

in her, and loses himself to her. He belongs to Mary and Mary belongs to him. He can say ardently with our Lord Jesus Christ himself: *All I have is yours, and all you have is mine.* (*Totus tuus ego sum, et omnia mea tua sunt*; John 17:10).



Meditation

For this third week, Saint Louis Marie says, “They should endeavor in all their prayers and works to acquire an **understanding of the Blessed Virgin and ask the Holy Spirit for this grace.** They may read and meditate upon what we have already said about her. They should recite the Litany of the Holy Spirit and the *Ave Maria Stella* [Hail, Star of the Sea]. In this week you can **also offer prayers that can be habitually done** (Morning Offering, praying three Hail Mary’s, the *Angelus* ...) and (as possible) reciting the Holy Rosary.”

- 1) Place yourself in the presence of God.
- 2) Ask the grace of the Holy Spirit to know the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- 3) Exhortation to Trust by Saint Bernard
- 4) The Litany of the Holy Spirit
- 5) Conclude praying the Ave Maris Stella

Twenty Sixth Day

Treatise of True Devotion to the Virgin Mary [183-190]

THE LIFE OF CONSECRATION EXPRESSED IN A BIBLICAL FIGURE

In order to better illustrate Marian Consecration, Saint Louis Marie uses the striking allegorical figures of **Rebecca and Jacob**

from the Old Testament. This shows the Blessed Virgin's concern for her children as Rebecca cared for Jacob her beloved son. Jacob, son of Isaac and grandson of Abraham, received his father's blessing through the skillful work of his mother Rebecca. The entire biblical account of Rebecca and Isaac and their two sons, Jacob and Esau, is chapter 27 of the book of Genesis. Now, we will tell the biblical story as it is recounted by St. Louis Marie and then present a summary of his explanation.

Biblical Story of Rebecca and Jacob

Several years after Esau had sold his birthright to Jacob, Rebecca, their mother, who loved Jacob tenderly, secured this blessing for him by a holy stratagem full of mystery for us.

Isaac, realizing that he was getting old, wished to bless his children before he died. He summoned Esau, who was his favorite son, and told him to go out hunting and bring him something to eat, in order that he might then give him his blessing.

Rebecca immediately told Jacob what was happening and sent him to fetch two small goats from the flock. When Jacob gave them to his mother, she cooked them in the way Isaac liked them. Then she dressed Jacob in Esau's clothes which she had in her keeping, and covered his hands and neck with the goat-skin. The father, who was blind, although hearing the voice of Jacob, would think that it was Esau when he touched the skin on his hands.

Isaac was of course surprised at the voice which he thought was Jacob's and told him to come closer. Isaac felt the hair on the skin covering Jacob's hands and said: *The voice is from Jacob, but the hands are from Esau.* (Gen 27:22) After having eaten, Isaac kissed Jacob and smelled the fragrance of his scented clothes. He blessed him and called down on him the dew of heaven and the fruitfulness of earth. *God grant you dew from heaven and fertile lands.* He made him master of all his brothers and concluded his blessing with these words: *Whoever curses you is cursed and who blesses you be full of blessings.*

Isaac had scarcely finished speaking when Esau came in, bringing what he had caught while out hunting. He wanted his father to bless him after he had eaten. The holy patriarch was shocked when he realized what had happened. But far from retracting what he had done, he confirmed it because he clearly saw the finger of God in it all. Esau began to protest loudly against the treachery of his brother. He then asked his father if he had only one blessing to give. In so doing, as the early Fathers point out, Esau was the symbol of those who are too ready to imagine that there is an alliance between God and the world, because they themselves are eager to enjoy, at one and the same time, the blessings of heaven and the blessings of the earth. Isaac was touched by Esau's cries and finally blessed him but only with a blessing of the earth, and he subjected him to his brother. Because of this Esau conceived such a venomous hatred for Jacob that he could hardly wait for his father's death to kill him. And Jacob would not have escaped death if his dear mother Rebecca has not saved him by her ingenuity and her good advice.

Esau is a Figure of the Condemned

According to the early Fathers and the interpreters of Holy Scripture, Jacob is the type of Our Lord and of souls who are saved, and Esau is the type of souls who are condemned. Rebecca, who is mother of both children, is a figure of the Virgin Mary.

Esau

1) Esau, the elder brother, was strong and robust, clever, skillful with the bow and very successful at hunting.

Conduct of sinners

1) They rely upon their own strength and skill in temporal affairs. They are very energetic, clever and well-informed about things of this world but very dull and ignorant about things of heaven.

Esau

2) He seldom stayed at home and, relying only in his own strength and skill, worked outside the house.

Conduct of sinners

2) They are never or very seldom at home, in their own house, that is, in their own interior, the inner, essential abode that God has given to every man to dwell in, that is, **in the secret of their conscience**. They do not love retreat, spirituality, or inner devotion at all. They despise pious people.

Esau

3) He never went out of his way to please his mother Rebecca, and did little or nothing for her.

Conduct of sinners

3) The reprobate care little or nothing about **devotion to Mary**. It is true that they do not really hate her. Indeed, they even speak well of her sometimes. They say they love her and they practice some devotion in her honor. Nevertheless they cannot bear to see anyone love her tenderly, for they do not have for her any of the affection of Jacob; they find fault with the honor which her good children faithfully pay her. They think this kind of devotion is not necessary for salvation, and as long as they do not go as far as hating her or openly ridiculing devotion to her they believe they have done all they need to win her good graces. Because they recite or mumble a few prayers to her **without any affection and without even thinking of amending their lives**, they consider they are our Lady's servants.

Esau

4) He was such a glutton and so fond of eating that he sold his birthright for a dish of lentils.

Conduct of sinners

4) The condemned sell their birthright, that is, the joys of Paradise, for a dish of lentils, that is, for the pleasures of the world. They laugh, they drink, they eat, they have a good time, gamble, without taking any more trouble than Esau to make

themselves worthy of their heavenly Father's blessing. In short, they think only of this world, love only the world, speak and act only for world and its pleasures. For a passing moment of pleasure, for a fleeting wisp of honor, for a piece of hard earth, they barter away their baptismal grace, their robe of innocence and their heavenly inheritance.

Esau

5) Like Cain, he was extremely jealous of his brother and persecuted him relentlessly.

Conduct of sinners

5) They cannot stand the elect. They despise them, criticize them, mock them, insult them, rob them, deceive them, impoverish them, and trample them into the dust. Meanwhile, they themselves are making fortunes, enjoying themselves, rising to power and living in comfort.

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- 1) **Place yourself in the presence of God.**
- 2) **Ask the grace of the Holy Spirit to know the Blessed Virgin Mary.**
- 3) **Exhortation to Trust by Saint Bernard**
- 4) **The Litany of the Holy Spirit**
- 5) **Conclude praying the Ave Maris Stella**

Exhortation to Trust

by Saint Bernard

“Oh! You, whoever you are, who feel far from land, dragged by the waves of this world, in the midst of storms, if you do not want to capsize, do not take your eyes off the light of this Star.

If the wind of temptation rises, if the stumbling block of tribulations gets in your way, look at the Star, invoke Mary.

If you are unbalanced by the agitations of pride, of ambition, of murmuring, of envy, look at the Star, invoke Mary.

If anger, avarice, impure desires shake the fragile vessel of your soul, raise your eyes to Mary.

If, disturbed by the memory of the enormity of your crimes, confused before the awkwardness of your conscience, terrified by the fear of Judgment, you begin to let yourself be swept away by the whirlwind of sadness, to throw yourself into the abyss of despair, think of Mary.

In the dangers, in the anxieties, in the doubts, think of Mary, invoke Mary.

May her name never depart from your lips, never leave your heart; and to reach the relief of her intercession, do not neglect the examples of her life.

Following her, you will not get lost; praying, you will not despair; thinking about her, you will avoid all mistakes.

If she sustains you, you will not fall; if she protects you, you will have nothing to fear; if she leads you, you will not get tired; if she is favorable to you, you will reach the end. And so you will verify, from your own experience, how right it was said: *And the name of the Virgin was Mary.*”

(Saint Bernard, *Super missus*, 2nd homily, 17)

Litany of the Holy Spirit

Lord have mercy, *Lord have mercy*
Christ have mercy, *Christ have mercy*
Lord have mercy, *Lord have mercy*
Christ hear us, *Christ hear us*
Christ graciously hear us, *Christ graciously hear us.*

God the Father of heaven, *have mercy on us.*
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, *have mercy on us.*
God the Holy Spirit, *have mercy on us.*
Holy Trinity, one God, *have mercy on us.*

(Repeat after each invocation: Have mercy on us)

Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son, ***have mercy on us.***
Spirit of the Lord, who at the beginning of creation, breathed over the waters, made them fertile.
Spirit under whose inspiration God's saints spoke.
Spirit whose unction teaches us everything.
Spirit who gives testimony of Jesus Christ.
Spirit of truth who inspires everything.
Spirit who descended upon Mary.
Spirit of the Lord who fills all the earth.
Spirit of God who dwells in us.
Spirit of wisdom and understanding.
Spirit of counsel and fortitude.
Spirit of knowledge and piety.
Spirit of fear of the Lord.
Spirit of grace and mercy.
Spirit of virtue, esteem and sobriety.
Spirit of faith, hope, love and peace.
Spirit of humility and chastity.
Spirit of goodness and meekness.
Spirit of all the forms of grace.
Spirit who scrutinizes the divine depths.

Spirit who prays for us with inexpressible pleading.
Spirit who descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove.
Spirit by whom we receive new birth.
Spirit who fills hearts with charity.
Spirit of adoption of the sons of God.
Spirit who appeared over the Disciples in the form of tongues of fire.
Spirit with which the Apostles were filled.
Spirit who gives to each one according to His will.

Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Ave Maris Stella

1. Hail, bright star of ocean,
God's own Mother blest,
Ever sinless Virgin,
Gate of heavenly rest.

2. Taking that sweet Ave
Which from Gabriel came,
Peace confirm within us,
Changing Eva's name.

3. Break the captives' fetters,
Light on blindness pour,
All our ills expelling,
Every bliss implore.

4. Show thyself a Mother;
May the Word Divine,
Born for us thy Infant,

Hear our prayers through
thine.

5. Virgin all excelling,
Mildest of the mild,
Freed from guilt, preserve us,
Pure and undefiled.

6. Keep our life all spotless,
Make our way secure,
Till we find in Jesus,
Joy forevermore.

7. Through the highest heaven
To the Almighty Three,
Father, Son and Spirit,
One same glory be. Amen.