

TRUE DEVOTION TO MARY
St. Louis De Montfort

Comments and Questions for Preliminary Remarks (Paragraphs #1 - #13).

This grand work of St. Louis de Montfort is a great treasure for the Church. Popes and canonized Saints, along with countless others, have embraced this life-changing devotion, including Saint John Paul II and Blessed Mother Teresa. Consider it a great blessing and privilege that God has called you to learn this great secret of sanctity. This devotion will bring an immense increase of joy to your life as you draw closer to each member of the Blessed Trinity through the powerful and loving intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

St. Louis de Montfort's *Preliminary Remarks* are incredibly beautiful and inspiring. He begins by focusing on one of Mary's greatest virtues – her profound humility. As you read and study this book, you will come to a deeper understanding of your need to grow in humility. Without humility, it is difficult to grow in holiness. It's been said that Mother Teresa never took offense because of her great humility. How often do we take offense at something someone says or does to us? A truly humble person always gives others the benefit of the doubt. St. Faustina says in her Diary, "The more a soul humbles itself, the greater the kindness with which the Lord approaches it" (#1092). Think of the numerous Saints who described themselves as the greatest of sinners, as dust and of no account. St. Louis de Montfort will challenge you to grow in humility in a profound way. It will not be easy. Our pride is great. Do not fear, however, because when you totally consecrate yourself to Our Lady and strive to imitate her virtues, a transformation will begin to take place in your soul. Mary will gently lead you along the path of holiness, inspiring you to trust in her powerful intercession.

Understand that this devotion is a journey and only through perseverance will it become a way of life for you. Plan to reread this book year after year, if you can. Renew your consecration annually using the 33 days of prayer. St. Louis de Montfort even suggests making a short consecration *daily*. He states in paragraph #259 of this book, "The more often we do so (renew our consecration), the sooner we shall be sanctified, and attain to union with Jesus Christ, which allows follows necessarily on our union with Mary."

You will find in this book that there is, as Fr. Frederick Faber says, something inspired and supernatural about it. You will grow deeper in this devotion each time you read and study it. The Holy Spirit will reveal to you what He wishes you to understand in the present moment, so be patient, but persevere. You will not regret it. There are no words to describe the great joy of going to Jesus through his most holy Mother. Incredible peace comes from having complete confidence in such a loving and tender Mother who cares about every detail of your life.

Let us pray to the great Marian Saints for the grace to embrace this special devotion. Let us especially invoke our beloved St. Pope John Paul II, who chose his papal motto from this book, signifying his great love and dependence on Our Lady. With his prayers and God's grace, may we also come to proclaim unreservedly, "*Totus tuus, Maria!*"- "Totally yours, Mary!"

Questions for paragraphs #1 – #13.

1. St. Louis de Montfort states the theme of the book in paragraph #1. Notice how he immediately begins by showing us the indissoluble union of Jesus and Mary. He wants us to understand that Jesus is the center, the goal and the end of this devotion. He reminds us of this so that there is no confusion when he pours out his love for Mary by singing her praises and describing her beauty and grandeur.

How will Jesus reign in the world through His Blessed Mother?

2. St. Louis de Montfort begins in paragraph #2 by focusing on Mary's profound humility, even stating in #3 that Mary begged the Lord to hide her - from her birth through her Assumption into Heaven. Our pride naturally causes us to desire to be seen, not hidden. Imagine this kind of humility. Could this be used to explain why there is not much written about Mary in the Bible (something for Protestants to ponder since they often ask, "Where does it say that about Mary in the Bible?")? Why do you think Mary wanted to hide herself even from herself? Was she aware of her greatness? Consider the quote of Fr. John Ziegler, "The thing about humility is that once you realize you have it, you've already lost it."
3. It is in paragraph #4 where St. Louis de Montfort first mentions the relationship between Mary and the Blessed Trinity. He says that God the Father gave Mary the power to perform miracles. This may sound strange at first, but if we consider what Jesus said in the Mustard Seed Parable, it is easy to believe that Mary had enough faith to "move mountains." Do you think that Mary knew she had this power and do you think she ever used it?

4. In paragraph #7, St. Louis de Montfort makes a somewhat startling claim, that Mary has power over God Himself. Considering that this book was found to be without error (see Fr. Faber's Preface), what do you think St. Louis de Montfort *actually* means by this statement?

5. We will read throughout this book how the devil feels about Mary. Here, in paragraphs #8 and #9, St. Louis de Montfort says that the devils themselves call her "Blessed," and that they "respect her while they fear her." Why do they respect her and why do they fear her?

6. Have you ever thought about Mary when you read 1 Cor. 2:9, "Eye has not seen, ear has not heard ...what God has ready for those who love Him?" What a joy it will be to see her face to face!

In paragraph #12, what does it mean that Mary is "the miracle of the miracles of grace, of nature, and of glory?"