

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

More than any other, Mary, the Mother of Christ, reminds us of the possibilities that await us when we open ourselves to God and allow Him to reveal His will and unconditional love through us. Mary found in herself the capacity to say “yes” when faced with unreasonable and daunting circumstances - “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” (Lk 1:38). What better way to celebrate this Season of Christmas and prepare for the New Year upon us than to participate in an Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary!

A number of years ago, shortly after I became bishop of the Diocese of Albany, I experienced a life-changing grace through this Act of Consecration, first introduced by St. Louis de Montfort. The guide I used in participating in this daily commitment was an updated version of St. Louis de Montfort’s classic book - **True Devotion to Mary** - developed and adapted for our times by Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC and titled, **33 Days to Morning Glory**. It’s an easy-to-follow daily reflection on spiritual themes and the examples and words of holy men and women who have led others – and been led themselves – to Christ through His Mother, Mary.

It is my hope as your temporary pastor here in the Diocese of Buffalo that you will take full advantage of this spiritually enriching opportunity - and invite others who may also be interested - in reflecting on the Mother of God beginning on **Tuesday, December 31st, 2019**. At the end of these thirty-three days of Consecration, I hope you will then join in a special culminating celebration at your parish Sunday Masses on **February 2nd, 2020**. You’ll be hearing more about this in the coming days.

An excellent retreat master, Fr. Michael leads us step-by-step through the Act of Consecration in his very personal and readable book. We have arranged for **33 Days to Morning Glory** to also be **available in magazine form** at your local parish. For all of the resources you need, please visit our dedicated [web page](http://www.buffalodiocese.org/MarianConsecration) (www.buffalodiocese.org/MarianConsecration), or call/email Cheryl Calire (716) 847-2205, [Pro-Lifeoffice@buffalodiocese.org](mailto:Pro-Lifeoffice@buffalodiocese.org) our Executive Director of Pro-Life Ministries.

I look forward to learning from your experience of this unique encounter with this act of abandonment to God’s great mercy. My prayer is that this Act of Consecration will serve to deepen your own journey of faith, enrich the lives those with whom you share it daily, and lead to a period of true renewal for our entire Diocese. I know from my own experience that by committing our hearts and minds to Mary and her example, we enter through a sacred door to the very heart of Jesus, who is always and forever the fulfillment of our own hearts’ deepest desires.

May you have a Blessed and Holy Christmas, experiencing its abundant joy with family, loved ones and friends!

Lovingly in Christ,



**Bishop Edward B. Scharfenberger**  
*Apostolic Administrator*