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By Fr. Maximilian M. Dean, F.I.
Introduction: The Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Let us state immediately and with fervor that the Immaculate Heart of Mary has already triumphed. Our Lady has already conquered and the definitive victory belongs to her. Bl. Dom Columba Marmion confirms this: “Her privileges have raised her above all creatures and now she reigns triumphant in Heaven on the right hand of Jesus as Queen of the Angels and of the Saints.”¹ In order to better grasp this, let us look at Mary’s triumphant Heart as Immaculate, Maternal, Sorrowful, and Glorious.

Immaculate Heart

First of all, blessed Mary was created victorious. “I am the Immaculate Conception,” she said at Lourdes. From the first moment of her existence, the Immaculata had a twofold victory over the enemy: a negative victory, a positive victory. Her negative victory was the fact that she was conceived without sin: the Immaculata was never subject to the devil; rather, she was victorious, regal and “utterly” triumphant over the infernal enemy from the first moment of her Conception.² Her positive victory was the perfect union of her will with the Holy Spirit: Our Lady was the Spouse of the Holy Spirit by name, that is, the created Immaculate Conception so completely united with the uncreated Immaculate Conception (the Holy Spirit) as to “receive the name of the bridegroom”.³ Through this double victory her Heart was already triumphing from the time of her Immaculate Conception and has never ceased to be triumphant.

In fact, she was predestined to be the Mother and Queen in the order of grace from all eternity. From all eternity, before any consideration of sin, God willed both the Incarnation of the Word and the divine maternity of Mary in “one and the same decree”.⁴ This means that the Immaculata was chosen and created by God as “predestined Mother”⁵ and triumphant Queen at the moment of her Conception. In other words, her Immaculate Heart

¹ Bl. Columba Marmion, Christ the Ideal of the Priest, B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, MO; P.II, Ch.XVIII, section I (p. 292).
² Bl. Pius IX, Ineffabilis Deus, “And indeed it was wholly fitting that so wonderful a mother should be ever resplendent with the glory of the most sublime holiness and so completely free from all taint of original sin that she would triumph utterly over the ancient serpent.” (italics are mine)
⁴ Bl. Pius IX, Ineffabilis Deus, “uno eodemque decreto”
⁵ Vatican II, Lumen Gentium #56
triumphs immediately after being conceived in the womb of St. Anne. Behold her Heart, like that of Jesus, separated from sin, holy, innocent, without sin, separated from sinners and elevated above the heavens (cf. Heb. 7:26), which will give human nature to the King of kings; behold her Heart elevated “above every other created perfection… and this from the first instant of her conception;”⁶ behold the Immaculate Heart of Mary which triumphs with every heartbeat.

Maternal Heart

But when the fullness of time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman (Gal. 4:4), namely that Woman who shall crush the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15), who shall appear clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars (Apoc. 12:1, 5). This Woman, in pronouncing her Fiat, became the Virgin Mother of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. At that moment her Immaculate Heart became a Maternal Heart: a Mother’s Heart for Jesus and for all those who would be united to her only Son in the Mystical Body of Christ.⁷ For this reason St. Bonaventure exclaims: “The Holy Spirit transformed the Immaculate Heart of the Mother of God into a furnace of His love and instrument of His marvelous operation.”⁸

The obedience of the Immaculata in her Fiat indicates a new triumph for her Heart, the triumph over the disobedience of Eve, the triumph of the coming of Christ the King—the New Adam, the triumph of her divine and virginal maternity, the triumph of the most profound intimacy between God and humanity in the virginal womb beneath her Maternal Heart.

One cannot overlook the triumph of her Heart when she intervened with her maternal mediation for the spouses at the wedding feast of Cana. In fact, it is precisely her Heart as mother of Jesus that hastens the hour of the King and this first of his signs Jesus worked at Cana of Galilee; and he manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him. (Jn. 2:1,11).

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⁶ Scritti di Massimilian Kolbe #1229: “If among creatures a bride receives the name of the bridegroom because she belongs to him, unites herself to him, makes herself similar to him and, in union with him, becomes the creative factor of life, how much more is the name of the Holy Spirit, “Immaculate Conception”, the name of Her within whom He lives in a love that is fruitful in the whole of the supernatural economy.” (translation is mine).
⁷ Cf. Pio XII, Radiom. 1947; cf. also Mistici Corporis, #75
⁸ Reported in Il Cuore Immacolato di Maria, Ven. Fr. Gabriel Allegra (p.70); third edition, 1991, Cireale (CT), Italy
Sorrowful Heart

However, we know all too well that after the fall of the human race through original sin there was an impenetrable wall between God and man. Consequently, there was an obstacle which impeded man from profiting from the coming of the King and Queen. Christ and Mary could not grant divine grace to man because man, as a result of original sin, had become filius irae.\(^9\) The Hearts of the Mediator and Mediatrix had to redeem humanity by destroying the curse of sin and opening the gate of divine mercy; They had to reclaim Their kingdom which humanity had given over to Satan in the Garden of Eden.

When the hour of glory arrived and the Divine King was raised up on the Cross, there stood at the foot of the Cross the Mother and Queen—Mary. Their royal Hearts, united and pierced through, redeemed the world, destroying the wall that separated God and man. For this reason Jesus said to St. Bridget, “The Heart of My Mother was like My Heart; I can say that My Mother and I, with one Heart only, accomplished the Redemption of the human race.”\(^10\) Therefore, on Calvary the Immaculate Heart of Mary, with and subordinate to Christ, conquered the enemy in a definitive manner, reclaiming the kingdom of God on earth as Co-Redemptrix of the human race.

Glorious Heart

More stupendous still is the heavenly triumph of Mary’s Heart. her Immaculate, Maternal and Sorrowful Heart is already glorified because it has been assumed into Heaven. It throbs with love in unison with the Heart of Jesus in the glory of Heaven amidst the Angels and the Saints. The Bl. Gabriel Allegra makes this clear: “The mystery of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is a summary of all her mysteries,[…] it is the compendium of all the greatest gifts, all the virtues, all the charisms of the Immaculate Mother […] from her holy Conception to her glorious Assumption, even unto eternity.”\(^11\)

After the Assumption her Heart, which synthesizes the entire person of Mary, is crowned by the Most Holy Trinity Himself: behold the glorious and royal Heart of Mary in Heaven! It is indisputable that the Immaculate Heart is already triumphing in Heaven; in fact, every time we meditate on the Coronation of Our Lady as Queen we contemplate the heavenly triumph

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\(^9\) Cf. Eph. 2:3 “children of wrath”.

\(^10\) Reported in Il Cuore Immacolato di Maria, Bl. Gabriel Allegra, P.II, C.I, s.3 (p.45).

\(^11\) ibid. P.II, C.I, s.3 (p.45); P.II, C.II, s.2 (p.54); P.II, C.II, s.1 (p.54).
In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph?

If the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is already realized in Heaven, what do the words of Our Lady of Fatima mean: “In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph”? The response is simple: Our Lady is not speaking about the triumph in Heaven, but the triumph in the world, in the Church, in hearts. Obviously the Mother’s Heart has not triumphed yet in this sense and it is not her fault, but ours alone.

It is for this reason that we pray to the Father day after day: 

_Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven._ (Mt. 6:10). The Father’s kingdom is the kingdom of Jesus and Mary. God the Father _hast given... power over all flesh_ (Jn. 17:2) to Jesus, and Our Lady reigns at His side as the Queen Mother. The Father’s will is clear: He wills the salvation and sanctification of all souls in His only-begotten Son. Our Lady has repeated this at Fatima, but she has made more specific the divine will, namely, that in order to save souls “God has willed to establish devotion to my Immaculate Heart in the world.” God wills devotion to her Heart, so that it might be on earth as it is in Heaven, that is, that the most Sacred Hearts might reign supreme on earth just as They do already in Heaven.

The Saints longed for this terrestrial triumph. St. Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort sighs: “Ah! When will the happy time come when the divine Mary will be established Mistress and Queen of all hearts in order that she may subject them fully to the empire of her great and holy Jesus? When will souls breathe Mary as the body breathes air?”

St. Maximilian Mary Kolbe also asked: “When will it happen that the souls of men shall love the Divine Heart of Jesus with her Heart?”

Bl. Jacinta of Fatima exclaimed to Lucia: “Oh, if I could only put into the hearts of all, the fire that is burning within my own heart, and that makes me love the Hearts of Jesus and Mary so much!”

We too long for this triumph.

So it is that Our Lady has need of soldiers, of a powerful army which will advance the triumph of her Heart in the world in this third millennium. Since the kingdom of God is above all heavenly and spiritual, it is essential

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12 True Devotion to Mary, (translated by Fr. Frederick Faber) Tan Books and Publishers, Rockford, IL, 1985; n. 217
13 Scritti di Massimiliano Kolbe #1224
14 Sr. Lucia, OCD, Fatima in Lucia’s Own Words, printed by Grafica Almondina, Portugal, 1976; (p.112).
that there be apostles of the Immaculate Heart who are heavenly and spiritual.
I: Awaiting the Triumph

“In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph!”
The Virgin of Fatima, July 13, 1917

Waiting… Waiting… Waiting… It’s part of the fabric of our human existence. We live in time and (like it or not) no one can avoid this experience. Whether it is the slow traffic light at a major intersection when we’re late, or the drawn out delay of dinner for the famished working man who, in the meantime, savors the delightful aromas of his bride’s exquisite cuisine, or the suspense of a gripping novel – like *The Lord of the Rings* – whose pages seem to multiply as the dramatic end draws nigh… whatever the example may be, it is the common lot of all to have waits and delays. However, as universal and inevitable as the experience may be, not everyone approaches and embraces it in the same way. After all, the experience marks the lives of both the saint and the sinner.

We do well to recall that expectation is a key part of our Christian spirituality. What distinguished the Saints from the rest was that they knew how to sanctify the present moment with profound faith, joyful hope, and ardent charity. They were abandoned to God’s holy will now, yet lived in expectant hope of the blessings to come. Put succinctly, they accepted and consecrated their experiences of waiting to the Lord of history: *But, beloved, do not be ignorant of this one thing, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day* (2 Pt 3:8). The Saints knew how to immerse *chronos* (χρόνος) - chronological time - into *kairos* (καιρός) – the eternal now when God is acting.

**Creation awaiting Christ**

In the beginning God created the universe with a view to Christ: *All things have been created through and unto Him* (Col 1:16). In other words, God’s purpose in creating heaven and earth was specifically geared towards Jesus or, as St. Paul puts it, God created all things *according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus* (Eph 3:12; cf. verses 8-12). Indeed, at the very heart of God’s creative plan (sin or no sin) we find the Heart of His Son: *This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased* (Mt 3:17). He is forever the *Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end* (Apoc 22:13), the One in whom all things were to be united and recapitulated so as to be offered back to the Creator.
As a result the entire universe, and Adam and his descendents in particular, were created with an inbuilt longing for the coming of Christ the King. He would be true God reigning in our midst and yet true man glorifying His Father and bringing mankind to the grace of adoptive sonship.

Interestingly, many Fathers and Doctors of the Church (like St. Augustine, \footnote{De Genesi ad litteram, lib. 9, c. 19, n. 36} St. Jerome \footnote{In Eph., lib. 3} St. Bonaventure, \footnote{In Sent. III, d.1, art. 2, q.2} St. Thomas Aquinas \footnote{Summa II-II, Q.2, art.7; III, Q.1, art.3 - Objection 5} and, more recently, our own Bl. John Paul II \footnote{General Audience, October 6, 1982} ) confirm that God had revealed to Adam the \textit{mystery of Christ... which has been hidden from eternity in God} (Eph 3:4,9) before original sin. According to this tradition Adam in the state of original innocence already foreknew that in the \textit{fullness of time} (Gal 4:4) the Word would become flesh and espouse creation in general, and the Church in particular, to Himself as His Bride and that his marriage with Eve was to be a foreshadowing of that \textit{great mystery} (μυστήριον μέγα) of the espousals of Christ with His Bride the Church (cf. Eph 5:32). In other words, Adam and Eve were created with a longing for the coming of Christ before the fall.

St. John of the Cross gives us an affirmation of this in his usual mystical style. In his poetic works he wrote a series of \textit{Romances} \footnote{The Collected Works of St John of the Cross (Eds. K. Kavanaugh and O. Rodriguez), Institute of Carmelite Studies, Washington DC, revised edition, 1991} describing the inner life of the Trinity, creation and the Incarnation. Here are some of the pertinent verses where the Father is dialoguing with the Son:

\begin{quote}
"My Son, I wish to give You 
a bride who will love You.
Because of You she will deserve
to share Our company,

and eat at Our table,
the same bread I eat,
that she may know the good
I have in such a Son;
and rejoice with Me
in your grace and fullness."
\end{quote}
“I am very grateful,”
the Son answered;
“I will show My brightness
to the bride You give Me,

so that by it she may see
how great My Father is,
and how I have received
My Being from Your Being.

I will hold her in My arms
and she will burn with Your love,
and with eternal delight
she will exalt Your goodness.” […]

“Now You see, Son, that Your bride
was made in Your image,
and so far as she is like You
she will suit You well;

yet she is different, in her flesh,
which Your simple Being does not have.
In perfect love
this law holds:

that the lover become
like the one he loves;
for the greater their likeness
the greater their delight.

Surely Your bride’s delight
would greatly increase
were she to see You like her,
in her own flesh.”

“My will is Yours,”
the Son replied…

This dogmatic, mystical poetry of St. John of the Cross, while having unique nuances of its own, clearly syncs up with the Franciscan school that the coming of Christ was not occasioned by sin, but rather was willed in
itself as the center and crown of all creation. From this perspective all of creation in the beginning (Gn 1:1) was awaiting the coming of the Divine Bridegroom; from the fiat lux – let there be light (Gn 1:3) everything was directed towards Christ the King who would be born of a Virgin at Bethlehem. The universe, and mankind in particular, was set in expectation, in waiting, in vigil.

**Sinful man awaiting the Redeemer**

With the devastating fall of Adam in the earthly paradise there was a rupture in our relationship with God. We had turned away from obedience to God’s plan to make us partakers of the divine nature (2 Pt 1:4) through Christ and sought, through disobedience, to be as gods (Gn 3:5) apart from Christ. Man disobeyed God and hid from Him in shame. Man now needed Redemption before he could experience an elevation to the status of an adopted son.

But God, who is rich in mercy (Eph 2:4), included Redemption from sin in his plan to re-establish and reconcile all things to Himself in Christ (Eph 1:10). Indeed mercy would triumph and the Woman with her Offspring would crush the head of that wicked serpent (cf. Gn 3:15) who had injected sin into God’s creation by his own pride and disobedience and had lead man astray.

As a result, man’s intense longing for the coming of the Messias was redoubled and would characterize history throughout the ages. After all, we were made with Christ the King in mind and after the fall our sole hope was to be created anew in Christ the Redeemer (cf. Gal 6:16).

**Israel in expectation**

This expectation, while built in to creation and accentuated by man’s need for Redemption, was most keenly experienced by Israel. God had chosen them and set them apart from the other nations because He intended to send His Son to and through them: And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of this root (Is 11:1). The Lord had made covenants and promises through the Patriarchs and Prophets so that they might pine away all the more for His coming.

Their entire spirituality was “Christian,” that is to say, centered upon and anticipating that long expected day when God would send the Messias (מָשִׁיחַ – the Anointed One). They were told the place:
And thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Juda: out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel: and his going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity.
(Mic 5:2)

They were told the sign:

*Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel.*
(Is 7:14).

They were a people preeminently in waiting. Expectation was at the core of their relationship with God as they earnestly hoped and prayed for the coming of the Virgin with her Divine Child. Their whole existence as the “people of God” sprang from and was directed to the coming of Jesus and Mary. Even they, the chosen people of God, were prostrate in sin and desperately needed and longed for the root and offspring of David, the bright morning star (Apoc 22:16).

**He came… and went…**

Yes, that day came – thanks be to God! – and went.

“It is finished!” And bowing His head, he gave up His spirit (Jn 19:30).

All was accomplished; all fulfilled. Jesus was the mediator of a superior covenant, enacted on the basis of superior promises (Heb 8:6). So what is it that characterizes the New Covenant? “Dinner is served, no more waiting…” Right? Not quite.

He who took our frail human flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary; who came in poverty, humility and charity at Bethlehem; who lived a hidden life of obedience, prayer and toil under St. Joseph and Our Lady at Nazareth; who preached, healed, forgave - and established His Church to preach, heal and forgive; who died on the infamous Cross, rose glorious from the tomb and ascended at the right of the Father… will come again. Only this time He will come in glory: *Hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming upon the clouds of heaven* (Mt 26:64).

The Church, the new people of God bought at the price of Christ’s precious Blood, is also a people in waiting. The Catechism of the Catholic Church points out: “Though already present in his Church, Christ's reign is nevertheless yet to be fulfilled ‘with power and great glory’ by the King's
return to earth…That is why Christians pray, above all in the Eucharist, to hasten Christ's return by saying to him: Marana thá! - Our Lord, come!” (CCC 671).

Although the kingdom of God is in our midst in the Church, she – with all of her children reborn of water and the Holy Spirit – continues to be in a state of vigilance. Perhaps St. Paul captures this best where he speaks of the glory to come, the eager longing of creation which groans and travails (cf. Rm 8:18-19). But the Church not only waits in longing, but actively seeks to “hasten Christ’s return”: And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” (Apoc 22:17).

**Fatima: the unique prophecy of our times**

While we await the glorious coming of our Savior and the resurrection of the dead and the new heavens and earth, there is a prophecy pertinent to our own times. There is a sign that will precede His coming and for which we ought to long for and seek with every fiber of our being. And that prophecy is this: “In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph!”

I can distinctly remember an episode which occurred when I was in formation at our Marian Friary in New Bedford, MA. During a gathering in Bl. John Duns Scotus Hall a friend of our community approached me to ask my prayers for a number of intentions and she broke down in tears. I told her, “Rosemary, entrust everything to Our Lady. She said that in the end her Immaculate Heart would triumph.” And through her tears she looked at me and said, “Brother, I live for that day.” While supposedly I was trying to assist her, she actually assisted me. I have never forgotten that moment and I continue to ask myself: “Do I live for that day?” I should. It is a prophecy that should characterize my entire spirituality.

St. Peter writes: And we have the word of prophecy, surer still, to which you do well to attend, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts (2 Pt 1:19). Our Lady’s prophecy for our times shines forth brightly in our dark times and should animate our entire spiritual journey until the day dawns. We should live for that day because that day will open the doors to Christ’s return on the clouds of heaven. Just as the Immaculate Conception of Mary preceded the Incarnation of the Word; so the triumph of her Immaculate Heart will precede the triumph of Christ in glory.

We know that the Church through the centuries has been eagerly awaiting and earnestly praying for the coming of Our Lord in glory. Yet in our day we have a specific sign that we know will precede his coming: the triumph of the Immaculate Heart.
The Virgin Mary and the latter times

St. Louis Grignon de Montfort (+ 1716) in his *True Devotion to Mary* employs his pen in describing Mary’s providential function in the last times. He notes that “it was through Mary that the salvation of the world was begun, and it is through Mary that it must be consummated… in the second coming of Jesus Christ, Mary has to be made known and revealed by the Holy Ghost, in order that, through her, Jesus Christ may be known, loved and served.”21

One of the reasons for this, he says, is because “as she is the dawn which precedes and reveals the Sun of Justice, who is Jesus Christ, she must be seen and recognized in order that Jesus Christ may also be.”22 This natural analogy is very rich and is worth reflecting upon.

In some of my privileged times of hermitage I have been able to experience in full the rising of the sun. From the starry night crowned with the moon, the horizon with its clouds would slowly be set on fire with hues of red and orange as the heavenly backdrop gradually transformed itself from black to deep blue. At this point the stillness of the pre-dawn would be broken by the singing of birds. First one, then another, until a full chorus of enthusiastic chanters sought to hasten, as it were, the rising of the sun with their unique morning song.

What always amazed me, however, was how just as the sun was about to break over the horizon the entire symphony would go silent - a sacred moment, a grand silence. Once the dramatic moment arrived and the fiery globe gently penetrated the horizon, then… and only then, they could start a new chorus. Their melodies would change as if to now praise the sun’s arrival and continue their day in its light and warmth.

When Christ, the Sun of Justice, comes in glory, He will be preceded by the stunning beauty of Mary, the dawn. There will be an enthusiastic chorus singing and, just before His coming, there will be a grand silence and peace, a Marian era. This chorus will sing like the birds at daybreak:

*My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready:*
*I will sing, and will give praise, with my glory.*
*Arise, my glory; arise, psaltery and harp:*
*I will arise in the morning early.*
*I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people:*

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21 *True Devotion to Mary*, (trans. by Fr. Faber) n.49
22 Ibid. 50
and I will sing unto thee among the populations. 
For thy mercy is great above the heavens: 
and thy truth even unto the clouds.  
(Ps 107:2-5)

Marian Apostles

What I am calling a “chorus,” St. Louis de Montfort calls “apostles of the latter times.”\textsuperscript{23} He describes them in this fashion:

“The Most High with His holy Mother has to form for Himself great saints who shall surpass most of the other saints in sanctity...”\textsuperscript{24}

“They will know the grandeurs of that Queen, and will consecrate themselves entirely to her service, as subjects and slaves of love. They will experience her sweetness and her maternal goodness, and they will love her tenderly like well-beloved children. They will know the mercies of which she is full, and the need they have of her help; and they will have recourse to her in all things, as to their dear Advocate and Mediatrix with Jesus Christ. They will know what is the surest, the easiest, the shortest and the most perfect means of going to Jesus Christ; and they will give themselves to Mary, body and soul, without reserve, that they may thus belong entirely to Jesus Christ.”\textsuperscript{25}

“They shall carry on their shoulders the bloody standard of the Cross, the Crucifix in their right hand and the Rosary in their left, the sacred Names of Jesus and Mary in their hearts, and the modesty and mortification of Jesus Christ in their own behavior. These are the great men who are to come; but Mary is the one who, by order of the Most High, shall fashion them for the purpose of extending His empire over that of the impious, the idolaters and the Muslims. But when and how shall this be? God alone knows. As for us, we have but to hold our tongues, to pray, to sigh and to wait: ‘With expectation I have waited’ (Ps 39:2).”\textsuperscript{26}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[23] Ibid. 55 
\item[24] Ibid. 47 
\item[25] Ibid. 55 
\item[26] Ibid. 59 
\end{footnotes}
Longing for and hastening the triumph

These riveting words of the Saint were written three centuries ago and the wait continues. However, one thing is for certain, we are three centuries nearer to the coming of Christ than he was. What is more, as I have noted, we have a specific prophecy of a Marian era: the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

What I would like to propose here is that we need to up the ante. It is not sufficient for us just to wait, but we must long for and hasten this triumph. I would dare say that Jesus is seeking children of Mary who are willing to pray and sacrifice themselves for the cause.

It is known that the Blessed Mother at the wedding feast of Cana hastened the “hour” of Jesus through her maternal mediation. It is also well accepted by theologians and mystics that Our Lady, praying and fasting in the temple for the coming of the Messias, had even previously hastened the coming of the Incarnate Word. The point here is that waiting, while it molds our spirituality with a primarily passive character, is not purely passive. There is an active dimension which God wills and looks for. In fact, many times His divine providence includes the condition that something will be merited or sought after in prayer and sacrifice.

In a word, God is looking for victim souls: victims of love for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Obviously this is a step beyond the daily Rosary, even beyond total consecration. God is seeking generous souls, like he found in the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph at the time of the Incarnation, who are willing to be authentic victims of love for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Are you willing? Does this desire resonate within you? In a word, is the Holy Spirit calling you to hasten this reign of her most pure Heart in the world?
II: Victims of Love for the Triumph

“Pro amore usque ad victimam”

We have been in a holding pattern for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary since she announced it in 1917 at Fatima. But the delay is an opportunity. As I noted before, it is not sufficient for us just to wait. We must long for and hasten this triumph by our holiness of life and by specifically praying and sacrificing ourselves for the cause. The ideal, then, is a small, select troop of spiritual soldiers dedicated to the cause, a special tasks force – not the Marines, but the Marians! Semper fidelis!

When Gedeon was called to bring about the victory for Israel, it was not by worldly power and might, but solely by the power of God. It was not by conventional war tactics, but through the genius of divine wisdom and counsel. The Lord made it clear to Gedeon that the reason he was to be victorious was because I have sent thee (Judges 6:14). In fact, after receiving confirmation of his calling to lead the Lord’s battle and rallying up the troops, he immediately saw the Lord whittle down his 32,000 men to 10,000. But he continued to believe because the Lord had sent him. Yet the Lord again pruned the tree to 300 men and the victory was the Lord’s.

The triumph of Mary’s Immaculate Heart will not be in the hands of the many, but only in those of the little ones to whom God has entrusted the battle and the victory. It will come about largely through the hidden, yet generous and powerful victims of love for the triumph.

Victims and oblations

Before fleshing out this vocation to loving victimhood for the triumph, I would like to put it, albeit briefly, into the broader context of salvation history. From the beginning man has always offered and sensed the need to offer sacrifice to God. While sacrifices to God had a wide variety of expressions, they were basically reduced to two types: the offering of victims (bloody sacrifice) and oblations (first fruits, incense, bread, etc.). And it came to pass after many days, that Cain offered, of the fruits of the earth, gifts to the Lord. Abel also offered of the firstlings of his flock, and of their fat (Gen 4:4-5).

Why this necessity to offer sacrifice to God? First, because as creatures we are indebted to God the Creator and holocausts are naturally regarded as the highest, most complete outward expression of man's reverence towards Him. Another reason lies in the fact of man’s sinfulness
and his need to atone for it. And with blood almost everything is cleansed according to the Law, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (Heb 9:22). In essence, offering sacrifice to God has always been an outward manifestation of our reverence and love towards the Creator and of contrition for our sins before God who is all holy and just.

If the Jewish religion was the religion of victims and holocausts (just read Leviticus!), then we can say that it was but a symbolic prefiguration of the religion of the Victim and Holocaust, Jesus Christ (cf. Heb 10:1-10).

**Jesus: High Priest and Victim**

Christianity is utterly unique. Obviously the hypostatic union sets the priesthood of Christ on an entirely different plane than that of the Levitical priesthood. Jesus, by virtue of the hypostatic union, is both God and Man. *We have such a High Priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of Majesty in the heavens* (Heb 8:1). As such His offering is perfect and irreversible. Jesus does not offer Himself over and over again, but as it is, once for all at the end of the ages, *He has appeared for the destruction of sin by the sacrifice of Himself* (9:26); *We have been sanctified through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all* (10:10).

What is more, and this is essential for our discussion, the Sacrifice and the High Priest of the New Covenant are one and the same. In a word, Jesus both offers and is offered. *But when Christ appeared as High Priest of the good things to come, He entered once for all through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made by human hands (that is, not of this creation), nor again by virtue of blood of goats and calves, but by virtue of His own blood...* (Heb 9:11-12). Jesus was the High Priest offering and Jesus was the Sacrifice offered.

While Our Lord alone is the Divine Priest and Victim, and while His offering is efficacious and even superabundant in bringing about the Redemption of the human race, nonetheless there is another particular to His priesthood. On the one hand, He alone is the Priest and there is only one Holy Sacrifice, yet He has willed that all the baptized in general, and the ordained in particular, participate in His priesthood. We are speaking of the “royal priesthood” of all of the faithful and the “ministerial priesthood” of the ordained clergy.

**Participation in Christ’s Sacrifice**

Note the logic: if Christ comes as the sole Priest and Victim and we are participants in His holy priesthood, then it would follow that we are
called to offer ourselves in union with Him to the Father. Ironically, while there are many who want to partake of Christ’s priesthood, there are few who wish to share in His ‘victimhood.’ But in the New Covenant the Priest and the Victim are inseparable.

The Abbot Bl. Columba Marmion’s insights shed light on this truth. He writes, “There is here an essential truth upon which we ought to meditate. The Word Incarnate, Head of the Church, took His share, the greater share, of sorrows; but He chose to leave to His Church, which is His mystical Body, a share of suffering.” Note his expression, Jesus chose to leave to His Church... a share of suffering, as if it were a gift of love from Christ the Divine Bridegroom to His Bride the Church. Marmion then cites St. Paul, I... fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh, for His body, which is the Church (Col 1:24) and comments,

“This is what is called redemptive suffering. Our Divine Lord “has reserved for us a share in His Passion” for the sake of His Church, that is, for the salvation of souls. This is where the term “offer it up” comes from. When we suffer some pain or difficulty we are invited to unite it to the sufferings of Christ the great High Priest and offer it up to the heavenly Father.

It goes without saying that our union with the priesthood and victimhood of Jesus is realized most fully during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass precisely because in the Mass the priest and sacrifice are the same: the priest stands in persona Christi and the sacrifice which is offered is that of

27 Bl. Columba Marmion, Christ in His Mysteries II, 13, 4
28 Ibid.
Jesus on Calvary, although in an unbloody manner. Transported, as it were, to Golgatha we are able to unite ourselves to that offering which Jesus made once for all (Heb 9:27; 10:10).

**The New Testament: discipleship means suffering**

In this context we are able to see how essential this is to Christian spirituality. Our Lord Himself made it abundantly clear that the lot of those who followed Him was that of contradiction, but always with the divine blessings. In Christ’s first sermon He begins with the Beatitudes, which are all in the third person – *Blessed are...* – but when He wraps them up He switches to ‘you’ in the plural form and says: *Blessed are you when men reproach you, and persecute you, and, speaking falsely, say all manner of evil against you, for My sake. Rejoice and exult, because your reward is great in Heaven; for so did they persecute the prophets who were before you* (Mt 5:11-12).

Following Christ means carrying the Cross. It means uniting ourselves to His journey and His sacrifice. He did not hide this. *And He said to all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me”* (Lk 9:23). Elsewhere He openly prepares his disciples for the reality that the enemies of Christ and His Church will deliver you up to tribulation, and will put you to death; and you will be hated by all nations for My Name’s sake. And then many will fall away, and will betray one another, and will hate one another... (Mt 24:9-10).

Even Christ’s Apostles were united, not only in accepting suffering, but even in rejoicing in that suffering. They regarded this to be a great honor and privilege. St. Luke recounts that after being scourged the Apostles departed from the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they had been counted worthy to suffer disgrace for the Name of Jesus (Acts 5:41).

And this theme is repeated like a *ritornello* throughout the New Testament. St. Peter writes, *But rejoice, in so far as you are partakers of the sufferings of Christ, so that you may also rejoice with exultation in the revelation of His glory...* (1 Pt 4:13). St. James confirms, *Esteem it all joy, my brethren, when you fall into various trials...* (Jm 1:2). And St. John, *In this we have come to know His love, that He laid down His life for us; and we likewise ought to lay down our life for the brethren* (1 Jn 3:16).

**Mary, Model and Mother of Sorrows**

While there are as many models of suffering in union with Christ as there are Saints in Heaven, there is one who is the Mother and Queen. Yes,
with the man of sorrows (Is 53:3) there was the Mother of Sorrows who stood by the Cross (cf. Jn 19:25); at the side of the New Adam (cf. Rm 5:14) God placed the New Eve; in working out our eternal salvation from sin God willed that with the Redeemer there be the Co-Redemptrix. Our Lady is thus given the title Queen of the Martyrs because what she suffered within her Most Pure Heart surpassed the suffering of all of the white robed army of Martyrs put together.

As noted before, all of us who have been incorporated into the Body of Christ partake in His priesthood. The Blessed Virgin was no exception. Actually, she was the supreme example of what it means to offer Jesus to the Father and unite oneself to that offering. This is why St. Maximilian, and others like him, were able to call Mary the Virgo Sacerdos. She nourished and offered the Victim – not as an Apostle, not as an ordained Bishop or priest, but as the Mother of the Apostles and all priests. Her maternal sacrifice of her Son was priestly in that she, with and subordinate to her Son, offered the Holy Sacrifice which redeemed the world. It follows that she was the Virgo Addolorata who united herself to the Victim offered.

The Mother of Sorrows is thus the Queen and Mother of those who offer Jesus and unite themselves to Jesus as little victims of love for the glory of God and the salvation and sanctification of souls

The Saints: victims of love

The Saints did not just practice virtue, but heroic virtue. For example, St. Maximilian Kolbe not only offered himself without limits to the service of the Immaculata, but desired to be consumed for her cause. In fact, in his Mass register he even offered a Mass a couple months after his ordination for this intention: Pro amore usque ad victimam – For love unto victimhood. He loved Our Lady immensely and used to say, “Without sacrifice there is no love;” or stated positively he wrote, “Love is nourished by sacrifices.”

St. Thérèse of Lisieux, famous for her “little way” (doing little things with lots of love), offered herself as a victim of holocaust to God’s Merciful Love. In her short life of 24 years she managed to fill Heaven with her love and merits, and now showers the earth with her example, teaching and intercession.

Bl. Elizabeth of the Trinity, renowned for living and teaching how to adore the gift of God’s presence within, underwent an extremely painful and slow death. All throughout she never complained, but ever rejoiced to be Jesus the High Priest’s “little host” which He deigned to offer for the praise of God’s glory (laudem gloriae) and for the salvation of souls.
Although he is not a canonized Saint, I would nonetheless like to relate the example of one of my brother priests. He was in his mid 50’s and had never been to the hospital for anything since he had left the maternity ward after his birth. That is, until one morning around 4 am when he knocked on my door in agony saying, “Father, I think I need to go to the hospital.” It turns out he needed immediate emergency surgery. I anointed him and to encourage him I said, “Father, you know what Padre Pio used to say: ‘I only suffer when I do not suffer.’” To which he immediately replied, “And St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi said: ‘To suffer, but not to die!’” And with that the nurse wheeled him off to surgery.

While the examples are endless, it is important for us to learn from the school of the Saints. “Love unto victimhood” is that narrow way to the heights of holiness and we are all invited to tread it with the help of God’s grace.

...for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart

Suffering, sacrifice, and even victimhood, then, are central to Christian spirituality. What is more, the constant motive behind this sacrificial love is that of conformity to the Crucified and Risen Jesus for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. But the greatest glory of God and the maximum salvation of souls can be found precisely in the triumph of Mary’s Immaculate Heart.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is that creature who gave the greatest possible glory to the Trinity through, with and in her Divine Son. This was her song: *My soul magnifies the Lord* (Lk 1:46), and as the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God she, after the Humanity of Christ, offered God the greatest praise possible in a creature, a praise beyond which cannot be imagined. Hence a triumph of her Immaculate Heart necessarily means the greater glory of God.

Regarding the salvation of souls, as the Co-Redemptrix of the human race she, in an utterly singular way, suffered for the salvation of souls. Pope Benedict XV (+1922) sums it up succinctly: “In truth Mary suffered and almost died with her suffering and agonizing Son; she renounced her maternal rights over her Son... and as far as what depended upon her, she immolated the Son to placate the divine justice in such a way that one can rightly say she, with her Son, redeemed the human race.”

Thus a triumph of her pierced Heart necessarily means the salvation of souls redeemed by her, with and subordinate to her Redeemer Son.

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29 Pope Benedict XV, *Inter sodalicia*, March 22, 1918 (AAS 10 1919, 182)
Did Our Lady at Fatima ask for victims of love for the triumph of her Immaculate Heart? We know that she prophesied the triumph, and we can be sure that that triumph will come regardless of our response; however, in foretelling the triumph she also explicitly invited her children to offer themselves for the cause. In her first apparition she asked the children, “Are you willing to offer yourselves to God and bear all the sufferings He wills to send you, as an act of reparation for the conversion of sinners?” They said yes and she added, “Then you are going to have much to suffer, but the grace of God will be your comfort.”

Like the Fatima children, Our Lady extends the invitation to us. There is a need, a dire need, for spiritual troops to combat the militant evils of our day by offering themselves in love for the cause of hastening the coming of Christ the King through the triumph of Mary’s Immaculate Heart.
III: Living as Victims of Love for the Triumph

“Let us disappear in her.
Let her alone remain and we in her, a part of her.”
St. Maximilian M. Kolbe

If only we could fathom how important our little part is in bringing about the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary! In the end her Immaculate Heart will gloriously triumph and in the meantime we seek to hasten that coming and to unleash graces for souls. Indeed some of us will sense a call to something more, to offer themselves as little victims of love for the triumph.

Like Baptism, Marriage, Holy Orders, Religious Profession, an offering of ourselves to God is not just a moment but something which must be lived out concretely. Being baptized into Christ the Son of God means one must live in Christ as a child of God; being married “unto death do us part” in that Sacrament which reflects the reciprocal love of Christ and the Church means being faithful to one’s spouse and children; being ordained a priest is not like getting hired for a job, rather it is a way of life: “You are a priest for ever” (Ps 109:4) says the Lord, and that means 24/7 in this life and forever in the next; and the public profession of poverty, chastity and obedience is not a fleeting formula recited before the Church, but the beginning of a religious journey consecrated to the Lord. In all of these examples we see that after the ceremony there must be commitment.

Likewise, in offering ourselves for the triumph of Mary’s Immaculate Heart we are pledging to live and die for the cause. In other words, this offering marks a beginning and saturates our entire being, penetrating our minds, hearts and actions. It becomes a veritable spirituality of love that seeks the maximum glory of the Most Blessed Trinity and the maximum salvation of souls through the triumph of the Mother’s Heart.

“Perfect love casts out fear”

Perhaps we might have a sense of fear in making this offering. After all, it means being a victim, albeit a victim of love, but a victim nonetheless. So a certain human hesitancy might enter in.

First, we must immediately distinguish this victimhood from the secular meaning of the word victim. A victim of a crime, like the bombing at the Boston Marathon, is an experience of terror at the hands of another’s
hatred. Clearly this is not the victimhood of which we are speaking. No one wants to be a victim of such diabolical violence.

So we must purge the term of any such meaning when we speak of our offering. The victimhood of love which we are proposing is one which is known, desired, and freely embraced in union with Jesus the Lamb of God. In offering ourselves we accept in advance whatever the Good Lord deigns to ask of us with the intention of ushering in that Marian era of peace, love and joy. It is a call of Divine Love that only the beloved will hear, understand and freely accept.

But even among those who hear Love’s calling, there can be a certain fear of making a commitment to such a lofty cause as the universal triumph of Mary’s Immaculate Heart. After all, the world is so far from this triumph that it would seem that only huge sacrifices could bring this about, even bloody martyrdom. At this prospect our weak human nature – so reluctant in making even small, voluntary sacrifices and so dismayed at its incapacity to keep simple impulses towards sin in check – seems to take exception. After all, wouldn’t it be a bit imprudent to make such an offering if I can’t even get up at the sound of my alarm clock in the morning, if I can’t smile in doing my daily duty, if at times I can’t even keep a single resolution to grow in holiness and avoid sin?

But Jesus said, “Do not be afraid; only have faith!” (Mk 5:36). We must trust in God because fear is useless. We need to be generous in our love, even if we are humbled by our self-knowledge. Why? Because God’s grace is infinitely greater than our weakness. And, in reality, even our weakness has its role to play. St. Peter offered himself, and when he fell he repented and humbled himself. If we wait until we are “perfect” before seeking perfection, we will remain as we are: imperfect. We must declare war on lukewarmness and mediocrity and, with humble hearts, we must give ourselves completely to the Lord without reserve. He Himself will sustain us. If we fall, let us heed the words of Pope Francis:

Ah! Brothers and Sisters, God's face is the face of a merciful father who is always patient. Have you thought about God's patience, the patience he has with each one of us? That is his mercy. He always has patience, patience with us, he understands us, he waits for us, he does not tire of forgiving us if we are able to return to him with a contrite heart. “Great is God's mercy”, says the Psalm [...] Let us never tire, let us never tire! He is the loving Father who always pardons, who has that heart of mercy for us all. And let us too learn to be merciful to everyone. Let us invoke the intercession of Our Lady
who held in her arms the Mercy of God made man. (Pope Francis’ first Angelus address, March 17th, 2013).

*Perfect love casts out fear [...] Let us therefore love, because God first loved us* (1 Jn 4:18). We are loved. Now we must love in return. In any offering there is an unknown element. The newly baptized does not know the details of what his incorporation into Christ will entail. The newlyweds cannot second guess the sacrifices that will be involved in their family life. The newly ordained priest knows he will be offering and offered as Christ, but he cannot know the particulars, often painful and secret, that will consummate his priestly holocaust. The newly professed religious, while he or she has studied the Rule in all of its particulars, now has to follow Christ one step at a time towards Calvary in a daily ‘Way of the Cross’ which will be marked by the unexpected. No matter what our walk of life, what our call, if we do not expect and embrace the Cross like Our Lord and Our Lady, we will never be happy.

**Little sacrifices of love**

The key here is supernatural, ardent charity. While we cannot know all of the details of what our offering will involve, we do know that we will receive far more than we give. We have been loved by God; we have been loved by our Immaculate Mother; their love will not fail us.

Once we put the accent on love we are in a position to make the offering and live it out. The fact is that a small host is made up of lots of fragments of pulverized grain; a chalice of wine is made up of many crushed grapes. So too, our offering as little victims of love for the triumph will predominately be made up of the small voluntary and involuntary sacrifices we offer up from day to day.

This *littleness* in itself should already assist us greatly in our Marian spirituality. We must always keep in mind that Mary is that Mother who is always thrilled at the little bundles of flowers her children lovingly offer her. Ours is not a spirituality of giants, but of little ones. As her children we are called to live the grace of the present moment, to begin the eternal now of Heaven by loving God and neighbor in our present circumstances through this Marian offering. By our humble, but generous self-donation to God for the triumph of Mary’s Most Pure Heart we are in essence animating our entire Christian existence with a special intention, one which is very pleasing to God and His Immaculate Mother; and this intention is one which will burn in our hearts and lead us to greater holiness of life, even to the hidden heroism of continually offering little things with lots of love.
Being victims in the Victim is a matter of the intention with which we live out our state in life. Our little victimhood is defined by that continual union of our mind and heart with the mind and heart of the Savior. We are, in essence, not asking God to send us bigger trials nor to multiply our tribulations, but simply telling God that we accept in advance whatever He will send us for the triumph of Mary’s Immaculate Heart. We are pledging, with the help of His grace, to fulfill faithfully and generously our daily duties and to live out our particular vocation with ardent charity.

Being His little victim means humbly trusting in His love. It means praying with the Psalmist:

*Lord, my heart is not exalted: nor are my eyes lofty. Neither have I walked in great matters, nor in wonderful things above me. If I was not humbly minded, but exalted my soul: As a child that is weaned is towards his mother, so reward in my soul.* (Ps 130:1-2)

Abandoned in His arms and offered for this cause, everything becomes an occasion to usher in the Marian era. Every joy, every sacrifice, every moment becomes an opportunity to long for, desire and hasten that marvelous day. Hence, the little sacrifices of love are what make up the life of a little victim of love.

I think, for example, of the practical heroism of St. Thérèse of Lisieux. She made it her business to constantly form and offer little hosts to the Lord with the grain of the daily grind. She would once say, “To ecstasy I prefer the monotony of sacrifice.” This is within the grasp of all of us; and yet how few we are that grab onto it! Everyone wants the ecstasy, the consolation, the honeymoon; very few accept (let alone prefer) the sacrifice, the desolation, the lifetime commitment.

**Voluntary sacrifices of love**

In a spirituality that flows from an intense longing to see the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and a desire to offer oneself for this intention, it follows that sacrifices of love are of the essence. There are two types of sacrifice which we can offer: voluntary and involuntary.

The former are those which we actively choose to offer. We are accustomed to doing this in the season of Lent. They can be ongoing or spontaneous, but they are always chosen voluntarily. We should not underestimate the power of these free-will offerings. The little mortifications of the tongue, the palate, the passions, etc. are of great value if offered with love and, in our case, offered for the triumph. Our Lady at Lourdes and
Fatima asked for penance and sacrifices, and the visionaries responded freely and fully to this request.

Take St. Bernadette, for example. When she was sick and even dying many sisters and visitors used to ask her, “Why don’t you go to the Grotto and take some of the miraculous water?” Her response was firm, “The Grotto is not for me, but for others.” In other words, she could have asked permission to go to the Grotto and to seek healing through Our Lady’s intercession, but she voluntarily chose not to. Our Lady had asked her to pray for poor sinners and thus the salvation of souls had become Bernadette’s mission.

In my novitiate my novice master had me cleaning the altar candlesticks in the sacristy one morning with another professed friar. We were both polishing away in silence and prayer, offering all to our Blessed Mother. When I thought I had finished my first candlestick, I whispered to the other friar who was in charge, “Ave Maria! I finished this one; should I start another one?” He responded by unceremoniously turning the candlestick upside down. Then he said, “Remember what St. Bernadette said to one of her Sisters: Don’t forget to clean the part that only God sees.” Ah! How our days are filled with opportunities to offer little bouquets of this type to our heavenly King and Queen! Voluntary sacrifices are not always seen by others; but they are always seen by God.

It is recorded that some of the Desert Fathers made a particular sacrifice of making baskets in the morning so as to avoid idleness. Diligence in work is indeed an important and pleasing sacrifice in the eyes of the Lord and we can certainly offer this up in every detail for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart. *Ora et labora,* as St. Benedict would put it. But these Fathers, in order to be utterly detached from their work, added another sacrifice in the evening… namely, they undid all of the baskets they had made in the morning!

**Involuntary sacrifices of love**

Be that as it may, the most precious sacrifices are not those which we choose, but those which Divine Providence chooses for us: sickness, misunderstandings, humiliations, persecutions, aridity, unwilled distractions, a computer crash, etc. In a word, consecrating ourselves to Mary as her little victim of love means a complete abandonment to Divine Providence. It means believing and living the reality that everything is a gift of God which Jesus gives us through the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It means accepting *everything* in the spirit of our self-offering which then gives sense to our entire spiritual life and daily routine.
Here the sacrifice, because it is not decided upon by us, but embraced as coming from the hands of God, does not contain that inherent danger of self-will or vainglory which can all too often be found in voluntary penances. It is a pure sacrifice. It resembles more completely the sacrifice of Jesus and Mary on Calvary: “Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit” (Lk 23:46).

How beautiful were the thoughts and aspirations of Bl. Elizabeth of the Trinity in her last months of suffering and in her death. She considered herself as “God’s little Host.” For her suffering was, as it were, a “Mass” where Jesus the High Priest offered her to the Father. In her case, it would seem that Jesus lingered in the offering or even went into an ecstasy…

If we too will offer ourselves as little hosts then we must place ourselves with abandon in the hands of Jesus. It may indeed happen that He seems to disappear and leave us at crucial moments; yet in reality He goes into an ecstasy of love in offering us as a pleasing sacrifice to the Father and in seeing our soul – “God’s little host” – so elevated above the earth, so full of the glory to God, so efficacious in opening up torrents of mercy for souls. If we can appreciate this gift of being hosts in His hands then we too will exclaim with Bl. Elizabeth, “O Love, consume my entire being for Your glory that it may be poured out drop by drop for Your Church!”

What is unique, then, about “our Mass” is the intention: this “Mass” is being offered for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. We don’t have to be conscious of that intention at every moment since it remains throughout the celebration; however, it certainly helps to have those Mementos during “our Mass” where we recall and renew the intention.

**Unlimited love for Mary**

Literally billions of souls are at stake, and some of them are very dear to us – we know them by name. Consequently, we are impelled to offer ourselves to Mother Mary with a childlike, filial love that knows no limits. Our offering, while it may remain hidden from others, will be ever present before the throne of God like a sanctuary lamp that burns slowly but constantly for His glory.

This offering as a little victim of love for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary bestows a special grace upon the soul: namely that of doing everything through, with and in Mary’s Most Pure Heart. This will culminate in the transformation of the soul, as it were, into her, so that the little victim will become an extension of her Immaculate Heart in the world. St. Maximilian M. Kolbe even spoke of being “transubstantiated into the Immaculata.” “Let us disappear in her,” he would say, “Let her alone remain and we in her, a part of her.”
In fact, what we will discover is that in order for us to be instruments in bringing about the triumph and reign of Our Lady in the world she must first and foremost triumph and reign in us. The glorious, universal triumph of Mary’s Heart starts in our hearts. The triumph must be realized one heart at a time.

That said, the spiritual program of this little victimhood of love starts at home. It begins with our consecration to her maternal heart, the imitation of her virtues, the awareness and correspondence to her ongoing spiritual presence, the death to the world and to ourselves, and the mystical transformation in the Most Holy Trinity in the depths of the divine sanctuary of her Immaculate Heart. In a word, we must experience and live her motherly presence first hand and then we will be able to bring that presence to others by our lives, words, prayers, and actions.

I conclude with a prayer which can serve as a model for offering oneself as a little victim of love for the triumph of Mary’s Most Pure and Immaculate Heart.

Offering as a Little Victim of Love
for the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

O Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and my Mother Mary, I consecrate myself entirely to you with a filial love that knows no limits. For the greatest possible glory of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and for the salvation and sanctification of souls, I offer myself as a little victim of love for the triumph of your Most Pure and Immaculate Heart.

Deign, oh my Mother, to accept this humble offering and give me the grace to do everything through, with and in your Heart. May you use me as you wish. Transform me completely within your Immaculate Heart so that I may disappear and you alone remain.

Amen.

Ave María!
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