

PREPARATION FOR TOTAL CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY

ST. LOUIS DE MONTFORT'S formula of total consecration to Jesus through Mary is not to be taken lightly. This is evidenced from the fact that the Saint himself advocates a serious preparation consisting of twelve preliminary days, in which the soul endeavours to rid itself of the spirit of the world as opposed to the spirit of Christ. This is followed by three weeks of prayer and meditation during which the soul strives to acquire a better knowledge of self (1st week), of Mary (2nd week), and of Jesus Christ (3rd week).

Though this preliminary period is strongly recommended, it is obvious that the length of time devoted to such a preparation may vary according to one's personal needs and circumstances. For the benefit of those desiring to make the complete preparation recommended by the Saint, the Montfort Fathers in the United States have, for the first time, assembled in one book the various prayers and meditations conducive to an adequate preparation for total consecration to Jesus through Mary. A chart, consisting of six suggested schedules for consecration has also been drawn up to make it easier to keep track of the preparation days.

It is our hope that this book will not only simplify the task of preparing for consecration but also encourage countless others to undertake this beautiful way of spiritual life TO JESUS THROUGH MARY.

-The Editors

Part I - TWELVE PRELIMINARY DAYS

Theme: SPIRIT OF THE WORLD

Examine your conscience, pray, practice renouncement of your own will; mortification, purity of heart. This purity is the indispensable condition for contemplating God in heaven, to see Him on earth and to know Him by the light of faith.

The first part of the preparation should be employed in casting off the spirit of the world which is contrary to that of Jesus Christ. The spirit of the world consists essentially in the denial of the supreme dominion of God; a denial which is manifested in practice by sin and disobedience; thus it is principally opposed to the spirit of Christ, which is also that of Mary.

It manifests itself by the concupiscence of the flesh, by the concupiscence of the eyes and by the pride of life. By disobedience to God's laws and the abuse of created things. Its works are: sin in all forms, then all else by which the devil leads to sin; works which bring error and darkness to the mind, and seduction and corruption to the will. Its pomps are the splendour and the charms employed by the 'devil to render sin alluring in persons, places and things.

PRAYERS TO BE RECITED DURING THESE FIRST TWELVE DAYS

Veni Creator

Come, O Creator Spirit blest!
And in our souls take up thy rest;
Come with Thy grace and heavenly aid,
To fill the hearts which Thou hast made.

Great Paraclete! To Thee we cry,
O highest gift of God most high!
O font of life! O fire of love!
And sweet anointing from above.

Thou in Thy sevenfold gifts art known,
The finger of God's hand we own;
The promise of the Father, Thou!
Who dost the tongue with power endow.

Kindle our senses from above,
And make our hearts o'erflow with love;
With patience firm and virtue high
The weakness of our flesh supply.

Far from us drive the foe we dread,
And grant us Thy true peace instead;
So shall we not, with Thee for guide,
Turn from the path of life aside.

Oh, may Thy grace on us bestow
The Father and the Son to know,
And Thee through endless times confessed
Of both the eternal Spirit blest.

All glory while the ages run
Be to the Father and the Son
Who rose from death; the same to Thee,
O Holy Ghost, eternally. Amen.

Ave Maris Stella

Hail, bright star of ocean,
God's own Mother blest,
Ever sinless Virgin,
Gate of heavenly rest.

Taking that sweet Ave
Which from Gabriel came,
Peace confirm within us,
Changing Eva's name.

Break the captives' fetters,
Light on blindness pour,
All our ills expelling,
Every bliss implore.

Show thyself a Mother;
May the Word Divine,
Born for us thy Infant,
Hear our prayers through thine.

Virgin all excelling,
Mildest of the mild,
Freed from guilt, preserve us,
Pure and undefiled.

Keep our life all spotless,
Make our way secure,

Till we find in Jesus
Joy forevermore.

Through the highest heaven
To the Almighty Three,
Father, Son and Spirit,
One same glory be. Amen.

(Indulgence of three years. Plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions, if recited daily for a month. Preces et Pia Opera, 292.)

Magnificat

My soul doth magnify the Lord.

And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid; for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

Because He that is mighty hath done great things to me; and holy is His name.

And His mercy is from generation to generations, to them that fear Him.

He hath showed might in His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat; and hath exalted the humble.

He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He hath received Israel His servant, being mindful of His mercy.

As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

(Indulgence of three years. Plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions, if recited daily for a month.-Preces et Pia Opera, 291)

FIRST DAY

St. Matthew: Chapter 5: 1-19

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain, and when he was set down, his disciples came unto him. And opening his mouth, he taught them saying: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for my sake: be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven. For so they persecuted the Prophets that were before you.

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt lose its savour wherewith shall it be salted? It is good for nothing anymore but to be cast out and be trodden on by men. You are the light of the world. A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that it may shine to all that are in the house. So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Do not think that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am come not to destroy but to fulfill. For Amen, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle shall not pass of the law, till all be fulfilled. He therefore, that shall break one of these least commandments, and shall so teach man, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But he that shall do and teach shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Now turn to page 1, For Prayers, etc.

SECOND DAY

St. Matthew: Chapter 5: 48, 6: 1-15

Be ye therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect. Take heed that you do not your justice before men, to be seen by them: otherwise you shall not have the reward of your Father who is in heaven. Therefore when thou dost an alms-deed sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honoured by men. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. And when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth. That thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father who sees in secret will repay thee. And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites that love to stand and pray in the synagogues and corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men; Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But thou, when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to the Father in secret; and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee. And when you are praying, speak not much, as the heathens. For they think that in their much speaking they may be heard. Be not you therefore like to them; for your Father knoweth what is needful for you, before you ask him. Thus therefore shall you pray: Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our supersubstantial bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. Amen. For if you will forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences. But if you will not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offences.

Now turn to page 1, For Prayers, etc.

THIRD DAY

St. Matthew: Chapter 7: 1-14

Judge not, that you may not be judged. For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged: and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why seest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye; and seest not the beam that is in thy own eye? Or how sayest thou to thy brother: let me cast the mote out of thy eye; and behold a beam is in thy own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam of thy own eye and then shalt thou see to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. Give not that which is holy to dogs. Neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest perhaps they trample them under their feet: and turning upon you, they tear you. Ask, and it shall be given you: seek and you shall find: Knock and it shall be opened to you. For everyone that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Or what man of whom if his son shall ask bread will he reach him a stone? Or, if he shall ask him a fish: will he reach him a serpent? If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him? All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do also to them. For this is the law and the prophets. Enter ye into the narrow gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate and straight is the way that leadeth to life, and few are there that find it!

Now turn to page 1, For Prayers, etc.

FOURTH DAY

Imitation: Book 3, Chapters 7, 40

That man has no good of himself, and that he cannot glory an anything

Lord, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him; or the son of man, that Thou visit him? What has man deserved that Thou should give him grace? Lord, what cause have I to complain, if Thou forsakest me, or what can I justly allege, if what I petition Thou shalt not grant? This most assuredly, I may truly think and say: Lord I am nothing, I can do nothing of myself, that is good, but I am in all things defective and ever tend to nothing. And unless I am assisted and interiorly instructed by Thee, I become wholly tepid and relaxed, but Thou, O Lord, art always the same, and endurest unto eternity, ever good, just and holy, doing all things well, justly and holily and disposing them in wisdom.

But I who am more inclined to go back, than to go forward, continue not always in one state, for I am changed, seven different times. But it quickly becomes better when it pleases Thee, and Thou stretchest out Thy helping hand: for Thou alone, without man's aid can assist me and so strengthen me, that my countenance shall be more diversely changed: but my heart be converted and find its rest in Thee alone.

He who would be too secure in time of peace will often be found too much dejected in time of war. If you could always continue to be humble and little in your own eyes, and keep your spirit in due order and subjection, you would not fall so easily into danger and offense. It is good counsel that, when you have conceived the spirit of fervour, you should meditate how it will be when that light shall be withdrawn.

Now turn to page 1, For Prayers, etc.

FIFTH DAY

Imitation: Continued: Book 3, Chapter 40

Wherefore, but I did know well, how to cast from me all human comfort, either for the sake of devotion, or through the necessity by which I am compelled to seek Thee, because there is no man that can comfort me. Then might I deservedly hope in Thy favour, and rejoice in the gift of a new consolation. Thanks be to Thee from Whom all things proceed, as often as it happens to me, I, indeed, am but vanity, and nothing in Thy sight, an inconstant and weak man. Where, therefore, can I glory, or for what do I desire to be thought of highly?

Forsooth of my very nothingness; and this is most vain. Truly vainglory is an evil plague, because it draws away from true glory, and robs us of heavenly grace. For, while a man takes complacency in himself, he displeases Thee; while he wants for human applause, he is deprived of true virtues. But true, glory and holy exultation is to glory in Thee, and not in one's self; to rejoice in Thy Name, but not in one's own strength. To find pleasure in no creature, save only for Thy sake. Let Thy Name be praised, not mine; let Thy work be magnified, not mine; let Thy Holy Name be blessed, but let nothing be attributed to me of the praise of men. Thou art my glory; Thou art the exultation of my heart; in Thee, will I glory and rejoice all the day; but for myself, I will glory in nothing but in my infirmities.

Now turn to page 1, For Prayers, etc.

SIXTH DAY

Imitation: Book 1, Chapter 18

On the examples of the Holy Fathers

Look upon the lively examples of the holy Fathers in whom shone real perfection and the religious life, and you will see how little it is, and almost nothing that we do. Alas, what is our life when we compare it with theirs? Saints and friends of Christ, they served our Lord in hunger and in thirst, in cold, in nakedness, in labour and in weariness, in watching, in fasting, prayers and holy meditations, and in frequent persecutions and reproaches. Oh, how many grievous tribulations did the Apostles suffer and the Martyrs and Confessors and Virgins, and all the rest who resolved to follow the steps of Christ! For they hated their lives in this world, that they might keep them in life everlasting. Oh what a strict and self-renouncing life the holy Fathers of the desert led! What long and grievous temptations did they bear! How often were they harassed by the enemy, what frequent and fervent prayers did they offer up to God, what rigorous abstinence did they practice!

What a valiant contest waged they to subdue their imperfections! What purity and straightforwardness of purpose kept them towards God! By day they laboured, and much of the night they spent in prayer; though while they laboured, they were far from leaving off mental prayer. They spent all their time profitably. Every hour seemed short to spend with God; and even their necessary bodily refreshment was forgotten in the great sweetness of contemplation. They renounced all riches, dignities, honours and kindred; they hardly took what was necessary for life. It grieved them to serve the body even in its necessity. Accordingly, they were poor in earthly things, but very rich in grace and virtues.

Now turn to page 1, For Prayers, etc.

SEVENTH DAY

Imitation: Book 1, Chapter 18

Outwardly they suffered want, but within they were refreshed with grace and Divine consolation. They were aliens to the world; they seemed as nothing and the world despised them; but they were precious and beloved in the sight of God. They persevered in true humility, they lived in simple obedience, they walked in charity and patience, and so every day they advanced in spirit and gained great favour with God. They were given for example to all religious, and

ought more to excite us to advance in good, than the number of lukewarm to induce us to grow remiss. Oh! how great was the fervour of all religious in the beginning of their holy institute! Oh, how great was their devotion in prayer, how great was their zeal for virtue! How vigorous the discipline that was kept up, what reverence and obedience, under the rule of the superior, flourished in all! Their traces that remain still bear witness, that they were truly holy and perfect men who did battle so stoutly, and trampled the world under their feet. Now, he is thought great who is not a transgressor; and who can, with patience, endure what he has undertaken. Ah, the luke-warmness and negligence of our state! that we soon fall away from our first fervour, and are even now tired with life, from slothfulness and tepidity. Oh that advancement in virtue be not quite asleep in thee, who has so often seen the manifold examples of the devout!

Now turn to page 1, For Prayers, etc.

EIGHTH DAY

Imitation: Book 1, Chapter 13

Of resisting temptations

As long as we live in this world, we cannot be without temptations and tribulations. Hence it is written in Job "Man's life on earth is a temptation." Everyone therefore should be solicitous about his temptations and watch in prayer lest the devil find an opportunity to catch him: who never sleeps, but goes about, seeking whom he can devour. No one is so perfect and holy as sometimes not to have temptations and we can never be wholly free from them. Nevertheless, temptations are very profitable to man, troublesome and grievous though they may be, for in them, a man is humbled, purified and instructed. All the Saints passed through many tribulations and temptations and were purified by them. And they that could not support temptations, became reprobate, and fell away.

Many seek to flee temptations, and fall worse into them. We cannot conquer by flight alone, but by patience and true humility we become stronger than all our enemies. He who only declines them outwardly, and does not pluck out their root, will profit little; nay, temptations will sooner return and he will find himself in a worse condition. By degrees and by patience you will, by God's grace, better overcome them than by harshness and your own impotency. Take council the oftener in temptation, and do not deal harshly with one who is tempted; but pour in consolation, as thou wouldst wish to be done unto yourself. Inconstancy of mind and little confidence in God, is the beginning of all temptations. For as a ship without a helm is driven to and fro by the waves, so the man who neglects and gives up his resolutions is tempted in many ways.

Now turn to page 1, For Prayers, etc.

NINTH DAY

Imitation: Book 1, Chapter 13

Fire tries iron, and temptation a just man. We often know not what we are able to do, but temptations discover what we are. Still, we must watch, especially in the beginning of temptation; for then the enemy is more easily overcome, if he be not suffered to enter the door of the mind, but is withstood upon the threshold the very moment he knocks. Whence a certain one has said "Resist beginnings; all too late the cure." When ills have gathered strength, by long delay, first there comes from the mind a simple thought; then a strong imagination, afterwards delight, and the evil motion and consent and so, little by little the fiend does gain entrance, when he is not resisted in the beginning. The longer anyone has been slothful in resisting, so much the weaker he becomes, daily in himself, and the enemy, so much the stronger in him. Some suffer grievous temptations in the beginning of their conversion, others in the end and others are troubled nearly their whole life. Some are very lightly tempted, according to the wisdom and the equity of the ordinance of God who weighs man's condition and merits, and preordaineth all things for the salvation of His elect. We must not, therefore, despair when we are tempted, but the more fervently pray to God to help us in every tribulation: Who, of a truth, according to the sayings of St. Paul, will make such issue with the temptation, that we are able to sustain it.

Let us then humble our souls under the hand of God in every temptation and tribulation, for the humble in spirit, He will save and exalt. In temptation and tribulations, it is proved what progress man has made; and there also is great

merit, and virtue is made more manifest.

Now turn to page 1, For Prayers, etc.

TENTH DAY

Imitation: Book 3, Chapter 10

That it is sweet to despise the world and to serve God

Now, will I speak again, O Lord, and will not be silent, I will say in the hearing of my God and my King Who is on high: Oh, how great is the abundance of Thy sweetness, O Lord, which Thou hast hidden for those that fear Thee! But what art Thou, for those who love Thee? What, to those who serve Thee with their whole heart? Unspeakable indeed is the sweetness of Thy contemplation, which Thou bestowest on those who love Thee. In this most of all hast Thou showed me the sweetness of Thy love, that when I had no being, Thou didst make me; and when I was straying far from Thee, Thou brought me back again, that I might serve Thee: and Thou hast commanded me to serve Thee. O Fountain of everlasting love, what shall I say of Thee? How can I forget Thee, Who hast vouchsafed to remember me even after I was corrupted and lost? Beyond all hope Thou showest mercy to Thy servant; and beyond all desert, hast Thou manifested Thy grace and friendship. What return shall I make to Thee for this favour? For it is granted to all who forsake these things, to renounce the world, and to assume the monastic life. Is it much that I should serve Thee, Whom the whole creation is bound to serve? It ought not to seem much to me to serve Thee; but this does rather appear great and wonderful to me, that Thou vouchsafest to receive one so wretched and unworthy as Thy servant.

It is a great honour, a great glory, to serve Thee, and to despise all things for Thee, for they who willingly subject themselves to Thy holy service, shall have great grace. They shall experience the most sweet consolation of the Holy Spirit, Who for the love of Thee, have cast aside all carnal delight.

Now turn to page 1, For Prayers, etc.

ELEVENTH DAY

Imitation: Book 1, Chapter 25

Of the Fervent Amendment of our whole life

When a certain anxious person, who often times wavered between hope and fear, once overcome with sadness, threw himself upon the ground in prayer, before one of the altars in the Church and thinking these things in his mind, said "Oh, if I only knew how to persevere," that very instant he heard within him, this heavenly answer: "And if thou didst know this, what would thou do? Do now what you would do, and thou shall be perfectly secure." And immediately being consoled, and comforted, he committed himself to the Divine Will, and his anxious thoughts ceased. He no longer wished for curious things; searching to find out what would happen to him, but studied rather to learn what was the acceptable and perfect will of God for the beginning and the perfection of every good work.

"Hope in the Lord," said the Prophet, "And do all good, and inhabit the land, and thou shall be fed of the riches thereof." There is one thing that keeps many back from spiritual progress, and from fervor in amendment namely: the labour that is necessary for the struggle. And assuredly they especially advance beyond others in virtues, who strive the most manfully to overcome the very things which are the hardest and most contrary to them. For there a man does profit more and merit more abundant grace, when he does most to overcome himself and mortify his spirit. All have not, indeed; equal difficulties to overcome and mortify, but a diligent and zealous person will make a greater progress though he have more passions than another, who is well regulated but less fervent in the pursuit of virtues.

Now turn to page 1, For Prayers, etc.

TWELFTH DAY

Imitation: Book 1, Chapter 25

And, whatever you see that is worthy of blame, take care that you do not do yourself; or if you have ever done so, study to amend as soon as possible. As your eye observes others, so again, you are observed by others. How pleasant and sweet it is to see brethren fervent and devout, well-mannered and well-disciplined! How sad and afflicting to see them disorderly, and not practicing the things they are called to do. How mischievous it is to neglect that purpose of

their vocations, and to turn their minds to what is not their business. Be mindful of the purpose you have undertaken, and place before you the image of the Crucified. Well may you be ashamed when looking into the Life of Jesus Christ, that as yet you have not studied more to conform yourself to Him, long as you have been in the way of God.

The religious who exercises himself earnestly and devoutly in the most holy life and Passion of our Lord shall find there abundantly all that is useful and necessary for him, nor need he seek out of Jesus, for anything better. Oh, if the Crucified Jesus, should come into your heart, how quickly and sufficiently learned would you be. The fervent and diligent man is ready for all things. It is harder labour to withstand our vices and passions than to toil at bodily labours. He that shuns not small defects, little by little, falls into greater ones. You will always be glad in the evening if you spent the day profitably. Watch over yourself, stir up yourself, and whatever may become of others, neglect not yourself. In proportion as you do violence to yourself, the greater progress will you make. Amen . . .

END PART 1

Now turn to page 1, For Prayers, etc.

Part II

Theme: KNOWLEDGE OF SELF

Prayers, examens, reflection, acts of renouncement of our own will, of contrition for our sins, of contempt of self—all performed at the feet of Mary, for it is from her that we hope for light to know ourselves. It is near her, that we shall be able to measure the abyss of our miseries without despairing. We should employ all our pious actions in asking for a knowledge of ourselves and contrition of our sins: and we should do this in a spirit of piety. During this period, we shall consider not so much the opposition that exists between the spirit of Jesus and ours, as the miserable and humiliating state to which our sins have reduced us. Moreover, the True Devotion being an easy, short, sure and perfect way to arrive at that union with Our Lord, which is Christ-like perfection, we shall enter seriously upon this way, strongly convinced of our misery and helplessness. But, how attain this without a knowledge of ourselves?

PRAYERS TO BE RECITED DURING THESE NEXT SEVEN DAYS (From the 13th day to the 19th day)

Litany of the Holy Ghost

(For private devotion only)

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Father, all powerful, have mercy on us.

Jesus, Eternal Son of the Father, Redeemer of the world, save us.

Spirit of the Father and the Son, boundless life of both, sanctify us.

Holy Trinity, hear us.

Holy Ghost, Who proceedest from the Father and the Son, enter our hearts.

Holy Ghost, Who art equal to the Father and the Son, enter our hearts.

Promise of God the Father,

Ray of heavenly light,

Author of all good,

Source of heavenly water,

Consuming Fire,

Ardent Charity,

Spiritual unction,

Spirit of love and truth,

Spirit of wisdom and understanding,

Spirit of counsel and fortitude,

Spirit of knowledge and piety,

Spirit of the fear of the Lord,
Spirit of grace and prayer,
Spirit of peace and meekness,
Spirit of modesty and innocence,
Holy Ghost, the Comforter,
Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier,
Holy Ghost, Who governest the Church,
Gift of God, the Most High
Spirit of the adoption of the children of God,
Holy Ghost, inspire us with the horror of sin,
Holy Ghost, come and renew the face of the earth,
Holy Ghost, shed Thy light in our souls,
Holy Ghost, engrave the law in our hearts,
Holy Ghost, inflame us with the flame of Thy love,
Holy Ghost, open to us the treasures of thy Graces,
Holy Ghost, teach us to pray well.
Holy Ghost, enlighten us with Thy heavenly inspirations.
Holy Ghost, lead us in the way of salvation.
Holy Ghost, grant us the only necessary knowledge.
Holy Ghost, inspire in us the practice of good.
Holy Ghost, grant us the merits of all virtues.
Holy Ghost, make us persevere in justice.
Holy Ghost, be Thou our everlasting reward.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, send us Thy Holy Ghost.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, pour down into our souls the gifts of the Holy Ghost.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, grant us the Spirit of wisdom and piety.
V/. Come, Holy Ghost! Fill the hearts of Thy faithful.
R/. And enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.
Let us pray
Grant, O merciful Father, that Thy Divine Spirit enlighten, inflame and purify us, that He may penetrate us with His heavenly dew and make us fruitful in good works; through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who with Thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, liveth and reigneth forever and ever. Amen.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
God the Father of heaven, have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.
Holy Mary, pray for us.
Holy Mother of God,
Holy Virgin of virgins,
Mother of Christ,
Mother of divine grace,

Mother most pure,
Mother most chaste,
Mother inviolate,
Mother undefiled,
Mother most amiable,
Mother most admirable,
Mother of good counsel,
Mother of our Creator,
Mother of our Savior,
Virgin most prudent,
Virgin most venerable,
Virgin most renowned,
Virgin most powerful,
Virgin most merciful,
Virgin most faithful,
Mirror of justice,
Seat of wisdom,
Cause of our joy,
Spiritual vessel,
Vessel of honour,
Singular vessel of devotion,
Mystical rose,
Tower of David,
Tower of ivory,
House of gold,
Ark of the covenant,
Gate of heaven,
Morning Star,
Health of the Sick,
Refuge of sinners,
Comforter of the afflicted,
Help of Christians,
Queen of angels,
Queen of patriarchs,
Queen of prophets,
Queen of Apostles,
Queen of martyrs,
Queen of confessors,
Queen of virgins,
Queen of all saints,
Queen conceived without original sin,
Queen assumed into heaven,
Queen of the most holy Rosary,
Queen of peace.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of world, spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

V/. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R/. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray

Grant unto us, Thy servants, we beseech Thee, O Lord God, at all times to enjoy health of soul and body; and by the glorious intercession of Blessed Mary, ever virgin, when freed from the sorrows of this present life, to enter into that joy which hath no end. Through Christ our Lord. R/. Amen.

(Indulgence of seven years. Plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions, if recited with the versicle and oration daily for a month.-Preces et Pia Opera, 290.)

Ave Maris Stella

Hail, bright star of ocean,
God's own Mother blest,
Ever sinless Virgin,
Gate of heavenly rest.

Taking that sweet Ave
Which from Gabriel came,
Peace confirm within us,
Changing Eva's name.

Break the captives' fetters,
Light on blindness pour,
All our ills expelling,
Every bliss implore.

Show thyself a Mother;
May the Word Divine,
Born for us thy Infant,
Hear our prayers through thine.

Virgin all excelling,
Mildest of the mild,
Freed from guilt, preserve us,
Pure and undefiled.

Keep our life all spotless,
Make our way secure,
Till we find in Jesus
Joy forevermore.

Through the highest heaven
To the Almighty Three,
Father, Son and Spirit,
One same glory be. Amen.

(Indulgence of three years. Plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions, if recited daily for a month. -Preces et Pia Opera, 292.)

THIRTEENTH DAY

St. Luke: Chapter 11, 1-11

And it came to pass, that as He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And He said to them: when you pray, say: Father, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation. And He said to them: which of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and shall say to him: Friend, lend me three loaves, because a friend of mine is come off his journey to me, and I have not what to set before him. And he from within should answer and say: trouble me not, the door is now shut and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. Yet, if he shall continue knocking, I say to you although he will not rise and give him because he is a friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say to you: ask and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.

Now turn to page 8, For Prayers, etc.

FOURTEENTH DAY

Imitation: Book 3, Chapter 13

Of the obedience of a humble heart; after the example of Jesus Christ

Son, he who strives to withdraw himself from obedience, withdraws himself from grace, and he that seeks particular privileges loses much as are in common. He who does not freely and willingly submit himself to his superior shows that his flesh is not as yet perfectly obedient, but instead is often rebellious. Learn then to submit yourself readily to your superior, if you desire to subdue your own flesh. For sooner is the exterior enemy overcome, if the inward man be not laid waste; there is not a more troublesome or worrisome enemy to the soul than yourself when you are not agreeing with the spirit. You must in earnest conceive a true contempt of yourself, if you will prevail against flesh and blood, because as yet, you love yourself too inordinately, therefore do you fear to resign yourself entirely to the will of others. But what great matter is this, if you who are but dust and a mere nothing, submit yourself to man for God's sake, when I the Almighty, and the Most High, Who created all things out of nothing for thy sake, humbly subjected Myself to man.

Imitation: Of the obedience of a humble heart; after the example of Jesus Christ

I became the most humble and the most subject of all men, that you might overcome your pride. Learn O dust, to obey; learn to humble yourself, and how to bow under the feet of all. Learn to break your own will, and yield yourself up to all subjection.

Now turn to page 8, For Prayers, etc.

FIFTEENTH DAY

St. Luke: Chapter 13, 1-5

And there were present, at that very time, some that told Him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And He answering, said to them: Think you, that these Galileans were sinners above all the men of Galilee, because they suffered such things? No, I say to you: but unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen upon whom the tower fell in Siloe, and slew them: think you, that they also were debtors above all the men that dwelt in Jerusalem? No, I say to you; but except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish.

True Devotion: No. 81, 82 We need Mary in order to die to ourselves

In order to rid ourselves of self, we must die to ourselves daily. This is to say, we must renounce the operations of the powers of our soul, and the senses of our body. We must see as if we saw not, understand as if we understood not and make use of all the things of this world, as if we made no use of them at all. This is what St. Paul calls dying daily: "Unless the grain of wheat falling in the ground die, itself remaineth alone, and bringeth forth no good fruit." If we do not die to ourselves, and if the holiest devotions do not incline us to the necessary and useful death, we shall bring forth no fruit worth anything, and our devotion will become useless.

We must choose, therefore among all the devotions to the Blessed Virgin, the one which draws us most toward this

death to ourselves, inasmuch as it will be the best and most sanctifying.

Now turn to page 8, For Prayers, etc.

SIXTEENTH DAY

True Devotion: No. 228

Preparatory Exercises

During the first week, we should offer up all our prayers and pious actions to ask for a knowledge of ourselves and contrition for our sins: and we should do this in a spirit of humility. For that end, we can, if we choose meditate on our inward corruption, as explained before. We can look upon ourselves, during these days, as snails, crawling things, toads, swine, serpents, and unclean animals; or we can reflect on the three considerations of St. Bernard: the vileness of our origin, the dishonours of our present state, and our ending as food for worms. We should pray our Lord and the Holy Ghost to enlighten us, and for that we might use the ejaculation, "Lord, that I may see!" or "May I know myself" or "Come Holy Ghost," together with the Litany of the Holy Ghost. We should have recourse to the Blessed Virgin and ask her to grant this immense grace, which must be the foundation of all others, for this end, we should say daily: Ave Maris Stella, and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin.

Imitation: Book 2, Chapter 5

Of self-consideration

We may not trust too much of ourselves; for the grace and understanding are often wanting in us; there is but little light and this we may soon lose by negligence. Oftentimes we are quite unconscious how blind we are. We often do amiss, and do worse in excusing ourselves. Sometimes we are moved by passion, and think it zeal. We blame little things in others and overlook great things in ourselves. We are quick enough in perceiving and weighing what we bear from others; but we think little of what others have to bear with us. He that should well and justly weigh his own doings would find little cause to judge harshly of another.

Now turn to page 8, For Prayers, etc.

SEVENTEENTH DAY

Imitation: Book 1, Chapter 24

Of judgment and punishment of sinners

In all things look to the end and how will you stand before the strict judge, from Whom there is nothing hid, Who takes no bribes, receives no excuses, but will judge that which is just. O miserable sinner, O foolish sinner, what will you answer to God, Who knows all your evil deeds. You who are sometimes afraid of an angry man? Why don't you provide yourself against the day of judgment? When no man can be excused or defended by another, but each one will have enough to answer for himself?

St. Luke: Chapter 16, 1-8

And he said also to his disciples: there was a certain rich man who had a steward; and the same was accused unto him, that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said to him: How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship: for now thou canst be steward no longer. And the steward said within himself: what shall I do, because my Lord taketh away from me the stewardship? To dig, I am not able; to beg, I am ashamed. I know what I will do, that when I shall be removed from the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. Therefore calling together every one of his lord's debtors, he said to the first: How much dost thou owe my Lord? But he said: an hundred barrels of oil, And he said to him: take thy bill, set down quickly and write fifty. Then he said to another: And how much dost thou owe? Who said: An hundred quarters of wheat. He said to him: take thy bill, and write eighty. And the Lord commended the unjust steward, for as much as he had done wisely: for the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.

Now turn to page 8, For Prayers, etc.

EIGHTEENTH DAY

St. Luke: Chapter 17, 1-10

And he said to his disciples: It is impossible that scandals should not come. But woe to him through whom they come! It were better for him, that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should scandalize one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves. If thy brother sin against thee, reprove him; and if he do penance, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times a day, and seven times a day be converted unto thee, saying: I repent. Forgive him. And the apostles said to the Lord: Increase our faith. And the Lord said: If you had faith like to a grain of mustard seed, you might say to this mulberry tree: Be thou rooted up, and be thou transplanted into the sea. And it would obey you. But which of you having a servant, ploughing or feeding cattle, will say to him, when he is come from the field: Immediately go. Sit down to meat. And will not rather say to him: Make ready my supper, and gird thyself, and serve me, whilst I eat and drink, and afterwards thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant, for doing the things which he commanded him? I think not. So you also, when you shall have done all these things that are commanded you, say: we are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do.

Imitation: Book 3, Chapter 47

That all grievous things are to be endured for life everlasting

Son, let not your labours which you have undertaken for My sake crush thee, neither let tribulations, from whatever source, cast you down, but in every occurrence let My promise strengthen and console you. I am sufficient in recompense to you beyond all bounds and measures. It is not long you have to labour here, nor will you always be oppressed with sorrows. Wait a little while and you shall see a speedy end of suffering.

Now turn to page 8, For Prayers, etc.

NINETEENTH DAY

St. Luke: Chapter 18, 15-30

And they brought also unto him, infants that he might touch them. Which when the disciples saw, they rebuked them. But Jesus, calling them together, said: Suffer children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Amen, I say to you: Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a child, shall not enter into it. And a certain ruler, asked him, saying: Good Master, what shall I do to possess everlasting life? And Jesus said to him: Why dost thou call me good? None is good but God alone. Thou knowest the commandments: Thou shalt not kill: Thou shalt not commit adultery: Thou shalt not steal: Thou shalt not bear false witness: Honour thy father and mother. Who said: All these things have I kept from my youth. Which, when Jesus had heard, he said to him: Yet, one thing is wanting thee. Sell all whatever thou hast, and give it to the poor, and then thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me. He having heard these things, became sorrowful; for he was very rich. And Jesus, seeing him become sorrowful, said: How hardly shalt they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God. For it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they that heard it said: Who then can be saved? He said to them: The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. Then Peter said. Behold, we have left all things, and followed thee. Who said to them: Amen, I say to you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, brethren or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive much more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

Now turn to page 8, For Prayers, etc.

Part III

Theme: KNOWLEDGE OF MARY

Acts of love, pious affections for the Blessed Virgin, imitation of her virtues, especially her profound humility, her lively faith, her blind obedience, her continual mental prayer, her mortification in all things, her ardent charity, her heroic patience, her angelic sweetness and her divine wisdom: "these being," as St. Louis De Montfort says, "the ten principal virtues of the Blessed Virgin."

We must unite ourselves to Jesus through Mary—this is the characteristic of our devotion; therefore Saint Louis De Montfort asks that we employ ourselves in acquiring a knowledge of the Blessed Virgin. Mary is our sovereign and our mediatrix, our Mother and our Mistress. Let us then endeavour to know the effects of this royalty, of this medi-

ation, and of this maternity, as well as the grandeurs and prerogatives which are the foundation or consequences thereof. Our Blessed Mother is also perfect—a mould wherein we are able to be moulded in order to make her intentions and dispositions ours. This we cannot achieve without studying the interior life of Mary, namely, her virtues, her sentiments, her actions, her participation in the mysteries of Christ and her union with Him.

PRAYERS TO BE RECITED DURING THESE NEXT SEVEN DAYS

Litany of the Holy Ghost

(For private devotion only)

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Father, all powerful, have mercy on us.

Jesus, Eternal Son of the Father, Redeemer of the world, save us.

Spirit of the Father and the Son, boundless life of both, sanctify us.

Holy Trinity, hear us.

Holy Ghost, Who proceedest from the Father and the Son, enter our hearts.

Holy Ghost, Who art equal to the Father and the Son, enter our hearts.

Promise of God the Father,

Ray of heavenly light,

Author of all good,

Source of heavenly water,

Consuming Fire,

Ardent Charity,

Spiritual unction,

Spirit of love and truth,

Spirit of wisdom and understanding,

Spirit of counsel and fortitude,

Spirit of knowledge and piety,

Spirit of the fear of the Lord,

Spirit of grace and prayer,

Spirit of peace and meekness,

Spirit of modesty and innocence,

Holy Ghost, the Comforter,

Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier,

Holy Ghost, Who governest the Church,

Gift of God, the Most High

Spirit of the adoption of the children of God,

Holy Ghost, inspire us with the horror of sin,

Holy Ghost, come and renew the face of the earth,

Holy Ghost, shed Thy light in our souls,

Holy Ghost, engrave the law in our hearts,

Holy Ghost, inflame us with the flame of Thy love,

Holy Ghost, open to us the treasures of thy Graces,

Holy Ghost, teach us to pray well.

Holy Ghost, enlighten us with Thy heavenly inspirations.

Holy Ghost, lead us in the way of salvation.

Holy Ghost, grant us the only necessary knowledge.

Holy Ghost, inspire in us the practice of good.

Holy Ghost, grant us the merits of all virtues.

Holy Ghost, make us persevere in justice.

Holy Ghost, be Thou our everlasting reward.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, send us Thy Holy Ghost.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, pour down into our souls the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, grant us the Spirit of wisdom and piety.

V/. Come, Holy Ghost! Fill the hearts of Thy faithful.

R/. And enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.

Let us pray

Grant, O merciful Father, that Thy Divine Spirit enlighten, inflame and purify us, that He may penetrate us with His heavenly dew and make us fruitful in good works; through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who with Thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, liveth and reigneth forever and ever. Amen.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of heaven, have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.

God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, pray for us.

Holy Mother of God,

Holy Virgin of virgins,

Mother of Christ,

Mother of divine grace,

Mother most pure,

Mother most chaste,

Mother inviolate,

Mother undefiled,

Mother most amiable,

Mother most admirable,

Mother of good counsel,

Mother of our Creator,

Mother of our Savior,

Virgin most prudent,

Virgin most venerable,

Virgin most renowned,

Virgin most powerful,

Virgin most merciful,

Virgin most faithful,

Mirror of justice,

Seat of wisdom,

Cause of our joy,

Spiritual vessel,

Vessel of honour,
Singular vessel of devotion,
Mystical rose,
Tower of David,
Tower of ivory,
House of gold,
Ark of the covenant,
Gate of heaven,
Morning Star,
Health of the Sick,
Refuge of sinners,
Comforter of the afflicted,
Help of Christians,
Queen of angels,
Queen of patriarchs,
Queen of prophets,
Queen of Apostles,
Queen of martyrs,
Queen of confessors,
Queen of virgins,
Queen of all saints,
Queen conceived without original sin,
Queen assumed into heaven,
Queen of the most holy Rosary,
Queen of peace.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of world, spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

V/. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R/. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray

Grant unto us, Thy servants, we beseech Thee, O Lord God, at all times to enjoy health of soul and body; and by the glorious intercession of Blessed Mary, ever virgin, when freed from the sorrows of this present life, to enter into that joy which hath no end. Through Christ our Lord. R/. Amen.

(Indulgence of seven years. Plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions, if recited with the versicle and oration daily for a month.--Preces et Pia Opera, 290.)

Ave Maris Stella

Hail, bright star of ocean,
God's own Mother blest,
Ever sinless Virgin,
Gate of heavenly rest.

Taking that sweet Ave
Which from Gabriel came,
Peace confirm within us,
Changing Eva's name.

Break the captives' fetters,
Light on blindness pour,
All our ills expelling,
Every bliss implore.

Show thyself a Mother;
May the Word Divine,
Born for us thy Infant,
Hear our prayers through thine.

Virgin all excelling,
Mildest of the mild,
Freed from guilt, preserve us,
Pure and undefiled.

Keep our life all spotless,
Make our way secure,
Till we find in Jesus
Joy forevermore.

Through the highest heaven
To the Almighty Three,
Father, Son and Spirit,
One same glory be. Amen.

(Indulgence of three years. Plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions, if recited daily for a month. -Preces et Pia Opera, 292.)

St. Louis De Montfort's Prayer to Mary

Hail Mary, beloved Daughter of the Eternal Father. Hail Mary, admirable Mother of the Son. Hail Mary, faithful Spouse of the Holy Ghost. Hail Mary, my Mother, my loving Mistress, my powerful sovereign. Hail, my joy, my glory, my heart and my soul. Thou art all mine by mercy, and I am thine by justice. But I am not yet sufficiently thine. I now give myself wholly to thee without keeping anything back for myself or others. If thou seest anything in me which does not belong to thee, I beseech thee to take it and make thyself the absolute Mistress of all that is mine.

Destroy in me all that may displease God; root it up and bring it to nought. Place and cultivate in me everything that is pleasing to thee. May the light of thy faith dispel the darkness of my mind. May thy profound humility take the place of my pride; may thy sublime contemplation check the distractions of my wandering imagination. May the continuous sight of God fill my memory with His presence; may the burning love of thy heart inflame the lukewarmness of mine. May thy virtues take the place of my sins; may thy merits be my only adornment in the sight of God and make up for all that is wanting in me. Finally, dearly beloved Mother, grant if it be possible, that I may have no other spirit but thine to know Jesus, and His Divine Will; that I may have no other soul but thine to praise and glorify God; that I may have no other heart but thine to love God with a love as pure and ardent as thine.

I do not ask thee for visions, revelations, sensible devotions, or spiritual pleasures. It is thy privilege to see God clearly, it is thy privilege to enjoy heavenly bliss; it is thy privilege to triumph gloriously in heaven at the right hand of thy Son and to hold absolute sway over angels, men and demons,

It is thy privilege to dispose of all the gifts of God, just as thou wilt. Such is, O heavenly Mary, the 'best part', which the Lord has given thee, and which shall never be taken away from thee—and this thought, fills my heart with joy. As for my part here below, I wish for no other than that which was thine, to believe sincerely without spiritual pleasures, to suffer joyfully without human consolation, to die continually to myself without respite, and to work

zealously and unselfishly for thee until death, as the humblest of thy servants. The only grace I beg thee, for me, is that every moment of the day, and every moment of my life, I may say -"Amen, so be it, to all that thou art doing in heaven. Amen; so be it, to all thou didst do while on earth. Amen, so be it, to all thou art doing in my soul," so that thou alone mayest fully glorify Jesus in me for time and eternity. Amen.

Recitation of the Rosary . . .

TWENTIETH DAY

St. Luke: Chapter 2, 16-21; 42.52

And they came with haste, and they found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in a manger. And, seeing, they understood of the word that had been spoken to them concerning this child. And all that heard wondered at those things that were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, praising and glorifying God, for all the things that they had heard and seen as it was told unto them. And after eight days were accomplished, that the child should be circumcised, his Name was called Jesus, which was called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb . . .

And when he was twelve years old, they going up to Jerusalem, according to the custom of the feast, and having fulfilled the days, when they returned, the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem. And, his parents knew it not. And thinking that He was in the company, they came a day's journey, and sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And not finding him, they returned into Jerusalem seeking him. And it came to pass, that, after three days, they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his wisdom and his answers.

And seeing him, they wondered. And his Mother said to him: Son, why hast thou done so to us? Behold, thy Father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And He said to them: How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the word that He spoke unto them. And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them. And His Mother kept all these words in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and men.

Now turn to page 14, For Prayers, etc.

TWENTY-FIRST DAY

Secret of Mary: Nos. 23-24

True Devotion to Our Blessed Lady

If we would go up to God, and be united with Him, we must use the same means He used to come down to us to he made Man and to impart His graces to us. This means is a true devotion to our Blessed Lady. There are several true devotions to our Lady: here I do not speak of those which are false.

The first consists in fulfilling our Christian duties, avoiding mortal sin, acting more out of love than with fear, praying to our Lady now and then, honouring her as the Mother of God, yet without having any special devotion to her. The second consists in entertaining for our Lady more perfect feelings of esteem and love, of confidence and veneration. It leads us to join the Confraternities of the Holy Rosary and of the Scapular, to recite the five decades of the Holy Rosary (the fifteen mysteries), to honour Mary's images and altars, to publish her praises and to enroll ourselves into her sodalities. This devotion is good, holy and praiseworthy if we keep ourselves free from sin. But it is not so perfect as the best, nor so efficient in severing our soul from creatures, in detaching ourselves in order to be united with Jesus Christ.

The third devotion to our Lady, known and practiced by very few persons, is this I am about to disclose to you, predestinate soul. It consists in giving one's self entirely and as a slave to Mary, and to Jesus through Mary, and after that, to do all that we do, through Mary, with Mary, in Mary and for Mary. We should choose a special feast-day on which we give, consecrate and sacrifice to Mary, voluntarily, lovingly and without constraint, entirely and without reserve: our body and soul, our exterior property, such as a house, family and income, and also our interior and spiritual possessions: namely, our merits, graces, virtues, and satisfactions.

Now turn to page 14, For Prayers, etc.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY

True Devotion: Nos. 105-110.

The characteristics of true devotion

Interior: True Devotion to our Lady is interior: that is, it comes from the mind and the heart, it flows from the esteem we have for her, the high idea we have formed of her greatness and the love which we have for her.

Tender: It is tender, that is, full of confidence in her like a child's confidence in his loving Mother. This confidence makes the soul have recourse to her in all its bodily and mental necessities, with much simplicity, trust and tenderness.

Holy: This devotion to our Lady is holy: that is to say, it leads the soul to avoid sin and imitate the virtues of the Blessed Virgin, particularly her profound humility, her lively faith, her blind obedience, her continual prayer, her universal mortification, her divine purity, her ardent charity, her heroic patience, her angelic sweetness and her divine wisdom. These are the ten principal virtues of the most holy Virgin.

Constant: It is constant, that is to say, it confirms the soul in good, and does not let it, easily abandon its spiritual exercises. It makes it courageous in opposing the world and its fashions and maxims, the flesh in its weariness and passions; and the devil in his temptations, so that a person truly devout to our Blessed Lady is neither changeable, irritable, scrupulous or timid.

Disinterested: True Devotion to our Lady is disinterested: that is to say, it inspires the soul not to seek, itself but God only, and God in His holy Mother. A true client of Mary does not serve that august Queen from a spirit of lucre and interest, nor for his own good, whether temporal or eternal, corporal or spiritual, but exclusively because she deserves to be served and God alone in her.

Now turn to page 14, For Prayers, etc.

TWENTY-THIRD DAY

True Devotion: Nos. 120, 121

Nature of perfect devotion to the Blessed Virgin or perfect consecration to Jesus Christ

All our perfections consist in being conformed, united and consecrated to Jesus Christ; and therefore the most perfect of all devotions is, without any doubt, that which the most perfectly conforms, unites and consecrates us to Jesus Christ. Now Mary, being the most conformed of all creatures to Jesus Christ, it follows that of all devotions, that which most consecrates and conforms the soul to our Lord is devotion to His holy Mother. That the more a soul is consecrated to Mary, the more it is consecrated to Jesus Christ (Sec. 120). Hence it comes to pass that the most perfect consecration to Jesus Christ is nothing else but a perfect consecration, of ourselves, to the Blessed Virgin, and this is the devotion which I teach; or, in other words, a perfect renewal of the vows and promises of Holy Baptism. This devotion, consists then, in giving ourselves entirely to our Lady, in order to belong entirely to Jesus Christ, through her.

We must give her: Our body, with all its senses and members; our soul with all its power; our exterior goods of fortune, whether present or to come; our interior and spiritual goods, which are our merits, our virtues and our good works, past, present, and future. In a word, we must give her all we have in the order of nature and in the order of grace and all that may become ours in the future in the orders of nature, grace and glory; and this we must do without reserve of so much as one farthing, one hair, or one least good intention. We must do it also for eternity, and we must do it without pretending to, or hoping for any other recompense for our offering and service, except the honour of belonging to Jesus Christ, through Mary and in Mary—even though that sweet Mistress were not, as she always is, the most generous and the most grateful of creatures.

Now turn to page 14, For Prayers, etc.

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY

True Devotion: Nos. 152-164

This devotion is an easy, short, perfect and secure way of attaining union with our Lord, in which union the perfection of a Christian consists. It is an easy way: It is the way which Jesus Christ, Himself trod in coming to us in which there is no obstacle in reaching Him. It is true that we can attain divine union by other roads, but it is by many

crosses and strange deaths, and with many more difficulties which we shall find it hard to overcome. It is a short way: This devotion to our Blessed Lady is a short road to find Jesus Christ, both because it is a road from which we do not stray, and because as I have just said it is a road which we tread with joy and facility, and consequently with promptitude. We make more progress in a brief period of submission to and dependence on Mary, than in whole years of following our own will and of relying upon ourselves. It is a perfect way: This practice of devotion to our Blessed Lady is also a perfect path by which to go and unite ourselves to Jesus, because the divine Mary is the most perfect and the most holy of creatures, and because Jesus, Who has come to us most perfectly, took no other road for His great and admirable journey. The Most High, the Incomprehensible, the Inaccessible, He Who is, had willed to come to us, little worms of earth, who are nothing. How has He done this? The Most High has come down to us perfectly and divinely, by the humble Mary without losing anything of His Divinity and Sanctity. So it is by Mary that the very little ones are to ascend perfectly and divinely, without any fear, to the Most High. It is a secure way: This devotion to our Blessed Lady, is also a secure way to go to Jesus and to acquire perfection, by uniting ourselves to Him. It is a secure way because the practice which I am teaching is not new. Indeed, we cannot see how it could be condemned without overturning the foundations of Christianity. It is clear then, that this devotion is not new, and that if it is not common, that is because it is too precious to be relished and practiced by everyone. This devotion is a secure means of going to Jesus Christ, because it is the very characteristic of Our Blessed Lady to conduct us surely to Jesus.

Now turn to page 14, For Prayers, etc.

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY

True Devotion: Nos. 213-225

Wonderful Effects of This Devotion

My dear brother, be sure that if you are faithful to the interior and exterior practices of this devotion which I will point out—the following effects will take place in your soul.

First Effect: By the light which the Holy Ghost will give you through His dear Spouse, Mary, you will understand your own evil, your corruption and your incapacity for anything good. In other words, the humble Mary will communicate to you a portion of her profound humility, which will make you despise yourself, despise nobody else, but love to be despised yourself.

Second Effect: Our Blessed Lady also will give you a portion of her faith, which was the greatest of all faiths, that were ever on this earth, greater than all the faiths of all the patriarchs, prophets, apostles and saints put together.

Third Effect: This Mother of fair love, will take away from your heart, all scruple and all disorder of servile fear.

Fourth Effect: Our Blessed Lady will fill you with great confidence in God and in herself because you will not be approaching Jesus by yourself, but always by that good Mother.

Fifth Effect: The soul of our Blessed Lady will communicate itself to you, to glorify the Lord. Her spirit will enter into the place of yours, to rejoice in God, her salvation, provided that only you are faithful to the practices of this devotion.

Sixth Effect: If Mary, who is the tree of life, is well cultivated in our soul by fidelity to the practices of this devotion, she will bear fruit in her own time, and her fruit is none other than Jesus Christ.

Seventh Effect: By this practice, faithfully observed, you will give Jesus more glory in a month, than by any other practice, however difficult, in many years.

Now turn to page 14, For Prayers, etc.

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

True Devotion: Nos. 12.38

If you wish to comprehend the Mother, says a saint, comprehend the Son, for she is the worthy Mother of God. Here, let every tongue be mute. Up to this time, the divine Mary has been unknown, and that is the reason Jesus Christ is not known as He ought to be. If then the knowledge and the kingdom of Jesus Christ, are to come into the world, they will be but a necessary consequence of the knowledge and the kingdom of the most holy Virgin Mary, who brought Him into the world for the first time, and will make His second advent full of splendour.

Mary, being a mere creature that has come from the hands of the Most High, is in comparison with his infinite Majesty less than an atom; or rather she is nothing at all, because He is "He Who Is," consequently that grand Lord, always independent and sufficient to Himself, never had, and has not now an absolute need of the Holy Virgin for the accomplishment of His Will, and for the Manifestation of His Glory. He has but to will in order to do everything. Nevertheless, God, having willed to commence and to complete His greatest works by the Most Holy Virgin, ever since He created her, we may well think He will not change His conduct in the eternal ages; for He is God, and He changes not, either in His sentiments or in His conduct.

Mary is the Queen of heaven and earth by grace, as Jesus is the King of them by nature and by conquest. Now, as the kingdom of Jesus Christ consists principally in the heart or the interior of man - according to the words, "The Kingdom of God is within you" - in like manner the kingdom of our Blessed Lady is principally in the interior of man; that is to say, his soul. And it is principally in souls that she is more glorified with her Son than in all visible creatures, and so we can call her, as the saints do, the Queen of All Hearts.

Now turn to page 14, For Prayers, etc.

Part IV

Theme: KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST

True Devotion: Nos. 60-67, 183, 212, 226-265

Acts of love of God, thanksgiving for the blessings of Jesus, contrition and resolution

During this period we shall apply ourselves to the study of Jesus Christ. What is to be studied in Jesus Christ?

First: The Man-God, His grace and glory; then His rights to sovereign dominion over us; since, having renounced Satan and the world, we have taken Jesus Christ as our Lord.

Second: His interior life; namely, the virtues and the acts of His Sacred Heart; His association with Mary in the mysteries of the Annunciation and Incarnation. During His infancy and hidden life at the feast of Cana and on Calvary
....

PRAYERS TO BE RECITED DURING THESE NEXT SEVEN DAYS

Litany of the Holy Ghost

(For Private devotion only)

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Father all powerful, have mercy on us.

Jesus, Eternal Son of the Father, Redeemer of the world, save us.

Spirit of the Father and the Son, boundless life of both, sanctify us.

Holy Trinity, hear us.

Holy Ghost, Who proceedest from the Father and the Son, enter our hearts.

Holy Ghost, Who are equal to the Father and the Son, enter our hearts.

Promise of God the Father, have mercy on us

Ray of heavenly light,

Author of all good,

Source of heavenly water,

Consuming fire,

Ardent Charity,

Spiritual unction,

Spirit of love and truth,

Spirit of wisdom and understanding,

Spirit of counsel and fortitude,

Spirit of knowledge and piety,

Spirit of the fear of the Lord,
Spirit of grace and prayer,
Spirit of peace and meekness,
Spirit of modesty and innocence,
Holy Ghost, the Comforter,
Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier,
Holy Ghost, Who governest the Church,
Gift of God, the Most High,
Spirit Who fillest the universe,
Spirit of the adoption of the children of God.
Holy Ghost, inspire us with horror of sin.
Holy Ghost, come and renew the face of the earth.
Holy Ghost, shed Thy light in our souls.
Holy Ghost, engrave Thy law in our hearts.
Holy Ghost, inflame us with the flame of Thy love.
Holy Ghost, open to us the treasures of Thy graces.
Holy Ghost, teach us to pray well.
Holy Ghost, enlighten us with Thy heavenly inspirations.
Holy Ghost, lead us in the way of salvation.
Holy Ghost, grant us the only necessary knowledge.
Holy Ghost, inspire in us the practice of good.
Holy Ghost, grant us the merits of all virtues.
Holy Ghost, make us persevere in justice.
Holy Ghost, be Thou our everlasting reward.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, send us Thy Holy Ghost.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, pour down into our souls the gifts of the Holy Ghost.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, grant us the Spirit of wisdom and piety.
V/. Come, Holy Ghost! Fill the hearts of Thy faithful.
R/. And enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.

Let us pray

Grant, O merciful Father, that Thy Divine Spirit enlighten, inflame and purify us, that He may penetrate us with His heavenly dew and make us fruitful in good works; through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who with Thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, liveth and reigneth forever and ever. Amen.

Ave Maris Stella

Hail, bright star of ocean,
God's own Mother blest,
Ever sinless Virgin,
Gate of heavenly rest.

Taking that sweet Ave
Which from Gabriel came,
Peace confirm within us,
Changing Eva's name.

Break the captives' fetters,
Light on blindness pour,
All our ills expelling,
Every bliss implore.

Show thyself a Mother;
May the Word Divine,
Born for us thy Infant,
Hear our prayers through thine.

Virgin all excelling,
Mildest of the mild,
Freed from guilt, preserve us,
Pure and undefiled.

Keep our life all spotless,
Make our way secure,
Till we find in Jesus
Joy forevermore.

Through the highest heaven
To the Almighty Three,
Father, Son and Spirit,
One same glory be. Amen.

(Indulgence of three years. Plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions, if recited daily for a month. *Preces et Pia Opera*, 292.)

Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Jesus, hear us.
Jesus, graciously hear us.
God the Father of heaven,
God the Son, Redeemer of the world,
God the Holy Ghost,
Holy Trinity, one God.
Jesus, Son of the living God,
Jesus, splendour of the Father,
Jesus, brightness of eternal light,
Jesus, King of glory,
Jesus, sun of justice,
Jesus, Son of the Virgin Mary,
Jesus, most amiable,
Jesus, most admirable,
Jesus, mighty God?
Jesus, Father of the world to come,
Jesus, angel of the great counsel,
Jesus, most powerful,
Jesus, most patient,
Jesus, most obedient,
Jesus, meek and humble of heart,
Jesus, lover of chastity,

Jesus, lover of us,
Jesus, God of peace,
Jesus, author of life,
Jesus, model of virtues,
Jesus, lover of souls,
Jesus, our God,
Jesus, our refuge
Jesus, Father of the poor,
Jesus, treasure of the faithful,
Jesus, Good Shepherd,
Jesus, true light,
Jesus, eternal wisdom,
Jesus, infinite goodness,
Jesus, our way and our life,
Jesus, joy of angels,
Jesus, King of patriarchs,
Jesus, master of Apostles,
Jesus, teacher of Evangelists,
Jesus, strength of martyrs,
Jesus, light of confessors,
Jesus, purity of virgins,
Jesus, crown of all saints,
Be merciful, spare us, O Jesus.
Be merciful, graciously hear us, O Jesus.
From all evil, Jesus, deliver us
From all sin,
From Thy wrath,
From the snares of the devil,
From the spirit of fornication,
From everlasting death,
From the neglect of Thine inspirations,
Through the mystery of Thy holy Incarnation,
Through Thy nativity,
Through Thine infancy,
Through Thy most divine life,
Through Thy labours,
Through Thine agony and Passion,
Through Thy cross and dereliction,
Through Thy sufferings,
Through Thy death and burial,
Through Thy Resurrection,
Through Thine Ascension,
Through Thine institution of the most Holy Eucharist,
Through Thy joys,
Through Thy glory,
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Jesus.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Jesus.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us, O Jesus.

Jesus, hear us.

Jesus, graciously hear us.

Let us pray

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who hast said: Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you; grant, we beseech Thee, to us who ask the gift of Thy divine love, that we may ever love Thee with all our hearts, and in all our words and actions, and never cease praising Thee.

Give us, O Lord, a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy Name; for Thou never failest to govern those whom Thou dost solidly establish in Thy love. Who livest and reignest world without end. Amen.

(Indulgence of seven years. Plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions, if recited with the oration daily for a month. —Preces et Pia Opera, 89.)

St. Louis De Montfort's Prayer to Jesus

O most loving Jesus, deign to let me pour forth my gratitude before Thee, for the grace Thou hast bestowed upon me in giving me to Thy holy Mother through the devotion of Holy Bondage, that she may be my advocate in the presence of Thy majesty and my support in my extreme misery. Alas, O Lord! I am so wretched that without this dear Mother I should be certainly lost. Yes, Mary is necessary for me at Thy side and everywhere: that she may appease Thy just wrath because I have so often offended Thee; that she may save me from the eternal punishment of Thy justice, which I deserve; that she may contemplate Thee, speak to Thee, pray to Thee, approach Thee and please Thee; that she may help me to save my soul and the souls of others; in short, Mary is necessary for me that I may always do Thy holy will and seek Thy greater glory in all things. Ah, would that I could proclaim throughout the whole world the mercy that Thou hast shown to me! Would that everyone might know I should be already damned, were it not for Mary! Would that I might offer worthy thanksgiving for so great a blessing! Mary is in me. Oh, what a treasure! Oh, what a consolation! And shall I not be entirely hers? Oh, what ingratitude! My dear Saviour, send me death rather than such a calamity, for I would rather die than live without belonging entirely to Mary.

With St. John the Evangelist at the foot of the cross, I have taken her a thousand times for my own and as many times have given myself to her; but if I have not yet done it as Thou, dear Jesus, dost wish, I now renew this offering as Thou desire me to renew it. And if Thou seest in my soul or my body anything that does not belong to this august princess, I pray Thee to take it and cast it far from me, for whatever in me does not belong to Mary is unworthy of Thee.

O Holy Spirit, grant me all these graces. Plant in my soul the Tree of true Life, which is Mary; cultivate it and tend it so that it may grow and blossom and bring forth the fruit of life in abundance. O Holy Spirit, give me great devotion to Mary, Thy faithful spouse; give me great confidence in her maternal heart and an abiding refuge in her mercy, so that by her Thou mayest truly form in me Jesus Christ, great and mighty, unto the fullness of His perfect age. Amen.

O, Jesus Living In Mary

O Jesus living in Mary

Come and live in Thy servants,

In the spirit of Thy holiness,

In the fulness of Thy might,

In the truth of Thy virtues,

In the perfection of Thy ways,

In the communion of Thy mysteries,

Subdue every hostile power

In Thy spirit, for the glory of the Father. Amen.

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY

True Devotion: Nos. 61, 62

Christ our Last End

Jesus Christ our Saviour, true God and true Man, ought to be the last end of all our devotions, else they are false and delusive. Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, of all things. We labour not, as the Apostle says, except to render every man perfect in Jesus Christ; because it is in Him alone that the whole plenitude of the Divinity dwells together with all the other plenitudes of graces, virtues and perfections. It is in Him alone that we have been blessed with all spiritual benediction; and He is our only Master, Who has to teach us; our only Lord on Whom we ought to depend; our only Head to Whom we must be united; our only Model to Whom we should conform ourselves; our only Physician Who can heal us; our only Shepherd Who can feed us; our only Way Who can lead us; our only Truth Whom we must believe; our only Life Who can animate us; and our only All in all things Who can satisfy us. There has been no other name given under heaven, except the name of Jesus, by which we can be saved. God has laid no other foundation of our salvation, our perfection or our glory, than Jesus Christ. Every building which is not built on that firm rock is founded upon the moving sand, and sooner or later infallibly will fall.

By Jesus Christ, with Jesus Christ, in Jesus Christ, we can do all things; we can render all honour and glory to the Father in the unity of the Holy Ghost; we can become perfect ourselves, and be to our neighbours a good odour of eternal life.

If, then, we establish solid devotion to our Blessed Lady, it is only to establish more perfectly devotion to Jesus Christ, and to provide an easy and secure means for finding Jesus Christ. Devotion to our Lady is necessary for us, as I have already shown, and will show still further hereafter, as a means of finding Jesus Christ perfectly, of loving Him tenderly, of serving Him faithfully.

Now turn to page 22, For Prayers, etc.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY

St. Matthew: Chapters: 26: 1; 26-29; 36-46

And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended all these words, he said to his disciples: You know that after two days shall be the Pasch, and the Son of man shall be delivered up to be crucified.

And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread and blessed, and broke; and gave to His Disciples, and said: Take ye, and eat, this is My Body. And taking the chalice, he gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the new testament which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins. And I say to you, I will not drink from henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father

Then Jesus came with them into a country place which is called Gethsemani. And he said to His disciples: Sit you here till I go yonder and pray. And taking with Him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to grow sorrowful, to be sad. Then he said to them: My soul is sorrowful even unto death. Stay you here and watch with me. And going a little further, he fell upon his face, praying and saying: My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. And he came to his disciples and found them asleep. And He said to Peter: What? Could you not watch one hour with Me? Watch ye; and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh weak. Again, the second time, he went and prayed, saying: My Father, if this chalice may not pass away, but I must drink it, Thy will be done. And he came again, and found them sleeping; for their eyes were heavy. And leaving them, he went again, and he prayed the third time, saying the self same word. Then He came to his disciples, and said to them: sleep ye now, and take your rest; behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go; behold, he is at hand that will betray Me.

Now turn to page 22, For Prayers, etc.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY

Imitation: Book 1, Chapter 1

Of the imitation of Christ and indifference to earthly vanities

He who follows Me does not walk in darkness. (John 8:12). Christ reminds you with these words that you must imitate His life, if you wish to be truly enlightened and freed from all blindness of heart. Your main task, therefore,

should be to study the life of Our Lord.

The teaching of Christ is greater than the advice of all the saints taken together. And if you study it with His frame of mind and heart, you will find in his teaching a hidden source of consolation and strength. Unfortunately, however, so many people care little or nothing about the Word of God, even though they have heard it time and time again, because they do not have the spirit of Christ. Yet, if you really want to understand the Words of Christ, you must try to pattern your whole life on His.

What good is it to be able to explain the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity if you displease the Blessed Trinity by your lack of humility? It is a good life that makes you pleasing to God, not high-sounding words and clever expressions. It is better to feel contrition for your sins than to know how to define it. What good is it to know the entire Bible by heart and to learn the sayings of all the philosophers if you live without grace and the Love of God?

Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, unless you serve God and love Him with your whole heart. (Eccles. 1:2) . The greatest wisdom of all is to seek the kingdom of heaven by despising the things of this world.

Now turn to page 22, For Prayers, etc.

THIRTIETH DAY

St. Matthew: Chapter 27, 36.44

And they sat down and watched him, and they put over his head his cause written: This is Jesus the King of the Jews. Then were crucified with him two thieves: one on the right hand and one on the left. And they that passed by blasphemed him, wagging their heads, and saying: Vah, thou that destroyest the temple of God and in three days dost rebuild it: Save thy own self: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. And in like manner, also the chief priests, with the scribes and the ancients mocking him, said: He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let him now deliver him, if he will have him. For he said: I am the Son of God. And the selfsame thing the thieves also, that were crucified with him.

Imitation: Book 2, Chapter 12

Of the Royal Road of the Cross

To many the saying, "Deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Me," seems hard. How much harder, however, will the words on the Day of Judgment be: Depart from Me, you accused ones, into the everlasting fire. (Matt. 25:41) . Those who follow the cross willingly now, will not fear the last judgment. When the Lord comes to judge, the Sign of the Cross will be in the heavens; then will those servants of the cross, who in their lifetime made themselves one with the Crucified, draw near with great trust to Christ, the judge.

Why are you afraid, then, to take up the cross when through it you can win an eternal kingdom? In the cross is salvation; in it is life; in it is protection from your enemies; in it is heavenly sweetness, in it is strength of mind; in it is joy of spirit; in it is the highest virtue; in the cross is perfect holiness.

Take up your cross and follow Jesus, and you will merit eternal life.

Now turn to page 22, For Prayers, etc.

THIRTY-FIRST DAY

Imitation: Book 4, Chapter 2

Of the Love God Shows You In This Sacrament

Trusting in Your great goodness and mercy, Lord, I come as one sick to the Physician, as one thirsty to the Fountain of Life, as one in need to the King of heaven; I come as a servant to my Master, as a creature to my Creator, as a dejected soul to my loving Comforter.

But why should You come to me? Who am I that You should give Yourself to me? How can a sinner dare show his face in Your presence? And why do You condescend to visit a sinner: You know Your servant; You know he has no good in him, and, therefore, You have no reason to grant him this great grace. Thus I confess my unworthiness; and I acknowledge Your goodness. I praise Your mercy, and I give thanks for Your boundless love.

True Devotion: Nos. 243-254

Those who undertake this holy slavery should have a special devotion to the great mystery of the Incarnation of the Word (25th March). Indeed, the Incarnation, is the mystery proper in this practice, inasmuch as it is a devotion inspired by the Holy Ghost; first to honour and imitate the ineffable dependence which God the Son was pleased to have on Mary, for His Father's glory—and our salvation—which dependence particularly appears in this mystery where Jesus is a captive and a slave in the bosom of the divine Mary, and depends on her for all things. Secondly, to thank God for the incomparable graces He has given Mary and particularly for having chosen her to be His most holy Mother, which choice was made in this mystery. These are the two principal ends of the slavery of Jesus and Mary. Because we are living in an age of intellectual pride and there are around us numerous, puffed-up scholars, conceited with critical spirits who have plenty to say against the best established and most solid practices of piety, it is better for us not to give them any needless occasion of criticism, hence, it is better to say, we are slaves of Jesus in Mary and call ourselves slaves of Jesus Christ, rather than the slaves of Mary; taking the denomination of our devotion rather from its last end, which is Jesus Christ, than from the means to the end, which is Mary; we may use either term though. Another reason is that the principal mystery we celebrate and honour in this devotion is the mystery of the Incarnation wherein we can see Jesus only in Mary, and incarnate in her bosom. Hence it is more to the purpose to speak of the slavery of Jesus in Mary, and of Jesus residing and reigning in Mary according to that beautiful prayer, "O Jesus Living in Mary", etc.

Those who adopt this slavery ought to have a great devotion to saying the Hail Mary. Few Christians, however enlightened, know the real value, merit, excellence and necessity of the Hail Mary. It was necessary for the Blessed Virgin to appear several times to great and enlightened saints to show them the merit of it.

Now turn to page 22, For Prayers, etc.

THIRTY-SECOND DAY

Irritation: Book 2, Chapter 7

Of Loving Jesus Above All Things

Blessed is the man who knows what it is to love Jesus, and to despise himself for the sake of Jesus. You must give up all other love for His, since He wishes to be loved alone above all.

Love of creatures is deceiving and constantly changing, but the love of Jesus is true and permanent. If you hold on to creatures, you will fall with them; if you hold on to Jesus, you will remain firmly planted forever.

Love Him, then keep Him as a friend. He will not leave you as others do; nor will He permit you to suffer eternal death. Separate yourself a little from everything, then. Cling, therefore, to Jesus in life and death; trust yourself to Him alone Who can help you when all others fail you.

The nature of Christ's love is such that it will not admit a rival; He wants you for Himself alone. He desires to sit on the throne of your heart as King; which is His right. If you only knew how to free yourself of the love of creatures, how quickly would He come into your heart!

True Devotion: Nos. 257-260

There are also some very sanctifying interior practices for those whom the Holy Ghost calls to a high perfection. These may be expressed in four words. To do all our actions: by Mary, with Mary, in Mary, and for Mary. So that we may do them all the more perfectly by Jesus, with Jesus, in Jesus and for Jesus.

By Mary: We must obey her in all things, in all things conduct ourselves by her spirit which is the Holy Spirit of God "those who are led by the Spirit of God, are the children of God." Those who are led by the spirit of Mary, are the children of Mary, and among the clients of Mary, none is true and faithful but those who are led by her spirit. Jesus has rendered Himself, so completely the Master of Mary, that He has become her own spirit. A soul is happy indeed when it is all possessed and overruled by the spirit of Mary, a spirit meek and strong, zealous and prudent, humble and courageous, pure and fruitful.

We must do our actions with Mary. We must consider in every action how Mary has done it; she being in our place. For this end, we must meditate on the great virtues which she practiced during her life, first of all her lively

faith, by which she believed, without hesitation, the angel's word, and believed faithfully and constantly, up to the foot of the Cross. Her profound humility which made her hide herself, hold her peace, submit to everything, and put herself last of all.

Now turn to page 22, For Prayers, etc.

THIRTY-THIRD DAY

Imitation: Book 4, Chapter 11

Of The Necessity Of Communion

O sweetest, Lord Jesus, how happy is the devout man who feasts at Your banquet, at which there is no other food but Yourself, his only Lover, most desired of all that his heart can desire!

How deeply I long to pour out my heartfelt tears in Your presence, and like the pious Magdalen, to wash Your feet with them. But where is such devotion in me, such copious shedding of holy tears? Surely, in Your sight, and before Your holy angels, my whole heart ought to be inflamed and weep for joy; for I have You with me truly present in this Sacrament, though You are under another form. My eyes could not bear to see You in Your own divine brightness, nor could the whole world stand in sight of the splendour of Your majesty. In concealing Yourself in this Sacrament You have regard for my weakness.

True Devotion: Nos. 261-265

We must do our actions in Mary. Our Blessed Lady is the true terrestrial paradise of the New Adam, and the ancient paradise was but a figure of her. In this earthly paradise we have riches, beauties, rarities and inexplicable sweetness, which Jesus Christ, the New Adam has left here; it was in this paradise that He took His complacency for nine months, worked His wonders and displayed His riches with the magnificence of a God. It is in this earthly paradise that there is the true tree of life, which has born Jesus Christ, the Fruit of Life, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which has given light unto the world. There are, in this divine place, trees planted by the hand of God, and watered by His Divine Unction, which have borne and daily bear fruit of divine taste. It is only the Holy Ghost, Who can make us know the hidden truth of these figures of material things. The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of the Father, also styles the Blessed Virgin, the Eastern Gate, by which the High-Priest, Jesus Christ, enters the world, and leaves it. By it, He came the first time, He will come the second, by it.

Finally, we must do all our actions for Mary, we must take her for our proximate end, our mysterious means, and our way to go to Jesus Christ. Supported by her protection we must undertake and achieve great things for Christ. We must defend her privileges, when they are disputed. We must stand up for her glory when it is attacked; we must draw all the world, if we can, to her service, and to this true and solid devotion. We must pretend to no recompense for our little service, except the honour of belonging to so sweet a Queen, and the happiness of being united through her to Jesus, her Son, by an indissoluble tie, in time and in eternity.

Now turn to page 22, For Prayers, etc.

How to Make Your Consecration

At the end of three weeks, we should go to confession and Holy Communion with the intention of giving ourselves to Jesus Christ in the quality of slaves of love, by the hands of Mary. After Communion, we should recite the consecration prayer—we ought to write it, or have it written, and sign it the same day the consecration is made. It would be well that on this day, we should pay some tribute to Jesus Christ and our Blessed Lady, either as a penance for our past unfaithfulness to the vows of Baptism, or as a testimony of dependence on the dominion of Jesus and Mary. This tribute should be one in accordance with your fervor, such as a fast, a mortification or an alms, or a candle. If but a pin is given in homage, and given with a good heart, it will be enough for Jesus, Who loves only the good will.

Once a year at least, and on the same day, we should renew this consecration, observing the same practices during the three weeks.

Here is your formula of

Consecration to Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Wisdom through the Blessed Virgin Mary

O Eternal and Incarnate Wisdom! O sweetest and most adorable Jesus! True God and true man, only Son of the Eternal Father, and of Mary, always Virgin! I adore Thee profoundly in the bosom and splendours of Thy Father during eternity; and I adore Thee also in the virginal bosom of Mary, Thy most worthy Mother, in the time of Thine Incarnation.

I give Thee thanks for that Thou hast annihilated Thyself, taking the form of a slave in order to rescue me from the cruel slavery of the devil. I praise and glorify Thee for that Thou hast been pleased to submit Thyself to Mary, Thy holy Mother, in all things, in order to make me Thy faithful slave through her. But alas! Ungrateful and faithless as I have been, I have not kept the promises which I made so solemnly to Thee in my Baptism; I have not fulfilled my obligations; I do not deserve to be called Thy child, nor yet Thy slave; and as there is nothing in me which does not merit Thine anger and Thy repulse, I dare not come by myself before Thy most holy and august majesty. It is on this account that I have recourse to the intercession of Thy most holy Mother, whom Thou hast given me for a mediatrix with Thee. It is through her that I hope to obtain of Thee contrition, the pardon of my sins, and the acquisition and preservation of wisdom.

Hail, then, O Immaculate Mary, living tabernacle of the Divinity, where the Eternal Wisdom willed to be hidden and to be adored by angels and by men! Hail, O Queen of Heaven and earth, to whose empire everything is subject which is under God. Hail, O sure refuge of sinners, whose mercy fails no one. Hear the desires which I have of the Divine Wisdom; and for that end receive the vows and offerings which in my lowliness I present to thee. I, N., a faithless sinner, renew and ratify today in thy hands the vows of my Baptism; I renounce forever Satan, his pomps and works; and I give myself entirely to Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Wisdom, to carry my cross after him all the days of my life, and to be more faithful to Him than I have ever been before.

In the presence of all the heavenly court I choose thee this day for my Mother and mistress. I deliver and consecrate to thee, as thy slave, my body and soul, my goods, both interior and exterior, and even the value of all my good actions, past, present and future; Leaving to thee the entire and full right of disposing of me, and all that belongs to me, without exception, according to thy good pleasure, for the greater glory of God in time and in eternity.

Receive, O benignant Virgin, this little offering of my slavery, in honour of, and in union with, that subjection which the Eternal Wisdom deigned to have to thy maternity, in homage to the power which both of you have over this poor sinner, and in thanksgiving for the privileges with which the Holy Trinity has favoured thee. I declare that I wish henceforth, as thy true slave, to seek thy honour and to obey thee in all things.

O admirable Mother, present me to thy dear Son as His eternal slave, so that as He has redeemed me by thee, by thee He may receive me! O Mother of mercy, grant me the grace to obtain the true Wisdom of God; and for that end receive me among those whom thou lovest and teacheest, whom thou leadest, nourishest and protectest as thy children and thy slaves.

O faithful Virgin, make me in all things so perfect a disciple, imitator and slave of the Incarnate Wisdom, Jesus Christ thy Son, that I may attain, by thine intercession and by thine example, to the fulness of His age on earth and of His glory in Heaven. Amen.

(A plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions, on the feast of the Immaculate Conception and April 28.-Preces et Pia Opera, 75.)

IMPRIMI POTEST:

Frank Setzer, S. M. M.

Provincial Superior

NIHIL OBSTAT:

William F. Hughes, S. T. L.

Censor Librorum

IMPRIMATUR:

Walter Philip Kellenberg, D. D.

Bishop of Rockville Centre

March 19, 1958
