

One

Christ's Example

Yesterday we meditated on Christ's relationship to Mary, which shows us three characteristics: dependence, reception of formation, and obedience.

When He extends Mary's motherhood to the beloved disciple, He tells us that one of the many ways we are called to imitate Him is in His relationship to Mary. Which sounds nice, but how – concretely – do we do that?

What's the difference practically between someone who has given himself to Mary by consecration and someone who hasn't?

Two

Dependence and Entrustment

The first step to giving yourself entirely to Mary is simply to say it.

Simply to say, "Mary, I give myself to you entirely, in imitation of your Son, so that you can bring me closer to Him."

The first step in any spiritual process is to say it.

In his book *True Devotion to Mary*, St. Louis Marie De Montfort proposed a 33-day process and a prayer of consecration to give oneself to Jesus through Mary.

Montfort wrote *True Devotion to Mary* probably in 1714, shortly before his death in 1716. He prophesied it would be attacked by the devil and buried because it proposed the key to the reign of Jesus in the world. It

was literally buried in a chest in a field during the French Revolution and not found until 1842. It was not translated into English until 1862.

Why did God allow this incredible work to be hidden for so long?
Because it was meant for our time.

St. Louis De Montfort could be called the Apostle of the Reign of Mary because he foresaw a time in the future when Mary would become the Queen of All Hearts so that she would establish Jesus as the King of all hearts.

True Devotion concludes with a formal prayer giving oneself entirely to Mary, so that we can better fulfill our baptismal promises, and better serve Jesus.

This is the first step of really relating to Mary the way Christ wants us to. Simply making an act of the will to entrust ourselves to her.

De Montfort's program is the most celebrated program of consecration in the life of the Church. But, at the end of the day, the most important thing is that you actually say to Mary, "I give myself, and all that I have, fully to you."

Three

Formation

We are giving ourselves to Mary the way a prizefighter or an Olympic athlete gives himself over to his coach so that the coach can form us to be the best we can be. And Mary, Mother of the Son and unique instrument of the Holy Spirit, is the best spiritual coach there is.

So how do we let her coach us? How do we allow her to form us, as she formed Jesus?

Probably the main way is to pray the rosary every day. St. John Paul II called the rosary “the school of Mary.” Because in the Rosary, we learn and reflect on all the most important truths of Christ, of the Church, of human nature, and of salvation – and all the while, we’re invoking Mary’s help.

Just as a teacher explains and clarifies the subject matter of the curriculum, so forms her students’ minds and character

So Mary explains and clarifies the curriculum of faith and hope and love, and in the process, she forms our minds and characters to be more in conformity with the Lord.

If having Mary as our Mother means allowing her to form us, then the Rosary is a privileged place to receive daily formation from her.

Four

Obedience

What does it mean, exactly, to be obedient to Mary? Because, of course, it’s hard to say we’ve given ourselves completely to Mary unless we give our wills – and the only measure of whether we’ve submitted our wills to someone else is if we give that other person obedience.

But Mary, of course, gives the same directives as Jesus. In fact, that’s the only command she gives in all of Scripture – is to the waiters at the Wedding Feast of Cana, when she tells them to “do whatever Jesus tells you.”

Mary and Christ give us the same instructions. So do the Church and the Holy Spirit. Whenever we follow God’s will, we are obeying Jesus and the Holy Spirit and Mary and the Church. We have four bosses, but they

all say the same thing: Accept the situation you find yourself in. Keep the commandments. Be faithful to prayer and relentless in serving the people in your life.

When we do that, we are obeying Christ. And so we are obeying His Mother.

Five

A Mother who loves Each of Us as Her Own

We consecrate ourselves to Mary because that's what Jesus did. We depend on Mary, let her form us, and obey her because that's what Christ wants. But we also do it because we know she's our Mother and wants the best for us.

As John Paul II says, "every Mother has a special and unique relationship with each of her children."

"Motherhood always establishes a unique and unrepeatable relationship between two people: between mother and child and between child and mother. Even when the same woman is the mother of many children, her personal relationship with each one of them is of the very essence of motherhood. For each child is generated in a unique and unrepeatable way, and this is true both for the mother and the child... It can be said that motherhood "in the order of grace" preserves the analogy with what "in the order of nature" characterizes the union between mother and child... Mary's motherhood which becomes man's inheritance is a gift: a gift which Christ himself makes personally to every individual."

(Redemptoris mater #45):

We all have the same Mother in Mary. But she has many different children in each of us. And she doesn't think of us as a faceless crowd.

Like Our Heavenly Father, Our Heavenly Mother knows us all by name. And whatever gifts the Father has planted in each of us, will blossom, each in its own way, under Mary's expert care - if we offer ourselves to Her.