franciscans and their fraternities should seek to live the experience of Francis, who made the Virgin the guide of his activity.

Scripture: Luke 1:28-32, 38

'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus.

I am the handmaid of the Lord, said Mary. Let what you have said be done to me.

Writings of St Francis:

Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Hail, O Lady, Holy Queen, Mary, holy Mother of God, who are the Virgin made Church,

Chosen by the most Holy Father in heaven whom he consecrated with His most holy beloved Son and with the Holy Spirit the Paraclete, in whom there was and is all fullness of grace and every good.

Hail His Palace! Hail His Tabernacle! Hail His dwelling!

Hail His Robe! Hail His Servant! Hail His Mother!

Church documents:

God is Love Paragraph 41

Outstanding among the saints is Mary, Mother of the Lord and mirror of all holiness. In the Gospel of Luke we find her engaged in a service of charity to her cousin Elizabeth, with whom she remained for "about three months" so as to assist her in the final phase of pregnancy.

"Magnificat anima mea Dominum" she says on the occasion of that visit, "My soul magnifies the Lord". In these words she expresses her whole program of life: not setting herself at the centre, but leaving space for God, who is encountered both in prayer and in service of neighbour – only then does goodness enter the world. Mary's greatness consists in the fact that she wants to magnify God, not herself.

Points to ponder:

1. What qualities of Mary are especially attractive to you? Why?
2. What role does Mary have in our lives and in the life of the Church?

Resolution: For the next month, what is one quality of Mary that you could work on in your own life?