

TRUE DEVOTION TO MARY
St. Louis De Montfort

Comments and Questions for Part II, Chapter II, “Motives of This Perfect Consecration,”
Motives #6 – #8 (#169 – #183).

In this section, St. Louis de Montfort gives us three final convincing reasons to consecrate ourselves totally to Jesus through Mary. In the last section, we learned how this devotion gives great honor and glory to God. We learned that going “through” Mary is an easy, short, perfect and secure path to union with Christ. Now, St. Louis de Montfort explains how this devotion gives us true interior freedom, helps us to excel in charity and inspires us to persevere in virtue.

In the sixth motive, we look again at what it means to be a slave of Jesus and Mary. St. Louis de Montfort reminds us of a great paradox – only by becoming a slave of Christ can we be truly free. When we submit ourselves to God’s Will and obey His Commandments, we are much less susceptible to the danger and slavery of sin. To illustrate this, think of children playing in a fenced-in yard on the corner of a busy intersection. The fence, rather than being an obstacle to their freedom, permits the children to play freely and without care or worry in the midst of the danger that surrounds them.

In the seventh motive, St. Louis de Montfort reminds us that when we give everything to Mary, she uses our gifts to aid our brothers and sisters who are most in need, including those souls in Purgatory. With this devotion, we are practicing a high degree of charity simply by fulfilling the duties of our state in life. This is very comforting!

Finally, St. Louis de Montfort thinks that his eighth motive is the most important and persuasive one of all. He claims that those who attach themselves to Our Lady through this consecration will obtain the graces needed for final perseverance. Fr. Gaffney says, “She, the Star of the Sea, leads us safely to our final port.” What more can a Christian ask for?

Questions for paragraphs #169 - #183.

1. All people yearn for freedom. However, the freedom that the world offers – the ability to do whatever one desires - is very different from the freedom that God promises to those who follow Him. True freedom is the ability to *choose to do what is right*. To choose to sin is an abuse of freedom. When we were baptized, we were “set free from sin and became slaves of God” (Rom 6:22). However, we know that many Christians lack freedom and instead suffer from the bondage of sin because they do not live out their baptismal promises. Since total consecration to Jesus through Mary is a perfect renewal of the vows of Baptism (see #126), we should expect that a voluntary slave of Jesus and Mary *will* experience the freedom that Christ promises.

According to St. Louis de Montfort, how does Our Lord increase our freedom through total consecration to Mary?

2. The seventh motive is so wonderful because St. Louis de Montfort tells us that through total consecration to Mary, we obtain great blessings for our neighbor and for the poor souls in Purgatory. Our Lady not only applies the value of our prayers and good works for those most in need, she also *augments* them with her merits and virtues. This is a great mystery, but one that should lead us to have great confidence in this devotion.

How does Mary help us to increase our Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy?

3. Do you struggle with perseverance at times and find it difficult to advance in virtue? According to St. Louis de Montfort, the majority of Christians have difficulty with this because we are weak and cannot adequately fight off the Evil One who is constantly trying to “rob” us. He says in #173 that this alone should be the greatest motive for us to embrace this devotion. St. Louis de Montfort would agree that total consecration to Mary *in union with* frequent reception of the Sacraments and fervent prayer (especially the Rosary) efficaciously assists us in the life-long task of perseverance in holiness.

St. Louis de Montfort compares Mary to Noah’s Ark in #175. What comparisons can be made between the two? Mary has also been called the Ark of the Covenant. How can these images of Our Lady help us to understand this eighth motive - that total consecration to Mary will help us to persevere in faith until death?

4. Fr. Gaffney refers to paragraphs #177 - #179 as St. Louis de Montfort’s “Famous Plea.” St. Louis de Montfort begins by once again reminding us of how weak we are. Fr. Gaffney says, “God does not wait for us to be holy to love us, but rather loves us to make us holy.” In #178, St. Louis de Montfort pleads with us to “pour” ourselves (our life, our worries, our treasures) into the Immaculate Heart of Mary. As beautiful as this sounds (and is!), what three things does St. Louis de Montfort say that we have to do for our part?