

TRUE DEVOTION TO MARY
St. Louis De Montfort

Comments and Questions for Part I, Article 3, “Providential Function of Mary in the Latter Times” (#49 – #59).

In the last section, St. Louis de Montfort explained that at least *some* amount of devotion to the Blessed Mother is necessary for salvation, especially for Catholics. Applying #847 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the document *Lumen Gentium* of the Second Vatican Council, we concluded that a person may have an *implicit* desire to venerate Mary based on his or her desire to serve Christ and this may be sufficient. We stressed, however, that as Catholics, we need to evangelize Mary to the world because as God told the prophet Hosea, “My people perish for lack of knowledge,” (Hosea 4:6). Part of the “Good News” is that we have a Mother in Heaven who loves us immensely and is very powerful at helping us to stay on the narrow path!

St. Louis de Montfort then described how Marian devotion is even more necessary for those who are called to a high degree of holiness. Furthermore, he stated that the saints of the End Times, in order to have an exceptionally intimate union with Christ and a *perfect fidelity* to the Holy Spirit, will reach their heights of holiness *precisely* because of their deep, personal relationship with the Blessed Mother and their *total* dependence on her powerful intercession.

In this section, St. Louis de Montfort gives seven reasons why God wishes to make Mary known in our time, the End Times. Remember that the End Times encompasses the time from Pentecost until the end of the world. So, starting with the Apostles, God desires that all people should have a devotion to the Blessed Mother. According to the early Church Fathers, Mary was closely united to the Apostles and Disciples as she counseled and comforted them until the time of her death. St. Louis de Montfort, however, is writing particularly about the final phase of the End Times. Of all the compelling reasons he gives for God’s desire to make Mary known now, the one he focuses on the most is her role in the final battle against Satan. He examines in great detail Genesis 3:15, the prophesy of the Woman crushing the head of the serpent. He explains why she must crush his *head* and what it means for him to strike at her *heel*.

Finally, this section ends with a beautiful description of the sanctity, fervor and joy of the saints of the latter times. They will be “rich in the grace of God, which Mary shall distribute to them abundantly” (#54). These graces will include the charisms of the Holy Spirit that will be needed in the days to come in order to successfully carry out the two-fold task of fighting heresy and building up the Church. It is this abundance of graces that we seek in this perfect devotion to Jesus through His Blessed Mother.

Questions for paragraphs #49 - #59.

1. The first sentence of #49 is very similar to the first line of this book, “It was through the Blessed Virgin Mary that Jesus Christ came into the world and it is also through her that He must reign in the world.” God does not wish to hide her now as He did when Christ lived on this earth. In #50, St. Louis de Montfort gives seven reasons why God wishes to make Mary known in the End Times. He states again that the more Mary is known and loved, the more Jesus will be known and loved. This is because Our Lady’s only goal is to lead us to Her Son, Who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Describe the three ways St. Louis de Montfort says that Mary will “shine forth” in the final phase of the End Times.

2. St. Louis de Montfort states that Mary must be “terrible to the devil and his crew, as an army ranged in battle” and that “the devil fears (her) ...*in a sense* more than God Himself.” Is this an image you have of our Blessed Mother? According to St. Louis de Montfort in #52 - #54, *how* does Mary fight the devil?

3. It is a little scary to read about the devil and how he will put “terrible snares before the faithful servants and true children of Mary.” However, remember that Pope John Paul II, who was totally consecrated to Jesus through Mary, had as the theme of his Pontificate, “Be not afraid.” He understood and *experienced* Our Lady’s power to “conquer, overthrow and crush” the evil spirits. We should be comforted by this thought, as well.

Using St. Louis de Montfort’s explanation of Genesis 3:15, what is our role in helping Mary to fight the devil?

4. In #55, St. Louis de Montfort gives a summary of what it will be like for those who persevere in living out their total consecration to Mary as he describes in the second part of the book. I hope that you are getting excited to learn this great secret! Finally, the two-fold task of the saints of the latter days (to fight and build) that we read about in #48 is explained in more detail in #56 - #59. Read these paragraphs carefully. Does a certain person come to mind? What group of people is St. Louis de Montfort specifically referring to here?