



Southern Sentinel

REGNAVIT A LIGNO DEUS

HOLY CROSS SEMINARY

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Dear Friends and Benefactors,

The month of May draws to mind the consideration of Our Lady's perfection and her pre-eminent role as the Mother of God and the Mother of God's children. If we desire to be true children of God, we rightly should strive to be like the Blessed Virgin and to adopt her multitudinous perfections and virtues. God wisely made Mary Immaculate, perfect in virtue and grace, in order to be a perfect model of holiness for all men; but Mary is made perfect primarily because she is the Mother of God.

Naturally, a child resembles his mother. In the supernatural work of the Incarnation how could the Son of God *resemble* His Mother, a mere creature? God would arrange in a most wonderful way Mary's pivotal role as Mother of God and Mother of men in His great work of Redemption and Salvation.

The Blessed Virgin would be conceived Immaculate and perfect in every way. The Divine Son would resemble His human Mother in this wonderful work of grace, whereby Our Lady is *perfectly* holy. Of course, Our Lord is infinitely perfect and pre-eminently holy. The Son of God bestowed upon His Mother her very perfections, so that she would be in the most fitting manner His perfect Mother. Mary is made the godliest of all creatures because she would be the



Our Lady Queen of Heaven and Earth, rule our hearts!

Mother of God. But she would also be the Mother of all of God's children. As Our Lady gave Christ to men, so too would she be the channel by which men would receive the life of grace and would thus, be given to God. Our Lady is truly our Mother in the life of God. If we are thus born of Mary, then we too must, like the Son, resemble Our Heavenly Mother.

Consequently, if we are to honourably call Mary our Mother, we must be like her in her perfection – at least we must ever strive to be more like her in all her perfections. Despite our wounded nature and sinfulness, this wonderful work of grace which transform the sinner into a saint, is possible. We appeal to Our Mother's love for her Son and His Mystical Body to bring us to perfection, which is God's will. God greatly desires to give His grace, but seldom ask and more seldom ask rightly because of our lack of perfection.

Our Lady's maternal solicitude and her perfection assure us of the surest means to ask God's grace and to present us to God as true children. With this intention in mind, many make a solemn consecration of themselves to Our Lady in order to avail of her *omnipotent supplication* before God in order to more advance in the pure and total service of God. But such a consecration made, must be lived. If one promises to give oneself to God, one must in fact do so.

St. Louis de Monfort explains in his method of total consecration that this *slavery to Jesus through Mary* should not be undertaken without serious reflection and determination to truly give all to God through Our Lady. In order to go through Our Lady we must necessarily determine to be like Our Lady in every way and this necessitates not merely a desire, but an earnest effort with God's abundant grace. The realisation of each man's perfection is not without effort or difficulty, but all must, at the very least, be genuinely convinced of the fact and must intently strive for this ideal.

Consequently, real and practical steps must be taken in pursuit of this transformation: *It is not enough to have given ourselves once as slaves to Jesus through Mary, nor is it enough to renew that act of consecration every month or every week. That alone would not make it a permanent devotion, nor could it bring the soul to that degree of perfection to which it is capable of raising it. It is not very difficult to enrol ourselves in a confraternity, nor to practice this devotion in so far as it prescribes a few vocal prayers every day; but the great difficulty is to enter into its spirit. Now its spirit consists in this, that we be interiorly dependent on Mary; that we be slaves of Mary, and, through her, of Jesus* (St. Louis de Montfort, *The Secret of Mary*).

The devotee of Our Lady will profoundly depend upon her example and efficacy to bestow grace, which are the pattern and means for this new birth in the life and likeness of Mary. She, who is most like her Divine Son, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is our Mother in the life of grace. As the Blessed Virgin gave birth to God, she gives birth to God's children, who we are by Baptism. Through sanctifying grace we participate in the life of God and are able to act *like* God; that is, live supernaturally.

It would be dishonourable for a devotee to give himself to Our Lady's household and familial service merely in word and to make no real effort to replicate the virtues and perfections of his most holy Mother. To wilfully settle with such a superficial (or duplicitous) devotion, one risks incurring condemnation, as St. Louis de Montfort solemnly warns: *Beware then, of remaining inactive while possessing my secret; it would turn into a poison and be your condemnation* (St. Louis de Montfort, *The Secret of Mary*).

Rather than be discouraged from undertaking the beautiful and salutary devotion of the total consecration to Mary, we should be encouraged to a greater confidence in Our Lady's efficacious role in our spiritual lives and give ourselves with greater fidelity and generosity. An attitude of superficiality is very common in our world. We may easily say something and not really mean what we say. We may believe we embrace a principle, more because it is catchy or audacious or even noble, but we rarely dare to live according to it. It may be with the greatest conviction and profession that we laud the validity and honour of an ideal, but we may hold it and practice it with neglect or even disdain – such would make a mockery of what is sacred in the case of this devotion of giving self to Mary and depending upon her for all.

Such presumptuousness is not lacking among men; sadly, this is too common among Traditional Catholics, who love the honour of being serious about their faith, but may fail to take seriously the consequences of the Faith and carry them out to their logical conclusions, which necessarily make saints out of sinners. For example, bold statements may often be made concerning the “supreme holiness of the Tridentine Rite, the treasure of the Holy Mass, the sanctity of Christ's Sacrifice”, while little real effort is made to frequent this holy and honourable celebration of Mass (outside days of obligation). Curiously, we make more time to recreate, visit friends, shop and transact business. Additionally, there may be those often made compromises, neither avoided nor broken, that occasion sin or condone the habit of sin in flat opposition to the purity and holiness of Christ's Sacrifice.

Hence, if we consecrate ourselves to the Blessed and most August Virgin, we must break with all that would defile us and hinder the grace of God from perfecting our souls. A great ideal cannot be truly held and believed if contrary actions are permitted to prevail. Mary *is* the ideal in the total consecration of St. Louis de Montfort, to whom we must align our lives, our thoughts and our actions.

Of course, the struggle to achieve this total giving of self to Jesus through Mary, to overcome sin and all the evil tendencies of our wounded nature and to practice the high virtues exemplified in Our Lord and Our Lady, is difficult. But God will give us His grace to accomplish His Will that we be perfect. We have but to cooperate... unceasingly and generously. The Blessed Virgin Mary is the greatest example of this cooperation and a unique means by which we may most effectively cooperate, as she bestows all necessary graces upon those who seek God.

As a mother loves and works for the good of her child, the Blessed Virgin ever seeks to make holy the children of God given to her at the Foot of the Cross; and still more does she love and labour for those who have wisely concurred with God's Will and who more fully give themselves to her for this end! The Blessed Virgin does not throw away the sinner because he is a sinner – rather, when the sinner appeals to her, she strives to free him, as a wounded son, from the tyranny of sin and to make him holy; she endeavours to draw the just still closer to Our Lord.

This disposition of clemency is essential for the reconciliation of sinners with God. As we are all sinners, we all appreciate and may profit from God's tolerance of our weakness. However, we must not be presumptuous of God's mercy and remain idle. On the contrary, we must labour unceasingly and effectively. It is Our Lady's divinely maternal care and concern for our sanctification that is not only reassuring but most efficacious in this work of God.

This most Holy Mother of God *commands* God's loving attention and concurrence when she asks for help. Our Heavenly Mother, when genuinely called upon by her weak but devoted children, will have compassion and will

infallibly ask for and obtain God's help. This is the secret of Mary: her pre-eminent role in the Christian life as the most efficacious Mediatrix of all graces. But true devotion, that interior dependence upon Our Lady, is fully realised by perseveringly endeavouring to acquire the same qualities that Our Heavenly Mother possesses. Our Lady's virtues and perfections are the manifestation of God's greatest creation, His Mother, who perfectly collaborated in Our Lord's work of sanctification and consequently gives God the greatest glory of all creatures. We do well to be like Mary. Ave Maria!

In emulating Our Lady, we acknowledge God's Will and embrace His plan to achieve our sanctification through Our Lady, whom God has given us as a perfect model and Mediatrix. Devout souls wisely, confidently and easily appeal to her for help. Hence, let us call upon Mary for those necessary graces to live Christ in all things as she lived on earth and now does for ever in heaven.

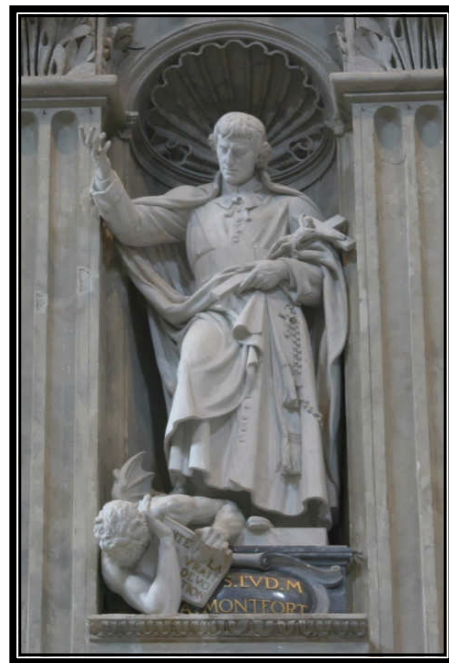
Throughout the month of May, as the Seminary prays the Holy Rosary before the Blessed Sacrament exposed, for the intentions of our friends and benefactors, we also thank you for your generosity in joining us in our appeal that the Mother of God intercede for us in order that Our Lord will grant abundant graces to all at Holy Cross. May we all be men of and like Christ: valiant and generous in giving all for the glory of God and for the sanctification of souls (even unto death as Our Divine Master). Please pray that the priests, brothers and seminarians will be true men of Christ, strong and firm in the Faith, gentle and compassionate in serving both saints and sinners.

May God bless you for your generous support of the Seminary by your prayers and sacrifices for our spiritual betterment and also for your financial help for the maintenance and operation of the Seminary for which we are greatly indebted. The Mother of God can only bless you abundantly for your charity in helping us to form other Christs, her sons, who prepare to offer and be offered in the most Holy Sacrifice for the glory of God.

In Christ the King,



Rev. Fr. Vicente A. Griego
Rector, Holy Cross Seminary



St. Louis de Montfort, Pray for us!

Announcements:

▪ **Ordinations in 2014:**

- a) The Clerical Tonsure and the Subdiaconate – 15 August
- b) The Minor Orders – 16 August
- c) The Diaconate – 18 December

▪ **Retreats:** Register at retreats@holycrossseminary.com or by post at the addresses listed above. Retreats are as follows:

- a) Ladies' Ignatian Retreat – 5 to 10 January 2015
- b) Men's Ignatian Retreat – 12 to 17 January 2015

▪ **Electronic subscription of the Seminary's Newsletter** may be requested at: website@holycrossseminary.com