

“Mary the Magnifier”

Last night in Adoration an analogy came to me regarding devotions to our Blessed Mother, the role Mary plays in guiding us to Christ. It is a subject I struggled with years ago as I slowly made my way from the pews of Protestantism to Catholicism. I was finding many deeper, beautiful Truths in Catholicism, a true richness in the faith; but what could I possibly gain by going to Mary vice Jesus?? Intercessory prayer and “role model” concepts were easy to grasp and accept, but “devotion”? Devotion to a creature – regardless of how beautiful and special and holy -- vice our Creator?? The idea truly frightened me! I simply could neither wrap my head nor my heart around it. But with prayer and time and grace I began to understand I was looking at the subject all wrong.

The “Magnificat” (or “Canticle of Mary”) is found in Luke 1:46-55. The modern translation of this Song of Mary begins, *“My souls proclaims the greatness of the Lord...”* But when we take “Magnificat” (Latin for “magnifies”) and place it in the opening it reads, “My soul magnifies the Lord.” This is a very important distinction, for in this we understand that Mary could never be an obstacle to or distraction from Christ. Devotion to her is actually not about her at all, but truly and absolutely all about Jesus. For the more I “devote” myself to her and her innate magnification, the more I am inherently drawn closer to Christ... Thus, it is precisely because of my ardent desire for Christ that I have a devotion to Mary. Can one get to Jesus without her? Absolutely, but with lesser clarity and increased difficulty. Which brings us to the analogy from last night ...

Very simply: If Jesus is the Target we’re aiming for, Mary is the scope on our rifle. The great value of the scope is that it magnifies the target for us; the “great value” of Mary is that she magnifies Christ for us... (Those with firearms experience may better appreciate the analogy!)

One would never suggest that the extent to which we focus on or “devote” ourselves to the scope and learn to properly align ourselves with it, implies any lack of devotion to hitting the Target. Quite the opposite, it implies we’re quite serious about the Target – that’s the reason for using the scope.



It is true that we may actually be able to hit our target without a scope – but that’s not the point. The point is that when we properly utilize a scope, aiming is easier and more precise and hitting my target is far more likely. So it’s not a question of necessity, but about simple prudence; and it’s not a question of distraction, but about increased focus. When your eternity rests on hitting that Target and you decide to set aside the scope you’re given, you either don’t understand the value of a good scope, or otherwise are not taking your Target very seriously...

Bottom line, when we take the time to align ourselves with Mary, the better we can see and hone in on Jesus, our ultimate Objective!

Peace,

Dcn Ron

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