



Day 20: Chastity

Jesus, the Free Man

“For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.” John 10:17-18

The Catechism reflects that, “God is love and in himself he lives a mystery of personal loving communion. Creating the human race in his own image . . . God inscribed in the humanity of man and woman the vocation, and thus the capacity and responsibility, of love and communion. (CCC #2331) The “capacity and responsibility” of love and communion is the virtue of chastity, the disciplined steering of our sexual desires toward good things. Jesus was the “Chaste One” who exercised perfect freedom that allowed each choice of His will to be one of love and blessing. In every moment, Jesus was aware of His capacity to love. Jesus made choices, acts of love that engaged all of His Person to love and bless those in His life. Jesus, in the fullness of His divinity and humanity, was ordered and oriented toward love and communion at all times. The grace and gift of chastity in His heart was the force of the Holy Spirit ordering all of His human passions and appetites to love. In freedom, He exercised this grace and gift with radical generosity and self-offering, never thinking about Himself or seeking self-interest.

Mary, Mother of Freedom

Mary enjoyed a particular and singular grace to live in the fulness of chastity. She beautifully and perfectly ordered the love of the “Other” in her life. As chaste Mother, she protected the “capacity and responsibility” of the chaste Son. Mary’s freedom fosters freedom in the human nature of her Son. In other words, as Mary cared for Jesus in his formative years and throughout His life, she was eliciting more and more His radical capacity to give Himself freely and fully in love to those around Him. Through her gaze, her tenderness, and her love, Jesus was able to experience the gift of authentic love, a love that is pure gift, receptivity, and communion. This love is never grasping, controlling, or manipulative, but always open and ready to bless and build up.

St. Juan Diego and Us

You can be set free to love chastely. Sin turns us in on ourselves, and we get caught so easily! Especially in the realm of our sexual appetite, we can feel constantly pulled, divided, and at war with ourselves. What is bestowed by God in our childhood innocence as a gift, is a prime target for the evil one and the world to attack, but Our Lady is always

present to protect us and help us order our lives, and our loves, correctly. After Juan Diego had collected the flowers from the top of Tepeyac Hill, he came back down, and Our Lady arranged each flower in the hollow of his tilma. Msgr. Chavez, reflecting on this scene, tells us, "Mary manifested a symbol of great closeness with humanity physically, morally, and spiritually. At the same time this gesture signified that the Mother of God arranges the divine truth in our interior. She is the one who disposes, organizes, and harmonizes God's truth in our being" (Chavez, *Nican Mopohua* pg 147) Chastity is hard; choices to love and die to self are hard, but you too can experience what Juan Diego did! Our Lady desires to arrange the divine truth in your own life. Praise God, dear brother, that He gives us the sacrament of Reconciliation to begin again, to be renewed, and to love like Christ.

Prayer

O Jesus, we adore You, we love You, and we thank You for the gift of Your presence. Your life, death, and resurrection reveal to us what it means to offer yourself as a free gift of love. We ask You now to hear this prayer.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of God and Mother of us, draw us close to your heart. As you inspired your Son to be totally given to the "other" in His life, please obtain for us the grace to overcome our grasping and selfishness and find true happiness in the gift of chaste, freely given love to those in our lives.

Amen.

After reading today's reflection, [pray the Litany of Restoration of Sonship](#).