

Day Three: *The Way of Life or Destruction?*

Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few (Mt. 7:13-14)

You have chosen to begin walking the path to holiness with greater security through Mary, with Mary and in Mary. This path is a rejection of the devil's and the world's empty promises and a choice ultimately for God in Christ.

But we must be real. This path is *hard*. Even more Christ reveals to us that *those who find it are few*. Pretty consoling words, huh? They are real enough to sow doubt in our minds about what we've really gotten ourselves into. Fear not, though, Christ and Mary have overcome the world (cf. Jn 16:33). This consecration and the way of life that it demands are an invitation to join Jesus and Mary in this victory.

Are you ready to bail? Or ready to keep going?

At this stage in our preparation it would be good to call to mind a very important grace that we should never cease asking for throughout these 33 days: *perseverance*.

Let us also hold fast to the advice of St. Teresa of Avila. She wrote in *The Way of Perfection* that those who travel the hard road must begin "by making an earnest and most determined resolve not to halt until they reach their goal, whatever may come, whatever may happen to them, however hard they may have to labor."

Resolve. Determination. The kingdom of heaven, sharing in the triumph of Christ through Mary, is for those who are *determined* to enter it (cf. Lk 16:16; Mt 11:12).

Find your encouragement in these words from Mary's Apostle in the 21st century:

"Do not be afraid to be holy! Have the courage and humility to present yourselves to the world *determined* to be holy, since full, true freedom is born from holiness" (St. John Paul II, *Message to Youth*, Santiago de Compostela, August 8th, 1999).

Ask for holiness through Mary and you will find it. Seek holiness through Mary and it will be given to you. Knock on the door of holiness with Mary and it will be opened to you.

Further questions to consider: Am I determined to persevere in this consecration? What fears do I have about persevering? Am I placing too much confidence in myself to the neglect of trusting in God's Providence? What resolutions should I make here and now to dispose myself to persevere? (Set a specific time each day to do my preparation meditation and prayers, post notes in my room, desk or car to remind me, take advantage of the accountability group in "GroupMe", etc.)

-Today's Prayer-

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart, **Hear me.**
From the fear of being forgotten ... **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From the fear of being ridiculed ...
From the fear of being wronged ...
From the fear of being suspected ...
From the fear of failure...

Come Holy Spirit, living in Mary. Give me the heart of Christ, my Lord.