

VIDEO 3

THE SECRET OF MARY by St. Louis de Montfort

B. TO FIND THE GRACE OF GOD, WE MUST DISCOVER MARY

CONTINUED:

14. (8) Mary received from God a unique dominion over souls enabling her to nourish them and make them more and more godlike. St Augustine went so far as to say that even in this world all the elect are enclosed in the womb of Mary, and that their real birthday is when this good mother brings them forth to eternal life. Consequently, just as an infant draws all its nourishment from its mother, who gives according to its needs, so the elect draw their spiritual nourishment and all their strength from Mary.

15. (9) It was to Mary that God the Father said, "Dwell in Jacob", that is, dwell in my elect who are typified by Jacob. It was to Mary that God the Son said, "My dear Mother, your inheritance is in Israel", that is, in the elect. It was to Mary that the Holy Spirit said, "Place your roots in my elect". Whoever, then, is of the chosen and predestinate will have the Blessed Virgin living within him, and he will let her plant in his very soul the roots of every virtue, but especially deep humility and ardent charity.

16. (10) Mary is called by St Augustine, and is indeed, the "living mold of God" . In her alone the God-man has formed in his human nature without losing any feature of the Godhead. In her alone, by the grace of Jesus Christ, man is made godlike as far as human nature is capable of it. A sculptor can make a statue or a life-like model in two ways: (i) By using his skill, strength, experience, and good tools to produce a statue out of hard, shapeless matter; (ii) By making a cast of it in a mold. The first way is long and involved and open to all sorts of accidents. It only needs a faulty stroke of the chisel or hammer to ruin the whole work. The second is quick, easy, straightforward, almost effortless and inexpensive, but the mold must be perfect and true to life and the material must be easy to handle and offer no resistance.

17. Mary is the great mold of God, fashioned by the Holy Spirit to give human nature to a Man who is God by the hypostatic union, and to fashion through grace men who are like to God. No godly feature is missing from this mold. Everyone who casts himself into it and allows himself to be molded will acquire every feature of Jesus Christ, true God, with little pain or effort, as befits his weak human condition. He will take on a faithful likeness to Jesus with no possibility of distortion, for the devil has never had and never will have any access to Mary, the holy and immaculate Virgin, in whom there is not the least suspicion of a stain of sin.

18. Dear friend, what a difference there is between a soul brought up in the ordinary way to resemble Jesus Christ by people who, like sculptors, rely on their own skill and industry, and a soul thoroughly tractable, entirely detached, most ready to be molded in her by the working of the Holy Spirit. What blemishes and defects, what shadows and

distortions, what natural and human imperfections are found in the first soul, and what a faithful and divine likeness to Jesus is found in the second!

19. There is not and there will never be, either in God's creation or in his mind, a creature in whom he is so honored as in the most Blessed Virgin Mary, not excepting even the saints, the cherubim or the highest Seraphim in heaven. Mary is God's garden of Paradise, his own unspeakable world, into which his Son entered to do wonderful things, to tend it and to take his delight in it. He created a world for the wayfarers, that is, the one we are living in. He created a second world - Paradise - for the Blessed. He created a third for himself, which he named Mary. She is a world unknown to most mortals here on earth. Even the angels and saints in heaven find her incomprehensible and are lost in admiration of a God who is so exalted and so far above them, so distant from them, and so enclosed in Mary, his chosen world, that they exclaim: "Holy, holy, holy" unceasingly.

20. Happy, indeed sublimely happy, is the person to whom the Holy Spirit reveals the secret of Mary, thus imparting to him true knowledge of her. Happy the person to whom the Holy Spirit opens this enclosed garden for him to enter, and to whom the Holy Spirit gives access to this sealed fountain where he can draw water and drink deep draughts of the living waters of grace. That person will find only grace and no creature in the most lovable Virgin Mary. But he will find that the infinitely holy and exalted God is at the same time infinitely solicitous for him and understands his weaknesses. Since God is everywhere, he can be found everywhere, even in hell. But there is no place where God can be more present to his creature and more sympathetic to human weakness than in Mary. It was indeed for this very purpose that he came down from heaven. Everywhere else he is the Bread of the strong and the Bread of angels, but living in Mary he is the Bread of children.

21. Let us not imagine, then, as some misguided teachers do, that Mary being simply a creature would be a hindrance to union with the Creator. Far from it, for it is no longer Mary who lives but Jesus Christ himself, God alone, who lives in her. Her transformation into God far surpasses that experienced by St Paul and other saints, more than heaven surpasses the earth. Mary was created only for God, and it is unthinkable that she should reserve even one soul for herself. On the contrary she leads every soul to God and to union with him. Mary is the wonderful echo of God. The more a person joins himself to her, the more effectively she unites him to God. When we say "Mary", she re-echoes "God". When, like St Elizabeth, we call her blessed, she gives the honor to God. If those misguided ones who were so sadly led astray by the devil, even in their prayer-life, had known how to discover Mary, and Jesus through her, and God through Jesus, they would not have had such terrible falls. The saints tell us that when we have once found Mary, and through Mary Jesus, and through Jesus God the Father, then we have discovered every good. When we say "every good", we except nothing. "Every good" includes every grace, continuous friendship with God,

every protection against the enemies of God, possession of truth to counter every falsehood, endless benefits and unfailing headway against the hazards we meet on the way to salvation, and finally every consolation and joy amid the bitter afflictions of life