

5-22-2016

'By Mary's Heart We Love the Heart of Jesus': The Teachings of St. Louis M. de Montfort (+1716) on Jesus' and Mary's Heart

Deyanira Flores

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_studies



Part of the [Catholic Studies Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Flores, Deyanira (2016) "'By Mary's Heart We Love the Heart of Jesus': The Teachings of St. Louis M. de Montfort (+1716) on Jesus' and Mary's Heart," *Marian Studies*: Vol. 67, Article 9, Pages 209-300.
Available at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_studies/vol67/iss1/9

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marian Library Publications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Marian Studies by an authorized editor of eCommons. For more information, please contact frice1@udayton.edu, mschlangen1@udayton.edu.

**“BY MARY’S HEART WE LOVE THE
HEART OF JESUS”: THE TEACHINGS OF
ST. LOUIS M. DE MONTFORT (+1716) ON
JESUS’ AND MARY’S HEART**

Deyanira Flores, STD

To the memory of Fr. J. Patrick Gaffney, SMM, with deep gratitude and admiration, who, together with his sister, Sr. Rosemary Gaffney, DW, with expertise and love, translated all the Hymns of St. Louis M. de Montfort into English.

The 100th Anniversary of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima (1917-2017) offers us a good opportunity to meditate on and renew our devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This paper dwells on the teachings of St. Louis M. de Montfort (+1716), which are so enlightening and profound. His teaching on Mary's Heart clearly contributed to the theology and devotion of Mary's Heart.

I. Introduction

There have been writings, specially inspired by God, that have left an indelible impression, and continue to produce to

this day incalculable spiritual fruit, the following among them: *The Imitation of Christ* of Thomas à Kempis, the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola, and the treatise *True Devotion to Mary* of St. Louis de Montfort.

The study of de Montfort's writings, including his not so well known but nonetheless very important *Hymns*, demonstrates that their fame is well-earned and rests on the outstanding solidity, clarity, conciseness, depth, and universality of the theological arguments expounded and the spiritual corollaries offered.

Within the rich and lasting contribution of his Marian doctrine is found his doctrine on Mary's Heart. We can say that his Marian teachings include Mary's Heart, and his teachings on Mary's heart encompass most aspects of Marian doctrine. As we shall see, there is no doubt that St. Louis certainly contributed to the theology and devotion of Mary's Heart.

A. Overview of St. Louis de Montfort's Teachings on the Sacred Heart

Given that St. Louis de Montfort is so Christocentric in his theology, and is so categorical about the indissoluble union that God willed between Jesus and Mary, it is impossible to talk about his teachings on the Heart of Mary without referring to those on the Sacred Heart. Likewise, in order to truly appreciate the importance of Mary's Heart, it is necessary to have clear the infinite greatness of the Sacred Heart of which She is the Mother.¹

¹ Cf. *True Devotion to Mary* (= TD), no.12, in *God Alone: The Collected Writings of St. Louis Marie de Montfort* (Bay Shore, NY: Montfort Publications, 1987),.293: "If you wish to understand the Mother ... then

The term “*heart*” appears many times in St. Louis de Montfort’s works: around 1005 instances,² in relation to the Sacred Heart, Mary’s Heart, God’s heart, and often our heart.

St. Louis dedicated seven of his *Hymns*³ to the theme of the Sacred Heart.⁴ Eight out of his ten *Hymns* on the Eucharist mention the Sacred Heart.⁵ Together they form a very complete theology on the Sacred Heart. Among his teachings, we mention:

understand the Son. *She is a worthy Mother of God.*”)

² It appears 835 times in his Hymns, 73 in The Love of Eternal Wisdom, 60 in True Devotion to Mary, 22 in Letter to the Friends of the Cross, 15 in The Secret of Mary.

³ All his *Hymns*, in Eng. trans., are found in: *God alone II. The Hymns of St. Louis Marie de Montfort* (Bay Shore, NY: Montfort Publications, 2005). We shall quote the number of the *Hymn*, of the stanza(s), and the page(s) from this edition.

⁴ They are: *Hymn 40 Treasures of the Sacred Heart*: pp. 264-269 (Mary is mentioned in vv. 4.33-38; pp. 265.268-269); *Hymn 41 Loving Excesses of the Sacred Heart*: pp. 269-273 (Mary: vv. 2.3.7.15; pp. 269.270); *Hymn 42 Words of Jesus Christ That Reveal the Great Benefits of Devotion to the Sacred Heart*: pp. 273-277 (Mary: vv. 27.28; p. 276); *Hymn 43 Outrages against the Sacred Heart*: pp. 277-281; *Hymn 44 Devotion to the Sacred Heart*: pp. 282-284; *Hymn 47 Act of Reparation to the Sacred Heart*: pp. 293-297 (Mary: vv. 27.28; p. 296); *Hymn 48 To the Religious of the Visitation*: pp. 297-299 (Mary: v. 3; p. 297).

⁵ They are: *Hymn 128 Blessed Sacrament: For Sunday*: pp. 533-534; *Hymn 129 Blessed Sacrament: For Monday*: pp. 535-536; *Hymn 130 Blessed Sacrament: For Tuesday*: pp. 537-539; *Hymn 131 Blessed Sacrament: For Wednesday*: pp. 539-541; *Hymn 132 Blessed Sacrament: For Thursday*: pp. 541-543; *Hymn 133 Blessed Sacrament: For Friday*: pp. 543-545; *Hymn 134 Blessed Sacrament: For Saturday*: pp. 545-547 (Mary: mentioned in every stanza); *Hymn 136 Reparation to the Blessed Sacrament*: pp. 549-551. In *Hymn 131*, the Sacred Heart is mentioned in every stanza. *Hymn 134* also develops the theme of Mary’s Heart. *Hymn 112 Desires for Communion*: pp. 484-485 (Mary: v. 7; p. 484) and the highly theological *Hymn 158 Most Blessed Sacrament*: pp. 619-623, speak about Jesus entering our heart (*Hymn 112*, 1.2.3.6.10.11.12: pp. 484-485; *Hymn 158*, 10: p. 622: “rush into my heart”; cf. vv. 8.14; p. 621.623). Cf. *Hymn 5*, 33-34: p. 21: charity is found in fullness in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus is the Heart of God.⁶ It is the Heart of the Son of Mary and Only-Begotten Son of God.⁷ It is constantly adoring, praising, and giving perfect homage to His Father.⁸ It is alive and present in the Blessed Sacrament.⁹ It is most worthy of adoration and praise.¹⁰ It loves humankind infinitely.¹¹ It is all aflame and lights the fire of love everywhere.¹² It ravishes us with Its beauty.¹³ It wants us to taste Its sweetness.¹⁴ It is all meekness, gentleness and goodness to charm us.¹⁵ It is all-merciful.¹⁶ It loved the

⁶ Cf. *Hymn* 44,3: p. 282: “All heaven kneels before this Heart, / Calling earth to adore it, / Let us in justice then adore, / For It is the Heart of God.”

⁷ Cf. *Hymn* 40,4: p. 265.

⁸ *Hymn* 40,7.8.10: p. 265; *Hymn* 41,3-5.12.32.34: pp. 269.270.272.273; *Hymn* 130,8: p. 538; *Hymn* 132,7: p. 542; cf. *Hymn* 128,3-8: pp. 533-534; *Hymn* 129,1: p. 535; *Hymn* 134,2.13: pp. 546.547.

⁹ *Hymn* 41,23: p. 271; *Hymn* 44,7.8.9: pp. 282.283; *Hymn* 47,6-9.12-13: pp. 294.295; *Hymn* 128,4.8: p. 534; *Hymn* 129,6: p. 536; *Hymn* 130,3-10: pp. 537-539; *Hymn* 131: pp. 539-541; *Hymn* 132,5-9: pp. 542-543.

¹⁰ *Hymn* 40,5.9.33.34: pp. 265.268; *Hymn* 42,29.33: pp. 276.277; *Hymn* 43,11.14: pp. 278.279; *Hymn* 44,3.5-6.19: pp. 282.284; *Hymn* 47,1.20.22-26: pp. 293.295-296; cf. *Hymn* 132,1: p. 541; *Hymn* 133,4.8.9: pp. 544.545 (referring to the Blessed Sacrament).

¹¹ *Hymn* 40,10-12: pp. 265-266; *Hymn* 41,6.8-11.13-14.16.18.23.25.29.34: pp. 269.270.271.272.273; *Hymn* 42,4.6.14.16.21: pp. 275.276; *Hymn* 43,38: p. 281; *Hymn* 44,2: p. 282; *Hymn* 47,1.10.17-20.26: pp. 293.294.295.296; *Hymn* 48,14: p. 298; *Hymn* 131,7.10: pp. 540-541; cf. *Hymn* 132, pp. 541-543; *Hymn* 158,5: p. 620 (Blessed Sacrament).

¹² *Hymn* 40,4.10.11.14.16.23.36: pp. 265-266.267.268; *Hymn* 41,2.35.36: pp. 269.273; *Hymn* 42,2.12.15.22.24.25.26: pp. 273.274-275.276; *Hymn* 44,9.16: p. 283; *Hymn* 47,29: pp. 296-297; *Hymn* 48,4.8 pp. 297.298; *Hymn* 131,1: p. 539; *Hymn* 132,5-6.9: pp. 542.543; cf. *Hymn* 129,8: p. 536; *Hymn* 130, 2.3: p. 537 (Blessed Sacrament); *Hymn* 134,4.7: pp. 546-547 (Mary).

¹³ *Hymn* 129,1: p. 535; *Hymn* 132,2: p. 541.

¹⁴ *Hymn* 44,8: p. 282; *Hymn* 131,4.6: pp. 539.540; cf. *Hymn* 129,4.7: pp. 535.536 (Blessed Sacrament).

¹⁵ *Hymn* 41,19-22.28: pp. 271.272; *Hymn* 42,19: p. 275; *Hymn* 130,6: p. 538.

¹⁶ *Hymn* 42,9-10: p. 274; *Hymn* 47,12.15: p. 295.

Cross and embraced it from Its Mother's womb.¹⁷ It suffered unto death and continues suffering immensely.¹⁸ It was pierced and rent for love of us.¹⁹ Its love is not corresponded!²⁰ It is abandoned and despised by many.²¹ We should make reparation for all the outrages It receives.²² It invites us to enter and dwell inside this Heart.²³ It is the treasury and unfailing fountain of every good.²⁴ It loves Mary above every heavenly and earthly creature.²⁵ It is One with Mary's holy Heart.²⁶ It wants to give Itself completely

¹⁷ *Hymn* 41,2-6.11: pp. 269.270.

¹⁸ *Hymn* 40,5.20: pp. 265.267; *Hymn* 41,9-13.16.23-30.33-37: pp. 270.271.272-273; *Hymn* 42,12: pp. 274-275; *Hymn* 43,17.22.30.35-36.38: pp. 279-280.281.

¹⁹ *Hymn* 41,33-37: pp. 272-273.

²⁰ *Hymn* 42,16: p. 275; *Hymn* 43,38: p. 281; *Hymn* 47,17: p. 295; *Hymn* 129,6: p. 536.

²¹ *Hymn* 43 *Outrages against the Sacred Heart*: pp. 277-281; *Hymn* 47,3.5-10.17: pp. 294.295.

²² *Hymn* 43,1-3.6.13.30-32.34: pp. 277.278-279.280-281; *Hymn* 44,6.17-18: pp. 282.283-284; *Hymn* 47 *Act of Reparation to the Sacred Heart*: pp. 293-297; cf. *Hymn* 133,1.6-11: pp. 543.544-545; *Hymn* 134,3: p. 546; *Hymn* 136,1.17-19: pp. 549.551.

²³ *Hymn* 40,18-19.29: pp. 266.268; *Hymn* 41,1: p. 269; *Hymn* 42,1.4.8.17.20.21.32: pp. 273.274.275-276.277; *Hymn* 44,1.7.9.10: pp. 282.283; *Hymn* 48,2.6.7.8: pp. 297-298; *Hymn* 131, pp. 539-541; *Hymn* 132,7: p. 542; cf. *Hymn* 128,6: p. 534; *Hymn* 130,9: p. 538; *Hymn* 132,1: p. 541; *Hymn* 133,8: p. 545; *Hymn* 134,1: p. 545-546 (present in and visit Him in the Blessed Sacrament).

²⁴ *Hymn* 40,15-17.24.27.32: pp. 266.267.268; *Hymn* 42,7.17.21-25.29.31-32: pp. 274.275.276.277; *Hymn* 43,17: p. 279; *Hymn* 44,7-10: pp. 282-283; *Hymn* 130,8: p. 538; *Hymn* 131, pp. 539-541; *Hymn* 133,8: p. 545; cf. *Hymn* 129, pp. 535-536; *Hymn* 132,1-3.6.8: pp. 541.542-543; *Hymn* 134,5.11: pp. 546.547 (Blessed Sacrament).

²⁵ *Hymn* 42,27-28: p. 276; *Hymn* 63,8: p. 326.

²⁶ *Hymn* 40,33-38: pp. 268-269; *Hymn* 42,27-28: p. 276.

to us.²⁷ It desires to save us.²⁸ It intercedes constantly for us before the Father and is the only One through Whom we obtain pardon.²⁹ To Him we should go in order to love Him, Mary and neighbor.³⁰ Saints are formed in It.³¹ Our heart is one with His.³² We should repay His love with our love.³³ It is our Model and Teacher.³⁴

In sum, highly theological and mystical in tone, St. Louis invites us *to enter into the Sacred Heart*,³⁵ *to visit It in the Blessed Sacrament*,³⁶ in order to discover all the Mysteries

²⁷ *Hymn* 44,10: p. 283; *Hymn* 98,8: p. 420; *Hymn* 129,6: p. 536; cf. *Hymn* 129,3: p. 535; *Hymn* 132,3: p. 541 (Blessed Sacrament).

²⁸ *Hymn* 41,6.13.17.24-37: pp. 269.270.271-273; *Hymn* 130,3: p. 537; *Hymn* 132,7: p. 542.

²⁹ *Hymn* 40,8.13.20.21: pp. 265.266.267; *Hymn* 41,12.30-32.34: pp. 270.272.273; *Hymn* 42,9-11, p. 274; *Hymn* 47,15.28: pp. 295.296; *Hymn* 131,3.5 pp. 539-540; cf. *Hymn* 128,2.3: p. 533 (Blessed Sacrament) *Hymn* 134,9: p. 547 (Mary).

³⁰ *Hymn* 40,14.22-23: pp. 266.267; *Hymn* 41,1: p. 269; *Hymn* 42,4.26.27: pp. 274.276; *Hymn* 131,6: p. 540; *Hymn* 132,6: p. 542; cf. *Hymn* 129,8.9: p. 536 (Blessed Sacrament).

³¹ *Hymn* 40,13-19.22-24.27-30.38: pp. 266.267-268.269; *Hymn* 42,1.4.17.20-26.32: pp. 273.274.275-276.277; *Hymn* 130,2.3.10: pp. 537.538-539: "... *Form in us your virtues / And your living image, / Our hearts will no longer resist / This labor all divine*"; cf. *Hymn* 132,3: p. 541: "... *Giving His flesh to eat, / His own blood to drink, / His soul and infinite Being, / So to change us into Himself*"; 132,6: p. 542 (Blessed Sacrament).

³² *Hymn* 44,4.12.15: pp. 282.283; *Hymn* 47,22.29-30: pp. 296-297; *Hymn* 132,4: pp. 541-542: "His love is even more surprising / Since He unites it forever / With us, His creatures. / *Jesus and the soul form but one. / Everything between them is in common*"; cf. *Hymn* 128,7: p. 534; *Hymn* 133,10, p. 545.

³³ *Hymn* 44,2: p. 282; *Hymn* 47,1.16-20: pp. 293.295-296; *Hymn* 133,9: p. 545; cf. *Hymn* 128,6-7: p. 534; *Hymn* 129,7-9: p. 536; *Hymn* 130,7: p. 538; *Hymn* 131,10: p. 540; *Hymn* 132,8-9: pp. 542-543; *Hymn* 158,13: pp. 622-623 (Blessed Sacrament); *Hymn* 134,12: p. 547 (Mary).

³⁴ *Hymn* 44,14.15.16: p. 283; cf. *Hymn* 130,1: p. 537: "professor"; 130,2.4.9.10: pp. 537.538-539; *Hymn* 131,6: p. 540 (Blessed Sacrament).

³⁵ *Hymn* 41,1: p. 269; *Hymn* 42,1.4.8.17.20.21.32: pp. 273.274.275-276.277; *Hymn* 44,1.7.9.10: pp. 282.283.

³⁶ *Hymn* 128,6: p. 534; *Hymn* 130,9: p. 538; *Hymn* 131,9: p. 540; *Hymn*

and Treasures hidden therein and inflame our hearts with the love of God and neighbor.

De Montfort's contribution to the theology and devotion of the Sacred Heart cannot be overstated. As Henri-Marie Guindon points out,

Saint Louis de Montfort promoted and spread devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus to a far greater extent than is generally realized. The silence of his biographers on this subject is surprising, not to say baffling. It is especially surprising when one considers the fact that his hymns on the Sacred Heart number no fewer than 905 lines; this is to say nothing of the mention he makes of the Heart of Christ in his other writings.³⁷

B. The French Terms *sein*, *âme*, *esprit*, and *entrailles*

In this paper, we shall concentrate mainly on the texts where the term "heart" (*coeur*) appears in relation to Mary. There are four other French terms which St. Louis uses to present similar teachings. They are: *sein*,³⁸ *âme*³⁹ ("soul"),

133,8: p. 545.

³⁷ H.-M. Guindon, "Sacred Heart," in *Jesus Living in Mary: Handbook of the Spirituality of St. Louis Marie de Montfort* (Bay Shore, NY: Montfort Publications, 1994), 1075; cf. pp. 1082-1085: "But one thing is certain: Montfort had a strong devotion to the Sacred Heart" (p. 1082).

³⁸ This interesting term is variously translated into English by the terms "bosom," "womb," or "breast," and touches upon several Marian doctrines.

³⁹ The term "*soul*" is frequently used, mostly in relation to *our soul*. It appears around 457 times in his *Hymns*, 106 in *True Devotion to Mary*, 68 in *The Secret of Mary* (=SM), 62 in *The Love of Eternal Wisdom*, and 9 in *Letter to the Friends of the Cross*. *Mary's soul* is not frequently mentioned. It basically comes up in relation to two scriptural texts: *the Magnificat*: "My soul glorifies the Lord" (Lk.1:46-47) (together with the term *spirit*), either quoting her, and/or applying the text to us (cf. SM 54: p. 276; TD 148.225.258: pp. 335.362.372; *Hymn* 85,1: p. 371; *Hymn* 90,13: p. 386), and Luke 1:35: *Mary's soul* pierced by the sword (cf. *Hymn* 74,1.4: p. 349: "1. Contemplate Mary suffering / ... See her saintly soul pierced / By the sword of sharp sorrow"; "In

esprit (“spirit”),”⁴⁰ and *entrailles* (“womb”).⁴¹ We shall mention them in conjunction with the term “heart,” or when they express important teachings.

II. A Holy Heart

St. Louis de Montfort often affirms Mary’s sanctity. He speaks about her “*holy Heart*,”⁴² and the characteristics that he stresses more are that it is “*loving*” and “*ardent*.”⁴³ He

her soul, she suffers more / Than all martyrs together). St. Louis makes the fundamental affirmation that Jesus and Mary “have but one heart, *but one soul*” (cf. *Hymn* 40,36: p. 268). When Jesus is buried, Mary calls Him “*beloved of my soul*” (cf. *Hymn* 73,4: pp. 347-348). As we shall see, *Mary’s role in our soul* is the theme that he develops more (Cf. also *Dossier of Texts* (2) at the end of this article.)

⁴⁰ The expression “*spirit of Mary*” appears only in *True Devotion to Mary* and *The Secret of Mary*, and only in relation to Marian Spirituality, but in some of de Montfort’s most important texts on this subject. Sometimes it comes in conjunction with other terms, mostly with “*soul*,” but sometimes with “*sein*” and “*heart*.” SM 68, p. 281, is an important text where “*spirit*,” “*soul*,” and “*heart*” all come together.

⁴¹ This term usually comes within the context of Mary’s intercession on our behalf, appealing to her maternal power to move her Son. The literal sense does not come out in the English translation of two out of the four texts we want to mention: TD 85: p. 316: “He is always lovingly conquered by the prayers of the dear Mother *who bore him and nourished him*”; “il est toujours amoureusement vaincu *par les mamelles et les entrailles* et les prières de sa très chère Mère”; *Prayer for Missionaries*, 6: p. 402: “It was she *who gave you birth and nurtured you*. Remembering this, how can you refuse me?”; “*Souvenez-vous de ses entrailles et de ses mamelles* et ne me rebutez pas”; *The Love of Eternal Wisdom* (= LEW) 204: p. 107: “Mary is his most worthy Mother because she conceived him and brought him forth *as the fruit of her womb*”; “comme le fruit *de ses entrailles*”; *Hymn* 124,1: p. 510: “O Wisdom, come, a poor soul begs you / By the blood of my gentle Jesus, / by Mary’s *womb* ...”; “*Par les entrailles de Marie*.” The French original is taken from: *Oeuvres complètes de saint Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1966), 543, 677, 205, 1508. (We shall quote it as *French original*.)

⁴² Cf. *Hymn* 82,6: pp. 367-368; *Hymn* 134,7,9: pp. 546-547.

⁴³ Cf. TD 269: p. 376; SM 68: p. 281; *Hymn* 84,1: p. 370; *Hymn* 127,56: p. 528; *Hymn* 134,7: pp. 546-547.

calls it “*pure*,”⁴⁴ “*benign*,”⁴⁵ “filled with *tenderness*.”⁴⁶ He desires to “Copy, throughout his life, / Her *faithful, generous* heart.”⁴⁷ Her Heart “*overflowed with virtue*.”⁴⁸ God “looked upon the *humility* / Of His servant’s heart,”⁴⁹ and Mary “*kept* in her heart / The most divine oracles,” and “Her heart *pondered* delicately / The words of others.”⁵⁰

In a great text on Mary’s fullness of grace (Lk.1:28), he explains how

“the torrential outpouring of God’s infinite goodness,” which had been “stemmed by the sins of men, *was now released precipitately and in full flood into the heart of Mary*.” God gave to her “all the graces which Adam and his descendants would have received so liberally from him had they remained in their original state of justice.”⁵¹

He affirms that “her *undivided* heart” was *never* “*sullied by the slightest sin*,” and Jesus was able to “paint there with no restraint / *His own authentic image*,”⁵² a very original and accurate way of expressing her perfect holiness.⁵³

⁴⁴ Cf. Letter to the Friends of the Cross (= LFC) 31: p. 134.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Hymn* 83,1: p. 369.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Hymn* 74,8: p. 350.

⁴⁷ *Hymn* 153,22: p. 607.

⁴⁸ *Hymn* 36,68: pp. 250-251; also 40,35, p. 268: “her *most virtuous* heart”; *Hymn* 87,10: p. 375.

⁴⁹ *Hymn* 85,1: p. 371.

⁵⁰ *Hymn* 23,19: p. 159.

⁵¹ LEW 106: p. 79.

⁵² Cf. *Hymn* 87,5: pp. 374-375; also, LFC 31: p. 134; *Hymn* 81,4: p. 365: “You alone are all-beautiful, / *Without sin, without any fault, / Never displeasing* the Most High, / *Wholly faithful* in everything, / During your sojourn here on earth / *You always loved God*, night and day.”

⁵³ Cf. *Hymn* 87,5: pp. 374-375; also *Hymn* 90,59: p. 395: “Hail Mary, / *All transformed into Jesus!* / Jesus is your life, / You are no longer. / O marvelous,

Taking into consideration that the image of fire is very strong in de Montfort's *Hymns*,⁵⁴ its application to Mary is very significant. Such is the case in the following stanza, which sums up well his teachings on Mary's holiness:

*Her holy Heart is a fire,
A burning bush all aflame
Which finds only in her God
Being, support and life.
It burns but is not consumed
For it can never love enough.*⁵⁵

III. A Maternal Heart

A. The Sacred Heart Was Formed from the Blood of Mary's Heart and Inside Her Womb

The more we adore and deepen the Mystery of the Sacred Heart of the Son of God, the more we are awed by the fact that this Sacred Heart was formed *from Mary's flesh and within her virginal womb*. St. Louis twice expresses this truth in similar terms. The first quotation comes from his fine theological description of what took place at the Annunciation: "The Holy Spirit formed *from the most pure blood of Mary's heart* a little body."⁵⁶ The second one stresses her love: "*From the blood of her flaming heart, / The Heart of Jesus was formed.*"⁵⁷

/ O blessed Mary! / Your mysteries are beyond understanding."

⁵⁴ In his *Hymns* on the Sacred Heart and the Eucharist alone it appears 31 times.

⁵⁵ *Hymn* 134,7: pp. 546-547.

⁵⁶ LEW 108: p. 80.

⁵⁷ *Hymn* 40,36: p. 268; cf. *Hymn* 40,35: p. 268: "Since Jesus took life / In her most virtuous heart."

The central Mystery of our Christian faith is the Incarnation. The Heart that was formed in Mary's womb belongs to the Son of God. St. Louis, enraptured in deep contemplation, expresses it thus:

Angels, tell me, I entreat you,
What is this lovely blazing fire?
*It is the Heart of Mary's Son,
And of the only Son of God.*⁵⁸

Already in the first century, St. Ignatius of Antioch (ca.107) had pointed to this Mystery: Jesus is “*of Mary and of God.*”⁵⁹ The Heart of Jesus belongs to the God-made-Man, Only-Begotten Son of Mary and Only-Begotten Son of God.

St. Louis invites us to “See in Mary's womb / *This tiny Heart aflame,*” filled with the Spirit and proclaiming God's love.⁶⁰

B. Jesus' Dwelling-Place

The term “*sein*” is most frequently used by de Montfort in reference to Mary's Divine Maternity: The Son of God became incarnate and dwelt “*in her womb*”:

⁵⁸ *Hymn 40,4*: p. 265.

⁵⁹ St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Letter to the Ephesians 7,2: Sources Chrétiennes* 10, p. 64.

⁶⁰ Cf. *Hymn 41,2*: p. 269.

... *Blessed is your womb*, pure and faithful Virgin,
For having contained immensity,
For having nourished, for having borne
Eternal Wisdom!⁶¹

The Angels at the time of the Incarnation⁶² and all of us now are called to adore Jesus Christ “alive in Mary’s womb.”⁶³ In the *Act of Consecration* itself, he says:

Eternal and incarnate Wisdom ... *I adore you profoundly*, dwelling in the splendor of your Father (“*dans le sein et les splendeurs de votre Père*) from all eternity and in the virginal womb of Mary (et *dans le sein virginal de Marie*), your most worthy Mother, at the time of your Incarnation.⁶⁴

In two other significant texts, the concepts of *God’s and Mary’s bosom* also appear together. One has to do with the Incarnation: in Mary, God “hid his only Son, *as in his own bosom.*”⁶⁵ The other is found in a *Letter* to his sister Guyonne-Jeanne, to whom he gives this beautiful advice:

⁶¹ Hymn 63,9: p. 326 (cf. a similar idea referred to St. Joseph: Hymn 122,3: p. 506: “You have carried *in your arms* / The Child *holding all things* in His hand”; the French original has the same term: “sein”: *French original*, p. 1502: “*Vous avez porté sur le sein / Celui qui tient tout en sa main.*”) Cf. also TD 18: p. 295: “*God the Son came down into her virginal womb* as a new Adam into his earthly paradise”; *Third Method for Saying the Rosary*: 8: p. 238; *Fourth Method for Saying the Rosary* (= *IV Method*) 17,9: p. 244; 19,4: p. 245: “The coming forth of the eternal Word *from the womb of Mary without breaking the seal of her Virginity*”; Hymn 41,2: p. 269; Hymn 81,2: p. 365: “*Happy the womb that bore him / And clothed him in humanity*”; Hymn 87,4: p. 374; Hymn 109,3: p. 474: “*The Son became incarnate in Mary’s womb / Taking there a body like ours, / To redeem us all / And to give us life.*”

⁶² Cf. *IV Method* 17,10: p. 244.

⁶³ Hymn 87,1: p. 374.

⁶⁴ LEW 223: p. 112; *French original*: p. 214.

⁶⁵ TD 6: p. 292.

“Dormez en repos *sur le sein de la divine Providence et de la très Sainte Vierge ...*”⁶⁶

St. Louis also compares Abraham’s and Mary’s *womb*:

... Let us not think that there was more glory and happiness in dwelling in Abraham's bosom (*sein*)--which is another name for Paradise--than in *dwelling in the bosom of Mary where God has set up his throne.*⁶⁷

He likewise speaks of Mary’s womb in relation to us. Even more than St. Paul (cf. Gal.4:19),⁶⁸ as Mother of the Head and the members, She is constantly concerned about forming Jesus in us.

Hence she conceives them, *bears them in her womb* (“sein”) and brings them forth to the glory of heaven through the graces of God which she imparts to them ... The elect *are in the womb of Mary* until she brings them forth into the glory of heaven ...⁶⁹

The Divine Maternity involves both Mary’s *womb (sein)* and *heart*. Jesus “bestows on her virginal *womb* / His grace without limit,” and “Her *heart* becomes his royal throne, / His dwelling-place unfailing.”⁷⁰ Jesus loves Mary’s *heart* above all. It is “His pleasant bed” and “palace of honor,” and *her womb* is His “most glorious throne.”⁷¹

⁶⁶ *Lettre 7 à Guyonne-Jeanne Grignon: French original:* p. 21. We quote the original French, because the English translation changes the text: “Be at peace and trust in Divine Providence and the Blessed Virgin”: *God Alone ...*: p. 10.

⁶⁷ SM 54: p. 276.

⁶⁸ Cf. TD 33: p. 299; also, LEW 214: pp. 109-110.

⁶⁹ LEW 213: p. 109.

⁷⁰ *Hymn* 87,4: p. 374.

⁷¹ Cf. *Hymn* 63,8: p. 326.

My womb brought you into light,
I have given you birth.
My heart fills you with love,
With love the most tender.⁷²

St. Louis underlines “the contentment of Jesus Christ in *the humble and virginal womb of Mary* and that of *Mary in the enjoyment of her God.*”⁷³ “Full of gratitude” to His Mother, “*For the milk of her most pure breast (“sein”),* He now “*feeds her with His divine blood.*”⁷⁴

He does not fail to mention also the ineffable loving relationship that develops between the Sacred Heart and Mary’s Heart. In one of his *Noels*, he contemplates the Savior “On His mother’s breast (“sein”), / *pressing against her heart* / With loving gentleness,” kissing, hugging and embracing her, and filling her with grace.⁷⁵

Very much in tune with Pierre de Bérulle’s (+1629) profound reflections on the subject, St. Louis reminds us that Jesus was not idle in Mary’s womb. It was there that He made His perfect and fundamental act of submission to the Father’s Will (cf. Heb.10,7-10):

My God, my Father, my Heart is set
To carry out your will.

⁷² Hymn 159,12: pp. 625-626.

⁷³ *IV Method* 18,3: p. 244; cf. 18,1: p. 244; Hymn 81,3: p. 365; Hymn 87,3: p. 374; Hymn 134,2: p. 546.

⁷⁴ Hymn 134,5: p. 546; cf. Hymn 77,14: p. 359 (*French original*: p. 1318): “As a baby at the breast (“à la mamelle”) / I am held so close to her (“Je suis attaché sur son sein”). / The pure and faithful Virgin / Feeds me milk all divine.”

⁷⁵ Cf. Hymn 61,4: p. 321.

Here in my mother's womb
*I submit to it with all my Heart.*⁷⁶

In his *Hymn* on Mary and the Eucharist, he affirms that Jesus, who *took so much pleasure in her womb*, again often wishes

... To rest there in silence.
*And to offer himself to the eternal Father
On the altar of her heart.*⁷⁷

It was there, "*in her womb* and with her co-operation," that "He chose all the elect."⁷⁸ Her womb is "His most glorious throne" whence He "makes his greatness known, forgives sinners, and distributes alms."⁷⁹

Albeit briefly, he also mentions *St. Joseph's heart*, relating it to two of his favorite themes: meekness and the fire of love. Jesus' smiles "*pierced his heart / Filling it with meekness,*" and St. Joseph was "*All aflame by His love.*"⁸⁰ In order to appreciate what high praise de Montfort is giving to St. Joseph, we must bear in mind how important it is for him to be "enflamed with God's love," and the significance de Montfort attaches to the term "meekness," considered by

⁷⁶ *Hymn* 41,3: p. 269.

⁷⁷ *Hymn* 134,2: p. 546.

⁷⁸ TD 248, p. 368; cf. *IV Method*: 18,5: p. 244.

⁷⁹ *Hymn* 63,8: p. 326; cf. *Hymn* 87,2: p. 374.

⁸⁰ *Hymn* 122,4: p. 506: "Who would have seen Him caress you, / Smile at you, embrace you / With extraordinary love! / *His smiles pierced your heart / Filling it with meekness. / All aflame by His love, / You told Him, in your turn: / My dear Son, I love you.*"

him God's favorite virtue.⁸¹ Two examples will suffice. Talking about Jesus Himself, he says:

Behold that eternal Wisdom who, to captivate our hearts and to take away our sins, has gathered into his person *all that is meek in God and in man*, in heaven and on earth.⁸²

How beautiful, *meek* and charitable is Jesus, the incarnate Wisdom! ...⁸³

IV. A Eucharistic Heart

St. John Paul II, who called Mary "Woman of the Eucharist," affirms in his Encyclical Letter on the Eucharist:

Certainly, *Mary must have been present* at the Eucharistic celebrations of the first generation of Christians, who were devoted to "the breaking of bread" (*Acts 2:42*).⁸⁴

Three centuries earlier, St. Louis de Montfort, who clearly affirms the intimate relationship that exists between Mary and the Eucharist, also develops the extremely interesting and not often mentioned theme of Mary receiving Holy Communion after Jesus' Ascension into heaven and her joy at sacramentally receiving her Son. His teachings are found in his *Hymn 134*, which is dedicated to the Eucharist and Mary's Heart. Let us see his contribution.

⁸¹ Cf. *Hymn 130,6*: p. 538: "*His heart is so meek, / (His favorite virtue!)*" /.

⁸² LEW 119: p. 83.

⁸³ LEW 126: p. 85.

⁸⁴ St. John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (4-17-2003), no. 53:
https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_20030417_eccle-de-euch.html.

First of all, he boldly affirms that Jesus, who “could not leave Mary, / So strong the love which bound them,” established the Eucharist “So that after the Ascension, / He could be her consolation here below.”⁸⁵ Then he describes how Jesus, through Holy Communion, wants to come and rest again in Mary, and offer Himself to the Father “*on the altar of her heart*,” as He did in her womb at the Incarnation.⁸⁶

Whereas Jesus is often “banished from the heart of ungodly man,” He “*comes into His Mother’s Sacred Heart / To receive perfect honor*,” and He, in turn, “*praises and glorifies her Heart*” in a way He alone can fittingly do.⁸⁷

An interchange takes place at Holy Communion between what we offer (or should offer) to Jesus and what He does for us. In Mary’s case, this interchange is most perfect. First, St. Louis describes what Jesus receives from her: Besides receiving perfect honor, He reposes in her purity, takes joy in her charity, and is drawn to her and enthralled by her humility.⁸⁸ Then he describes what Mary receives from Him. Jesus, who is always grateful for the least thing done for Him, “Shares with her all His treasures.”⁸⁹ Mary has a unique relationship with the Eucharist: Christ nourishes her with *the Body She nourished in His infancy*, and for the milk which

⁸⁵ *Hymn* 134,1: pp. 545-546; he says something similar concerning humankind in LEW 71: pp. 68-69: “He could not bear the thought of leaving him [man]. So, he devised a marvelous way of dying and living at the same time, and of abiding with man until the end of time. So, in order fully to satisfy his love, *he instituted the sacrament of Holy Eucharist.*”

⁸⁶ Cf. *Hymn* 134,2: p. 546.

⁸⁷ Cf. *Hymn* 134,3: p. 546.

⁸⁸ Cf. *Hymn* 134,4: p. 546.

⁸⁹ Cf. *Hymn* 134,5: p. 546.

He received from “her most pure breast,” He now “feeds her with His divine blood.”⁹⁰

St. Louis tries to describe the reaction of Mary’s Heart at the “pleasures and caresses She receives in that sweet moment,” when She holds her beloved Son, “the only object of her tenderness.” Paraphrasing her Magnificat, he says that “*It is then that her Sacred Heart / Thrills for joy in Jesus her Saviour.*”⁹¹ He compares her Heart with a burning bush all aflame with love, which “burns but is not consumed / For it can never love enough.”⁹²

Next follows a great affirmation on the perfect union that exists between Jesus and Mary:

Love seems, in this great mystery,
Of their two hearts, to form but one;
Between them, *everything is shared,*
For the Son is completely in his Mother.
In the Mother, one can only perceive
Her dear Son, her love: Jesus.⁹³

St. Louis now turns to us to call our attention to Mary’s intercession and example. It is then that “by her prayer” she obtains pardon for sinners. “*Her holy Heart and most chaste breast / Make Him meek and mild.*”⁹⁴ In her communions “the faithful Virgin” gives us “holy examples” to imitate, in order “*to render perfectly / All our duties to the Blessed*

⁹⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

⁹¹ *Hymn* 134,6: p. 546.

⁹² *Hymn* 134,7: pp. 546-547.

⁹³ *Hymn* 134,8: p. 547.

⁹⁴ *Hymn* 134,9: p. 547; literally: “Lui font tomber les armes de la main”: *French original*: p. 1555.

Sacrament.”⁹⁵ But Mary is not only “the perfect model” for receiving Holy Communion. *It was also from her* “That His body and blood came to us”; *she gave us* “*this precious gift,*” which raises us to such a high rank that even angels envy us.⁹⁶

St. Louis then mentions a theme dear to him: he asks Mary to lavish *in our hearts* her virtues and her love, so that Jesus may enjoy being in us and we may love Him through her.⁹⁷ She is “our perfect supplement,” and for this reason St. Louis asks Jesus *to come into her Heart*, and “She will provide for our lack of fervor.”⁹⁸

V. Two Hearts in One

A. “They Have But One Heart, But One Soul”

St. Louis de Montfort speaks about a very important truth: the indissoluble union that exists between Jesus and Mary: “*They have but one heart, but one soul,*” he affirms.⁹⁹

Lord, *you are always with Mary and Mary is always with you* ... She is so completely *transformed into you* by grace that she no longer lives, she no longer exists, because *you alone*, dear Jesus, *live and reign in her* more perfectly than in all the angels and saints ... So intimately is she united to you that it would be easier to separate ... all the angels and saints from you than Mary; *for she*

⁹⁵ Cf. *Hymn* 134,10: p. 547.

⁹⁶ Cf. *Hymn* 134,11: p. 547.

⁹⁷ Cf. *Hymn* 134,12: p. 547.

⁹⁸ Cf. *Hymn* 134,13: p. 547; also, TD 144: p. 334.

⁹⁹ Cf. *Hymn* 40,36: p. 268.

*loves you more ardently, and glorifies you more perfectly than all your other creatures put together.*¹⁰⁰

In his *Hymns on the Sacred Heart*, he teaches that this union is based on the Mystery of the Incarnation, and should move us to love them both, to lose ourselves entirely “in these two miraculous hearts,” both of which convince us “*To see but one in the two.*”¹⁰¹

He also admonishes us that, if we want to love Mary, we should love her with Jesus’ Heart, “*for her Heart is one with His.*”¹⁰² Their hearts are not only united in and through the Incarnation, but also on Calvary and now in heaven:

*Our hearts were but one victim
When they lived on earth,
So intimately united, they form
But one love in the heavens.*¹⁰³

In a *Hymn* on the Eucharist, St. Louis teaches that it is love that “*Of their two hearts forms but one,*” and “*Between them, everything is shared.*” For this reason, “the Son is completely in his Mother,” and in Mary we can only perceive “Her dear Son, her love: Jesus.”¹⁰⁴

Even though we would never be able to reach the union that Mary has with God, St. Louis teaches with Tradition that we too are all called to a loving and intimate relationship with God. In his *Hymns*, he speaks about Jesus inviting the

¹⁰⁰ TD 63: p. 308.

¹⁰¹ Cf. *Hymn* 40,36-37: pp. 268-269.

¹⁰² Cf. *Hymn* 42,27: p. 276.

¹⁰³ Cf. *Hymn* 42,28: p. 276; also, *Hymn* 87,6: p. 375.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. *Hymn* 134,8: p. 547.

soul to come, enter, rest in His Sacred Heart,¹⁰⁵ and he urges us to “*give Jesus our souls*” and “*surrender our hearts to His fire,*” because “He yearns to make them His dwelling.”¹⁰⁶

When divine Wisdom enters a soul, *he brings all kinds of good things with him* and bestows vast riches upon that soul. “*All good things came to me along with him* and untold riches from his hand” (Wis.7:11).¹⁰⁷

A thousand times happy is the man *into whose soul* Wisdom has entered to have his abode!¹⁰⁸

God’s love for us is presented in Sacred Scripture and Tradition in spousal terms. St. Louis expresses it thus: “It is certain that Eternal Wisdom *loves souls* so much *that he even espouses them*, contracting with them a true, spiritual marriage which the world cannot understand.”¹⁰⁹ A consequence of this is that “*Jesus and the soul form but one. / Everything between them is in common.*”¹¹⁰ St. Louis

¹⁰⁵ Cf. *Hymn* 42,17-26.32: pp. 275-276.277. He also speaks about the Holy Spirit coming to us; e.g., *Hymn* 13,42: p. 81; *Hymn* 15,46: p. 105; *Hymn* 17,9: p. 114; *Hymn* 21,5: p. 145.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. *Hymn* 64,8: p. 327.

¹⁰⁷ LEW 90, p. 74; also *Hymn* 103,12: p. 449: “*With you I shall have everything / Without fear of lacking anything.*” Cf. something similar said about Mary: TD 216, p. 360: “*I am as a child, weaned from earthly pleasures and resting on its mother’s breast. It is upon this breast that all good things come to me ... (cf. Ps.130:1.2).*”

¹⁰⁸ LEW 51, pp. 63-64.

¹⁰⁹ LEW 54: p. 64; cf. *Hymn* 55,24: p. 309; *Hymn* 56,37: p. 311. He also presents the Holy Spirit as “*a most tender spouse*”: *Hymn* 98,13-16.21: pp. 420-421; *Hymn* 27,11: p. 185.

¹¹⁰ *Hymn* 132,4: p. 542; cf. *Hymn* 56,37: p. 311: “*Soul, I am yours, He tells me ...*”

himself longs for this union with Him: “*May we both have one soul / In two different bodies!*”¹¹¹

B. Hymn 87

St. Louis develops more at length this theme in his *Hymn 87, In Honor of Jesus Alive in Mary at the Incarnation*. This Hymn actually offers us a good Mariological synthesis, where Mary’s Divine Maternity, Virginity, Holiness, Co-redemption, Spiritual Maternity, union with her Divine Son, and Marian Spirituality are all synthetically mentioned.

He starts by inviting us to adore Jesus, “alive in Mary’s womb,” “God become infant / Giving us life.”¹¹² Because of her Divine Maternity, Mary’s womb has become both “*A sacred temple ... / Where God takes all delight,*” and “*Our refuge certain / Where God, most merciful, dwells.*”¹¹³ St. Louis perceives here a perfect interchange between Jesus and Mary:

In this womb, night and day
He takes delight.
Mary, in turn, loves Him
With all her might:
What loving return
Of mutual affection!¹¹⁴

In the next two stanzas, he extolls not only the Divine Maternity, but Mary’s perfect holiness as well, which is the fruit of two converging realities: Jesus’ action in her,

¹¹¹ *Hymn 126,8*: p. 515.

¹¹² Cf. *Hymn 87,1*: p. 374.

¹¹³ Cf. *Hymn 87,2*: p. 374.

¹¹⁴ Cf. *Hymn 87,3*: p. 374.

bestowing on her “His grace without limit,” and “*painting in her heart with no restraint His own authentic image,*” and Mary’s “*totally undivided heart,*” which became “his royal throne, his dwelling-place unailing.”¹¹⁵

St. Louis moves on to speak about their union on Calvary, with a clear affirmation of Mary’s Co-redemption:

Their hearts stoutly united
By intimate bonds,
Jointly offer themselves
As two victims,
Abolishing the punishment
Our sins deserve.¹¹⁶

Then follows a reference to the mystery of her Spiritual Maternity, which underlines once more the deep union that exists between Jesus and Mary in the Work of Salvation.¹¹⁷

St. Louis returns to the ineffable relationship between Jesus and Mary, trying to fathom “the blessed raptures / *Of these two loving hearts,*” which only in heaven we may really know.¹¹⁸ He underlines again their indissoluble union, and explains that

They both seem to merge.
How beautiful their union!
Mary is totally in Jesus,
Her most faithful lover,

¹¹⁵ Cf. *Hymn* 87,4-5: pp. 374-375.

¹¹⁶ *Hymn* 87,6: p. 375; cf. TD 18: p. 295: “Even at his death she had to be present so that he might *be united with her in one sacrifice and be immolated with her consent* to the eternal Father ...”

¹¹⁷ Cf. *Hymn* 87,7: p. 375.

¹¹⁸ Cf. *Hymn* 87,8: p. 375.

Or better, *she no longer is,*
*But Jesus alone in her.*¹¹⁹

Then he invites us *to come to these two hearts*, in order to “warm our coldness, / Share their ardor, / Their virtues, their graces.” They both “love sinners,” and therefore “We shall find a place there.”¹²⁰

De Montfort now turns to Mary herself, to whom he gives the significant titles of “Mother of Divine Love,” “rich sanctuary,” “Bearer of our Sovereign / And of our salvation,” to ask her to “Send this meek Lamb / *Into our hearts.*”¹²¹ In the last two stanzas, he addresses Jesus, “our dear spouse, / Our God, our brother,” asking Him to “*be born in us / By his Holy Mother,*” in order to go to the Father by Him.¹²²

Come by your humility,
Making us childlike;
Come by your holiness
Restoring our innocence.
Come by your charity
*To reign over us totally.*¹²³

C. Cult of Both Hearts

A direct consequence of the union that exists between the Heart of Jesus and that of Mary is the cult that we are to render to both Hearts. St. Louis affirms it, being careful to

¹¹⁹ Cf. *Hymn* 87,9: p. 375.

¹²⁰ Cf. *Hymn* 87,10: p. 375.

¹²¹ Cf. *Hymn* 87,11: p. 375.

¹²² Cf. *Hymn* 87,12: p. 376.

¹²³ *Hymn* 87,13: p. 376.

distinguish the cult of adoration owed to Jesus from that of veneration owed to Mary:

Praising this adorable Heart,
I praise in proportion
The Heart of His admirable Mother,
So intense is their union.

It is you alone whom I adore,
Heart of my God, glorious Heart,
But, adoring you, I also honor
*The Heart of heaven's Queen.*¹²⁴

VI. A Suffering Heart

A. The Love of Jesus for the Cross

St. Louis de Montfort distinguishes himself for his deep knowledge and love of the science of the Cross. In his works, in particular *Letter to the Friends of the Cross* and *The Love of Eternal Wisdom*, he explains very well Jesus' love for the Cross and its value in Christian life. Among his teachings, we mention the following:

— Christ “wishes to become incarnate in order to convince men of his friendship; he wishes to come down upon earth to help men to go up to heaven.” We would have expected, then, that He would “appear glorious and triumphant,” accompanied by angels, to “crush all his enemies *and win the hearts of men* by his attractiveness, his delights, his magnificence and his riches.” But such was not the case at all. He chose instead the Cross to be “the

¹²⁴ *Hymn* 40,33-34: p. 268.

instrument of his conquests ... *the friend and spouse of his heart ...*”¹²⁵

— He loved the Cross from His infancy. He received it from His Father *while in Mary’s womb*, and “*placed it deep in his heart*, there to dominate his life.”¹²⁶

— This adorable Cross, “*stained with the blood of a God*,” was chosen by Jesus “*to be the spouse of his heart, his heart’s only desire and inspiration*, the only object worth his toil, his only arm in combat, his only crown of glory, his only guide in his judgements ...”¹²⁷

— So great is His love for us, that from His childhood “*His heart longed ardently*” for it.¹²⁸

B. The Sufferings of Mary’s Heart

1. The Christian Paradox

Jesus chose and loved the Cross not only for Himself, but also for His closest followers. To “the noblest saints of His court” he gave the “crosses of greatest price.”¹²⁹ And to Mary, He gave the heaviest cross of all. St. Louis presents here the Christian paradox:

I made my mother suffer all with me,
I pierced her heart with grief,

¹²⁵ Cf. LEW 168: pp. 95-96.

¹²⁶ Cf. LEW 169: p. 96; also, LFC 16: p. 129.

¹²⁷ *Letter 34 to Marie Louise Trichet*: p. 38.

¹²⁸ Cf. *Hymn* 19,10: p. 127; also, *Hymn* 102,11-13: pp. 443-444.

¹²⁹ Cf. *Hymn* 11,21: p. 63.

*Because she was so dear to me
And the tender object of my heart.*¹³⁰

Giving the heaviest crosses to those He loves more is not the only paradox. Another one, very difficult to understand, is the suffering of the innocent and its value. Christ Himself and Mary are the greatest examples of this:

At the side of Jesus, see Mary his Mother, who was never stained with any sin, original or actual, *yet whose pure and loving heart was pierced through*. If I had time to dwell on the sufferings of Jesus and Mary, I could show that what we suffer is nothing compared to theirs.¹³¹

With all the Saints, St. Louis considers the cross and joy in affliction an “amazing grace” which we obtain through prayer, humility, and the intercession of Mary, who, “*Through her sorrow-pierced heart / She bestows life / And even the cross of the Lord.*”¹³²

St. Louis encourages us saying that the cross is “the portion and reward” of those who desire Wisdom, and “our loving Saviour ... sends crosses to his friends in proportion to their strength, and tempers them with divine unction.”¹³³ He also explains very well, giving six arguments, why the Cross is so important and fruitful in our lives.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ LFC 31: p. 134.

¹³² *Hymn* 11,33: p. 65.

¹³³ Cf. LEW 103: p. 78; also, TD 154: p. 337: “The most faithful servants of the Blessed Virgin ... receive from her the best graces ... *which are crosses* ... [T]his good Mother ... drips all the crosses she prepares for them in the honey of her maternal sweetness and the unction of pure love.”

¹³⁴ Cf. LEW 176: p. 98.

2. *Mary's Sufferings on Calvary*

St. Louis dedicated an entire *Hymn* to the theme of Mary's sufferings at the foot of the Cross.¹³⁵ Her heart is mentioned three times. First, in relation to her suffering, he says: Love is the reason for her "torment," "*Her heart, her great sacrifice.*"¹³⁶ Secondly, he tells Mary that we "sympathize" with her, and asks for the intercession before her Son of "*her heart filled with tenderness.*"¹³⁷ Finally, he asks her to "*Pierce our heart with an arrow / Of love from her heart,*" so that *our heart* may share in her sorrow.¹³⁸

3. *Mary's Co-Redemption*

St. Louis does not only dwell on Mary's terrible sufferings on Calvary, but he also underlines that She suffered *in union with her Son*:

When Jesus fell beneath his cross
You were stricken
To the depths of misery. What sorrows,
What agonies,
*You both suffered together!*¹³⁹

In Jesus' mouth he puts this statement: "*Our hearts were but one victim / When they lived on earth.*"¹⁴⁰ In another *Hymn*, he clearly affirms Mary's Co-redemption:

¹³⁵ Cf. *Hymn 74 Sufferings of the Blessed Virgin at the Foot of the Cross*: pp. 349-350.

¹³⁶ Cf. *Hymn 74,3*: p. 349.

¹³⁷ Cf. *Hymn 74,8*: p. 350.

¹³⁸ Cf. *Hymn 74,9*: p. 350.

¹³⁹ *Hymn 90,23*: p. 388; cf. TD 18: p. 295.

¹⁴⁰ *Hymn 42,28*: p. 276.

*Their hearts stoutly united
By intimate bonds,
Jointly offer themselves
As two victims,
Abolishing the punishment
Our sins deserve.*¹⁴¹

But suffering is never the last word. St. Louis invites *the “loving heart”* of the “glorious Queen of heaven” to be “no longer sad” and “leap for joy,” *because Jesus is risen.*¹⁴²

4. Our Compassion and Reparation

St. Louis dwells at length on all the physical, moral, and spiritual sufferings Jesus underwent for our sake, concluding that no one has ever or will ever suffer like Him.¹⁴³ How deep should be “our grief, our love and our gratitude” to Him, “who endured for our sakes freely and with the utmost love all that a man could possibly suffer.”¹⁴⁴ He also invites us to “*share in the sufferings” of Mary*, “Mother of Fair love, / To expiate our offenses, / *Offering her some return.*”¹⁴⁵

Another kind of compassion to which he refers at least thirty-six times in the *Hymns* we studied is Reparation for the abandonment and the outrages that Jesus’ Heart suffers now, in particular in the Blessed Sacrament.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴¹ *Hymn* 87,6: p. 375.

¹⁴² Cf. *Hymn* 84,1: p. 370.

¹⁴³ Cf. LEW 154-166: pp. 91-94.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. LEW 163: p. 94.

¹⁴⁵ *Hymn* 74,10: p. 350.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. *Hymns* 43; 44; 47; 133; 134; 136.

To make amends for these outrages,
Let us love Him deeply,
Let us render Him homage,
Let us pay court to Him.
Let us make an act of reparation
To His Heart so despised,
Since this most loving Heart
*Has emptied itself for us.*¹⁴⁷

What! Can we be indifferent
To this contempt, this abuse?
No, no, that would be impossible.
Let us weep then over gentle Jesus!
Let us visit Him often,
Taking the place of so many Christians;
His Heart entreats us,
He wants to shower us with gifts.¹⁴⁸

VII. An Interceding Heart

Mary's intercession is a gift from Jesus Himself to us, for which St. Louis expresses "heartfelt gratitude."¹⁴⁹ Her Divine Maternity itself, as Tradition often proclaims, intercedes for us:

O Sacred Heart, *by her breasts,*
By her womb which bore you,
Forgive your unfaithful people ...¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ *Hymn* 133,9: p. 545; cf. *Hymn* 133,6.10-11: pp. 544-545.

¹⁴⁸ *Hymn* 133,8: p. 545.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. SM 66: p. 279.

¹⁵⁰ *Hymn* 47,28: p. 296; also *Hymn* 82,7: p. 368; *Hymn* 134,9: p. 547.

He sometimes speaks about it in terms of her Heart. He asks Jesus to “*Listen to Mary’s heart who begs him, / And surely honors him the most.*”¹⁵¹ He asks Mary that *her “heart filled with tenderness”* may “entreat her dear Son for us.”¹⁵² “*Her holy Heart and most chaste breast / Make Him meek and mild.*”¹⁵³

In a short paraphrase of the *Memorare*, he says:

Remember, Virgin Mary,
Your heart is so benign,
Never has it been known
*To pray to you in vain.*¹⁵⁴

In another *Hymn* he asks her “*to take our hearts,*” and “*in everything plead the case of her servants.*”¹⁵⁵ His heart begs Mary “*through her own heart*” to give him gentleness, in order to win for heaven sinful souls.¹⁵⁶ In Mary’s lips he puts this consoling assurance:

My child, I am moved,
For my heart is full of love,
I am praying and speaking to my Son
*For you all, night and day.*¹⁵⁷

¹⁵¹ *Hymn* 47,27: p. 296.

¹⁵² *Hymn* 74,8: p. 350.

¹⁵³ *Hymn* 134,9: p. 547: “It is then *by her prayer* / She obtains from our Savior / Pardon for the poor sinner, / He is her Son, she is His Mother. / *Her holy Heart and most chaste breast / Make Him meek and mild.*”

¹⁵⁴ *Hymn* 83,1: p. 369.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. *Hymn* 90,42: p. 392.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. *Hymn* 9,29: p. 49.

¹⁵⁷ *Hymn* 127,56: p. 528.

Authentic devotion to Mary is trustful, and “prompts us to go to her *in every need of body and soul.*”¹⁵⁸ “All consolation / *For body and soul*” comes through her intercession; she is “the all-powerful support / *Of poor miserable souls,*” whose “maternal kindness” consoles “*suffering souls.*”¹⁵⁹ We seek her help when the “*soul is troubled*” by daily sins.¹⁶⁰ The Rosary “heals the *sin-sick soul.*”¹⁶¹ St. Louis asks Mary to share her tears with him so that *his soul* “may be cleansed.”¹⁶²

VIII. Jesus and Mary in Our Hearts

We shall deal now with what we could call a series of variations on a most sublime theme: *the presence of Jesus and Mary in our hearts.*

God did not only will to create us, give us a wonderful universe to live in, and be very good to us, benefitting us with countless gifts, but He willed to establish with each human being a personal, intimate, loving relationship which is expressed in Sacred Scripture under the images of the father/mother-son or husband-wife relationships.

St. Louis speaks about the height of this relationship here on earth: God dwelling in us and we in Him, and Mary’s special place and mission in the acquisition of this union with God to which we are called and of which she is the

¹⁵⁸ TD 107: p. 322.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. *Hymn* 159,3-5: p. 624; also *Hymn* 82,4: “*The troubled soul / That finds her / Is consoled*”; *Hymn* 13,88: p. 86: “*Speak a word in my favor, / And my soul is healed.*”

¹⁶⁰ Cf. *Hymn* 77,12: p. 359.

¹⁶¹ Cf. *Hymn* 115,13: p. 490.

¹⁶² Cf. *Hymn* 123,12: p. 509.

maximum example, being, after the Human Nature of Christ, the creature most perfectly united with God.

St. Louis employs around seventeen different verbs to express the ineffable union which God has willed to have with each one of us and in which Mary has such an important role to play. The subjects are Jesus and/or Mary. In many cases the direct object is “*heart*,” but other terms like “*soul*” are also used in a synonymous sense. These verbs are: reign, possess, win, belong, lend, dwell, live, have inside, come into, send into, form, bring forth, produce, take and give to, act by or through. The final goal is our sanctification and perfect union with God in heaven. Let us see his teachings.

A. Jesus and Mary Reign in Our Hearts

“Thy kingdom come,” we pray in the Our Father (Mt.6:10). We are thereby reminded that it is God alone who should reign in the world at large and in each one of us in particular.

In the forceful *Hymn 153 Service of God in Spirit and Truth*, St. Louis rightly insists that if we are to serve the Lord, we have to do it “without reserve,” and we ought to give Him all, for He is “the supreme Lord of all”: “*The whole heart, the whole mind, the whole soul, / Give all or give me naught.*”¹⁶³ We have to submit to God’s will “*our whole heart, undivided, always.*”¹⁶⁴ After God, Mary is our

¹⁶³ *Hymn 153,2*: p. 604.

¹⁶⁴ *Hymn 153,23*: p. 607; also 153,20: p. 606: “Let us set the whole mind to know, / *The whole heart to love, / The whole body to serve this great Lord, / Unceasingly, unsparingly.*”

exemplar. We are to copy “throughout our lives, *her faithful, generous heart.*”¹⁶⁵

This kingdom is never a question of oppression, but of love:

*O God of love, consuming fire,
Be our gentle conqueror...
Reign henceforth in our souls ...*¹⁶⁶

1. God Asks for Our Hearts

Inspired in Proverbs 23:26: “My son, *give me your heart,*” St. Louis insists that we should offer God the gift of *our heart*, for “that is all He asks for.”¹⁶⁷ Explaining the three kinds of slavery that exist, he affirms that voluntary slavery is the most perfect one, for by it *we give to God our heart* and freely choose to serve Him.¹⁶⁸

He says the same thing about Jesus Christ. When we receive the great gift which is divine Wisdom, which we can possess only through Mary, “where are we to lodge him?” “What throne are we to offer” to Him? “*He has asked only for our heart, it is our heart we must offer him,* and there we must lodge him.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ *Hymn* 153,22: p. 607.

¹⁶⁶ *Hymn* 135,5: pp. 548-549.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. LEW 132: p. 87.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. TD 70: p. 311.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. LEW 209: p. 108.

2. *Jesus Reigns in Our Hearts and Souls*

Divine Wisdom has to reign in our souls.¹⁷⁰ But “only through Mary, can we possess divine Wisdom.”¹⁷¹ The reign of Jesus, St. Louis insists, will come about *only through Mary*:

When will that happy day come ... when God's Mother *is enthroned in men's hearts* as Queen, *subjecting them to the dominion of her great and princely Son*? When will souls breathe Mary as the body breathes air? ... Lord, *that your kingdom may come*, may the reign of Mary come!¹⁷²

De Montfort expresses his ardent desire, “deeply engraved in his heart,” for which he has prayed for years, that

The Blessed Virgin will have more children, servants and slaves of love than ever before, and that through them Jesus, his dear Lord, *will reign more than ever in the hearts of men.*¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ Cf. *Hymn* 103,11: p. 449: “I burn with your fire, / Come to me. / *You are enthroned in my soul*, / ... With you and with your love / I am happy day and night”; *Hymn* 109,39: p. 482: “I salute you, Mary, / ... Your name is holy and blessed / As is Jesus, your Son / *Who alone reigns in our souls*.” He also speaks about the Holy Spirit reigning in us; e.g., *Hymn* 141,15: p. 572.

¹⁷¹ Cf. LEW 209: p. 108; cf. LEW 203-214: pp. 107-110; TD 50: p. 303: “Since she is the sure means, the direct and immaculate way to Jesus and the perfect guide to him, *it is through her that souls* who are to shine forth in sanctity, *must find him*.”

¹⁷² TD 217: p. 360.

¹⁷³ Cf. TD 113: pp. 323-324.

3. *Mary, Queen of Our Hearts*

Jesus is our King and Mary our Queen:

*You alone are my Queen,
Your Son alone my King,
May you both govern me,
He the King, you the Queen.
I fear no enemies
With such powerful friends.*¹⁷⁴

St. Louis explains how Jesus is King “by nature and by conquest,” and Mary is Queen “by grace.” They reign primarily “*in the heart or interior of man,*” and that is why we may call the Virgin “*Queen of our hearts.*”¹⁷⁵ Since we belong entirely to Jesus (cf. Rom. 7:4; 1Cor. 6:19-20; 1Pet. 1,18-19), we must “glorify him in our body and *let him reign in our soul.*”¹⁷⁶ Likewise, “the kingdom of the Blessed Virgin is *principally in the interior of man,* that is, *in his soul.*”¹⁷⁷

That God should reign over us is obvious, because He is our God and Creator, and thus has the right to govern us and expect obedience from us. What about Mary? To speak about Mary reigning in our hearts means that she has received a special power from God regarding us.¹⁷⁸ St. Louis

¹⁷⁴ *Hymn* 81,8: p. 366.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. TD 38: p. 300; also *Hymn* 82,9: p. 368; SM 55: p. 276: “*Queen of a soul.*”

¹⁷⁶ Cf. TD 68: p. 311.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. TD 38: p. 300.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Pius XII, Encyclical Letter *Ad Caeli Reginam* (11-October-1954), no.42: http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_11101954_ad-caeli-reginam.html: “Besides, the Blessed Virgin possessed, after Christ, not only the highest degree of excellence and

explains very well why Mary has this power and seven ways in which she concretely exercises it:

God, Who through the Incarnation had given her authority *over His own Son*, also gave her “*a far-reaching dominion over the souls of the elect*” so that she could: 1. “*make her dwelling-place in them,*” 2. “*nourish them,*” 3. and “*bring them forth to eternal life as their mother,*” 4. “*have them for her inheritance and possession,*” 5. “*form them in Jesus and Jesus in them,*” 6. “*implant in their heart her virtues,*” 7. “*be the inseparable associate of the Holy Spirit in all these works of grace.*”¹⁷⁹ In other words, God gave Mary this sovereignty over us for our benefit, *that She may help us truly establish the reign of her Divine Son in our hearts.*

Speaking in terms of *Mary’s soul*, he says that the most important of all the happy effects that Marian Consecration faithfully practiced produces is that it establishes “*Mary’s life in the soul,*” and she becomes “*Queen*” of that soul, and thereby “works untold wonders in it.”¹⁸⁰

B. Possessing the Hearts of Jesus and Mary

The Servant of God, Monsignor Luis María Martínez (+1956), explains very well how love longs for mutual

perfection, *but also a share in that influence by which He, her Son and our Redeemer, is rightly said to reign over the minds and wills of men.* For if through His Humanity the divine Word performs miracles and gives graces, if He uses His Sacraments and Saints as instruments for the salvation of men, why should He not make use of the role and work of His most holy Mother in imparting to us the fruits of redemption?”

¹⁷⁹ Cf. TD 37: p. 300; also, LEW 205: p. 107; SM 14: p. 266-267: “Mary received from God *a unique dominion over souls* enabling her to nourish them and make them more and more godlike.”

¹⁸⁰ Cf. SM 55: pp. 276-277.

possession: God wants us to be totally His, and He grants us the unthinkable: that He should likewise be totally ours.¹⁸¹

St. Louis, a great mystic, understood and lived this deeply. He longs to possess Jesus' Heart. In a *Hymn on Reparation to the Sacred Heart*, he asks the Lord "to have in this life / *No other heart than His.*"¹⁸² In another *Hymn*, dedicated to express his love for Jesus, Divine Wisdom, he even asks Him: "*May we both have one soul / In two different bodies.*"¹⁸³

After Jesus,¹⁸⁴ the same is true with Mary. He confides how Mary is everything to him: "ardor, *soul*, honor, his all, *his heart.*"¹⁸⁵ It is Jesus Himself Who has given him to His "holy Mother": "...*She is within me. What a precious possession* and what a consolation for me! Should I not in return *be all hers?*"¹⁸⁶

It is a reciprocal relationship fruit of total consecration to her, in which Mary, when someone "gives himself entirely to her," she "*gives herself completely in a wondrous manner to him*" and works many things on his behalf. "*Just as one who is consecrated belongs entirely to Mary, so Mary belongs entirely to him.*"¹⁸⁷

¹⁸¹ Cf. Luis M. Martínez, *El Espíritu Santo* (México: Editorial La Cruz, 1998), 95-109. On the love of God for us and our love for Him, cf. his book *El Amor* (México: Editorial La Cruz, 2004).

¹⁸² Cf. *Hymn* 47,30: p. 297.

¹⁸³ Cf. *Hymn* 126,8: p. 515.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. *Hymn* 75,32: p. 355: "I love you / More than myself / More than my own heart, / *after Jesus, my Savior ...*"

¹⁸⁵ Cf. *Hymn* 75,10: p. 352.

¹⁸⁶ SM 66: pp. 279.280.

¹⁸⁷ TD 144: p. 334; cf. TD 145: p. 334.

In a beautiful prayer to Mary found in *The Secret of Mary*, he expresses how, through God's mercy, Mary belongs to him, and he wishes to belong wholly to her: He starts by giving her ten titles, three in relation to the Three Divine Persons: "beloved daughter of the eternal Father," "admirable mother of the Son," "faithful spouse of the Holy Spirit"; three in relation to us: "Mother most dear, Lady most lovable, Queen most powerful"; and four in relation to him: "my joy, my glory, *my heart and soul*."¹⁸⁸ Then he asserts the mutual possession that binds them, his desire to belong ever more to her, and his entreaty to her to do all that is necessary to assure that She may have full possession of him.¹⁸⁹

Thereupon he enumerates ten things in which Mary excels and in which he asks her to substitute him. Among them, two have to do with the heart: 1. He desires that "*the burning love of Mary's heart may inflame the coldness of his*."¹⁹⁰ 2. Uniting together the terms "spirit," "soul," and "heart," he has a great text where the teachings conveyed by these terms elsewhere in his writings come together:

... Finally, most dearly beloved Mother, grant, if it be possible, *that I may have no other spirit but yours* to know Jesus and his divine will. *May I have no soul but yours* to praise and glorify the Lord. *May I have no heart but yours* to love God purely and ardently as you love him.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁸ Cf. SM 68: p. 280.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. SM 68: p. 280.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. SM 68: p. 281.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*; cf. two similar texts: *Hymn* 153,20: p. 606; *Hymn* 141,14: p. 572, addressed to Jesus and the Holy Spirit respectively.

C. We Dwell in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary and They Dwell in Our Hearts

1. *Jesus Dwells in Our Hearts*

St. Louis is very clear about two inseparable truths: Jesus came down to Mary's *womb* in order to come to our *heart*:

*How good to see the Savior
On His mother's breast ("sein")! ...*¹⁹²

O Jesus, *the reason* for your plan
To be born in a stable
*Is to find in my heart
A pleasing place to stay.*
Then come to me now,
Rest in me with glory ...¹⁹³

St. Louis likewise affirms Mary's role in bringing about Jesus' dwelling in us:

... Bearer of our Sovereign,
And of our salvation,
*Send this meek Lamb
into our hearts.*¹⁹⁴

And our own part in opening ourselves to Him:

¹⁹² *Hymn* 61,4: p. 321.

¹⁹³ *Hymn* 61,9: p. 322; the original French: p. 1270: "Est de trouver dans mon sein / Un séjour agréable."

¹⁹⁴ *Hymn* 87,11: p. 374; the original French: p. 1339, reads: "Faites venir en notre sein / Cet agneau débonnaire."

... It is decided, I now open my breast (“poitrine”),
O Divine Heart, *enter in*.¹⁹⁵

In his beautiful *Noel Hymns*, St. Louis insists on the theme of Jesus dwelling in our hearts: The Magi, when they leave, ask the Child “*to dwell in their hearts forever*.”¹⁹⁶ St Louis pleads that we should “give Him our souls,” and “*surrender our hearts to His fire*,” because “*He yearns to make them His dwelling*.”¹⁹⁷

Gentle Jesus, now is the time
To ravish our hearts;
Dwell in them
For you are the kindest of conquerors.¹⁹⁸

Hymn 65, Ninth Noel, is partly dedicated to the theme of *giving our heart to Jesus, and asking Mary to take our heart and give it to Him*: Jesus, our “gentle Savior,” does not request money from us, “*But a very fervent heart*.” We must give “*A loving heart to the loving Savior*.”¹⁹⁹

St. Louis asks Mary, “Completely filled / With holiness, / With grace and beauty,” whom he reveres “with her dear Son,” *to take his heart quickly and “give it to Jesus*.”²⁰⁰ He wants to kiss Him at pleasure, and asks Jesus *to take his heart forever*. Glorifying “this conquering Child,” he insists in

¹⁹⁵ *Hymn 47,29*: p. 296-297; *French original*: p. 1236: “*Divin Coeur entrez dan mon sein*.”

¹⁹⁶ Cf. *Hymn 60,15*: p. 320.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. *Hymn 64,8*: p. 327.

¹⁹⁸ *Hymn 64,10*: p. 328.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. *Hymn 65,8-9*: p. 329.

²⁰⁰ Cf. *Hymn 65,12-13*: p. 330.

asking Mary “to take his heart and give it to Jesus.”²⁰¹ In another Hymn he expresses a similar idea: “Accept my heart / And give it to Jesus my Savior.”²⁰²

Sometimes he entreats Jesus to come to him, so that *his heart* may be the Lord’s home:

You are seeking an abode,
Come to me.
Swiftly, without delay,
Come to me.
With you, how lovely!
*May my heart be your home.*²⁰³

He asks the same thing in relation to Holy Communion, when he expresses both his desire for Jesus to come *enter his heart*, and his awareness, after Communion, that *he carries his Lord “deep in his heart”*:

Come, my true friend,
My dear treasure, my only joy.
Without you, how miserable I am!
Come then, (twice) *enter into my heart*, Come!

My soul is aflame
I carry my Lord
Deep in my heart.
Thanks, thanks, thanks to Love
Victorious *in my heart* today.²⁰⁴

²⁰¹ Cf. *Hymn* 65,16-17: pp. 330-331.

²⁰² Cf. *Hymn* 75,31: pp. 354-355.

²⁰³ *Hymn* 103,19: p. 450.

²⁰⁴ *Hymn* 112,11-12: p. 485.

“The good God for loving us” deserves that we love Him back. “Anathema to sinners / *Who do not give their hearts to Him!*” We should “*Let our hearts be His dwelling.*”²⁰⁵

2. Mary Dwells in Our Hearts

St. Louis affirms that God Himself asked Mary to “dwell in Jacob” (Sir.24:13), “that is, *dwell in my elect* who are typified by Jacob.”²⁰⁶ And the Holy Spirit asked her to “place her roots in His 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.²⁰⁷

He recognizes that Mary’s presence in our heart is a great mystery:

Here is something hard to grasp:
In my heart’s center I carry her
Etched with strokes of glory,
Yet in faith’s darkness still.²⁰⁸

This presence is precisely the most important of all the happy effects that Marian Consecration faithfully practiced produces. Speaking in terms of *Mary’s soul*, he says that

²⁰⁵ Cf. *Hymn* 135,4-5: pp. 548-549.

²⁰⁶ Cf. SM 15: p. 267; TD 29: p. 297: “Take up your abode permanently in my children”; also TD 31: p. 298.

²⁰⁷ Cf. SM 15: p. 267. Concerning Mary’s virtues implanted in our souls, cf. TD 34.37.144: pp. 299.300.334.

²⁰⁸ *Hymn* 77,15: p. 359.

it establishes, even here on earth, *Mary's life in the soul*, so that it is no longer the soul that lives, *but Mary who lives in it* (cf. Gal.2:20). In a manner of speaking, *Mary's soul becomes identified with the soul of her servant*. Indeed, when by an unspeakable but real grace Mary most holy becomes *Queen of a soul*, she works untold wonders in it ...²⁰⁹

Inspired in the Magnificat (Lk.1:46-47) and in St. Ambrose's (+397) interpretation of it: "May the *soul* of Mary be in each one of us to glorify the Lord! May the *spirit* of Mary be in each one of us to rejoice in God!"²¹⁰ and, joining the terms "*soul*" and "*spirit*," St. Louis affirms that if we are faithful to the devotion he teaches, "*the soul of Mary will be communicated to us to glorify the Lord. Her spirit will take the place of ours to rejoice in God, her Savior.*"²¹¹

Likewise, precisely because "the spirit of Mary is the spirit of God," we are justified in wishing that Mary's soul and spirit might be in us.²¹² But in order to achieve this desire, we have to "set to work ... through perseverance in the living of this devotion."²¹³

3. *Mary's Action in Our Soul*

Mary is never idle. Working with the term "*soul*," St. Louis describes her as "a great wonder-worker especially *in the interior of souls*," and he specifies that "she works there in secret, *unsuspected by the soul*, as knowledge of it might

²⁰⁹ Cf. SM 55: pp. 276-277.

²¹⁰ St. Ambrose, *In Lucam* 2,26: PL 15, 1561 D–1562 A.

²¹¹ TD 217: p. 360.

²¹² Cf. TD 258: pp. 371-372.

²¹³ Cf. SM 54: p. 276.

destroy the beauty of the work.”²¹⁴ These “wonders of grace” which “only she can produce” take place when Mary “*has taken root in a soul,*” and de Montfort rightly underlines that she produces them “*in union with the Holy Spirit,*” Who is always the main Agent.²¹⁵

Among the effects that Mary “produces in the *depths of the soul* where she dwells” are “*a purity of heart and body, a singleness of intention and purpose, and a fruitfulness in good works.*”²¹⁶

... She enlightens his mind with her pure faith. *She deepens his heart with her humility. She enlarges and inflames his heart* with her charity, makes it pure with her purity, *makes it noble and great* through her motherly care ...²¹⁷

In sum, “*Mary becomes all things for the soul* that wishes to serve Jesus Christ ... Experience alone will teach us the wonders wrought by Mary *in the soul.*”²¹⁸ On our part, we have to say “Amen, so be it, *to all she is doing in our soul.*”²¹⁹

When speaking about St. Louis’ *love for Mary* and his teachings on Mary’s *activity* in the soul and its wonderful *effects* on our spiritual life, we must not forget that first and foremost he speaks about *his deep yearning for Eternal*

²¹⁴ SM 55: pp. 276-277.

²¹⁵ Cf. TD 35: p. 299; also, TD 222: p. 362: “Mary, wonder of God, when *souls abandon themselves to you, you cannot but work wonders in them!*”; SM 55.57: pp. 276-277.

²¹⁶ Cf. SM 56: p. 277.

²¹⁷ SM 57: p. 277.

²¹⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

²¹⁹ Cf. SM 69: p. 281.

Wisdom, Jesus Christ,²²⁰ to whom he dedicated an entire book, *The Love of Eternal Wisdom*, where he describes at length Eternal Wisdom's infinite love for humanity,²²¹ the activity that He accomplishes in our souls,²²² and the effects of Wisdom in the soul that possesses Him.²²³

Having this clear in mind, we can appreciate better how his teachings on Mary's role in our spiritual life spring from a solid Christological foundation: "The greatest means of all, and the most wonderful of all secrets *for obtaining and preserving divine Wisdom* is a loving and genuine devotion to the Blessed Virgin."²²⁴ The Marian devotion he teaches, "if well practiced, *not only draws Jesus Christ, Eternal Wisdom, into our soul*, but also makes it agreeable to him and he remains there to the end of our life."²²⁵

Mary's role is clear:

O Divine Mary
You alone have found
Infinite Wisdom
In the Word enfleshed.
Being His great Mistress,

²²⁰ E.g., *Hymn 103 Desires of Incarnate Wisdom*: pp. 447-451; *Hymn 112 Desires for Communion*: pp. 484-485; *Hymn 124 Desires for Wisdom*: pp. 510-511; *Hymn 125 Pursuit of Wisdom*: pp. 511-513; *Hymn 126 Prayers Wisdom*: pp. 514-516; *Hymn 54 Lover of Jesus*: pp. 306-308; *Hymn 55 Lover of Jesus*: pp. 308-310; *Hymn 56 Lover of Jesus*: pp. 310-312. On love of Mary, e.g., *Hymn 90,40*: "O Holy Lady, / May my poor soul / Love you for all eternity."

²²¹ Practically the entire book deals with this theme; e.g., LEW 8-12.47-51.64-71.117-132.154-166: pp. 51-53.62-64.67-69.82-87.91-94; cf. also, among others, *Hymn 131*: pp. 539-541 on the love of the Eucharistic Heart of "the Savior of our souls."

²²² Cf. LEW 20-30, pp. 55-57.

²²³ Cf. LEW 90-103, pp. 74-78.

²²⁴ LEW 203: pp. 106-107.

²²⁵ LEW 220: p. 111.

Love now impels you
To send Him to us
To teach us all,
To help us all,
To help us all.²²⁶

4. Mary Lends Us Her Heart to Receive the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus

The theme of Mary dwelling in our heart often comes in St. Louis' works in relation to Jesus dwelling in our hearts. He is very much aware that the heart he is offering Jesus is very fickle.²²⁷ That is why we need Mary's Mediation: "*Our heart is tainted, carnal, full of unruly inclinations and consequently unfit to house such a noble and holy guest ...*"²²⁸

What is the solution? Mary. "The great way, the wonderful secret" that he offers is, "so to speak, *to bring Mary into our abode by consecrating ourselves unreservedly to her as servants and slaves.*" We should surrender to her absolutely everything we possess, and in turn She, who is so generous, "*will give herself to us in a real but indefinable manner; and it is in her that Eternal Wisdom will come and settle.*" Thus, Christ will not come into our weak hearts, but into holy Mary's, who knows very well how to receive Him and keep Him.²²⁹

²²⁶ Hymn 125,7: p. 513; French original: p. 1512: "En étant la maîtresse"; cf. Hymn 124,1.7-8: p. 510.511.

²²⁷ Cf. Hymn 117,7: p. 493: "We offer you, gentle Savior, / Our heart in homage, / But guard well this heart / For it is very fickle /..."

²²⁸ LEW 210: pp. 108-109.

²²⁹ Cf. LEW 211: p. 109; cf. also LEW 212-213: p. 109.

As we have seen, the themes of the Eucharist and the Sacred Heart, of Jesus dwelling in our hearts and our receiving Holy Communion, of the abandonment and the outrages suffered by the Blessed Sacrament and the Sacred Heart, often come together in the teachings of St. Louis. The reason is that devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is not devotion to a relic of the past or a symbol of God's love, nor is it only devotion to the Sacred Heart alive and glorious in Heaven, *but to the Sacred Heart alive and present today and every day in every single Tabernacle in the world!*²³⁰ And, if in every soul in the state of grace, through the Trinitarian Indwelling, the Three Blessed Persons dwell, it is through Holy Communion, where Jesus is present in Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity, that the Sacred Heart comes sacramentally to dwell in us.

Therefore, just as Mary helps us prepare our heart in order for the Sacred Heart to dwell there, she likewise helps us to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. Moreover, the Eucharist should be received "*in union with Mary.*"

In fact, in the fourth recommendation found in the guidelines to follow before receiving Holy Communion, given to those who make his Marian Consecration, de Montfort exhorts: 1. "Implore Mary *to lend us her Heart* so that we may receive her Son with her dispositions." 2. Her Son's glory "requires that he should not come into *a heart* so sullied and fickle as our own." "If she will take up her abode in us to receive her Son, he will be received by her in a perfect manner." 3. Even if it is in the poor stable of *our soul*, Jesus, "whose love for her is unique, still wishes to take

²³⁰ Cf. Hymn 131,4: p. 539: "*This Heart is found in the Blessed Sacrament.*"

his delight and his repose in her.” 4. We should “*beg her to lend us her heart*, saying, ‘O Mary, I take you for my all; *give me your heart*.’” As mentioned before,²³¹ Mary can take up her abode in us “*because of the sovereignty she has over all hearts*,” given to her by God.²³²

5. *We Dwell in Jesus’ Heart*

In a letter to Bl. Marie Louise Trichet, St. Louis congratulates her for the straits she is enduring, as they would produce the reward of “*finding spacious dwelling in the divine Heart*, which was pierced for her to enter.” His Heart is a “pleasant and safe refuge from its enemies for a soul truly possessing Wisdom.” It is the price to be paid “to become partakers of the divinity of the Heart of Jesus crucified.”²³³

Inspired by the image of the lost sheep, St. Louis glorifies the Shepherd, because the runaway sheep “*Now is lodged in his heart*.”²³⁴ Hymn 131, entirely dedicated to the Eucharist and the Sacred Heart, develops at some length the theme of dwelling in Jesus’ Heart. After inviting us to “*Come, see his Sacred Heart*” *aflame in the Blessed Sacrament*,²³⁵ St. Louis affirms that

*This Heart is always open
To make itself our home,
Our sure refuge,*

²³¹ Cf. TD 37: p. 300.

²³² Cf. TD 266: pp. 375-376.

²³³ Cf. *Letter 34 to Marie Louise Trichet*: p. 38.

²³⁴ Cf. *Hymn* 143,31: p. 581.

²³⁵ Cf. *Hymn* 131,1: p. 539.

For everyone a mighty fortress
Never pierced by any foe.
It is the kingdom of peace,
Where we become (*twice*) invincible.²³⁶

The next stanza offers several important teachings: 1. St. Louis invites all Christians to “flee far from the world / *Into this Heart where all good abounds.*” 2. “*This Heart is found in the Blessed Sacrament.*” 3. He encourages us to “Come, *taste within this faithful Heart / More sweetness, more delight / than our own heart could desire.*” 4. We have nothing to fear, it is *this Heart Itself* that calls us to Him.²³⁷

Then St. Louis puts into Jesus’ own lips an invitation to the sinner to “find true life / And all kinds of wealth / In the Holy Eucharist,” to “hide and rest in safety” *within His Sacred Heart*, where he will find sorrow and forgiveness for his sins.²³⁸

Jesus also invites “*fervent souls*” to taste “the delightful sweetness / *That always fills His Heart*”; to rest there and learn in silence “The language of holy Love.” *His Sacred Heart “becomes all things / To every soul resting there.”* St. Louis gives a list of things He does for us: “giving without diminishing, enriching, helping, encouraging, protecting, instructing, loving, caressing, guiding.” “It is for all everything, fully.”²³⁹ “During the worst upheavals, / When

²³⁶ Cf. *Hymn* 131,2: p. 539.

²³⁷ Cf. *Hymn* 131,4: p. 539.

²³⁸ Cf. *Hymn* 131,5: pp. 539-540.

²³⁹ Cf. *Hymn* 131,7: p. 540.

despised and insulted,” we should go there to be consoled and conquer our enemies.²⁴⁰

Again he places in Jesus’ lips the invitation to the “*soul all pure*” to visit Him, who is awaiting her in the Blessed Sacrament, “Leaving behind finite things”; to “*Enter His Heart, remain hidden there / Fearing nothing, for it is her home,*” and savoring His goodness.²⁴¹ St. Louis ends the Hymn asking Jesus to *shelter him in His Heart*, in order to be victorious over himself and his enemies, and asking Him that *His Heart alone be his Paradise*, where forever his heart may love Him.²⁴²

In *Hymn 132*, he teaches that *Jesus carries us written in His Heart*; that *His Heart emptied Itself for us*, “So that we all may become / The children of His Father,” and that “It is open so we may dwell there, / So He may protect and console us.”²⁴³

6. *We Dwell in Mary*

Just as Jesus dwelt in Mary’s womb, we, too, are called to dwell in her womb, and Mary does not fail to share with us her blessings, “including that infinite treasure which contains every good, Jesus, *the fruit of her womb.*”²⁴⁴

St. Louis explains how Mary is “the Resting-place of the Holy Trinity,”²⁴⁵ and “the true earthly paradise of the new

²⁴⁰ Cf. *Hymn 131,8*: p. 540.

²⁴¹ Cf. *Hymn 131,9*: p. 540.

²⁴² Cf. *Hymn 131,10*: p. 540.

²⁴³ Cf. *Hymn 132,7*: p. 542.

²⁴⁴ LEW 206: pp. 107-108; cf. TD 216, p. 360: “*It is upon this breast (“sein”) that all good things come to me ...* (cf. Ps.130:1.2).”

²⁴⁵ TD 262: p. 374.

Adam,” Jesus, where He dwelt for nine months, and where “untold riches” were left and great wonders were worked by Him.²⁴⁶ Therefore, “what a joy and a privilege for us *to enter and dwell in Mary*, in whom almighty God has set up the throne of his supreme glory!”²⁴⁷

But it is difficult for us “to enter such an exalted and holy place,” whose absolute Master is the Holy Spirit.²⁴⁸ If we obtain “this remarkable grace by our fidelity,”

we should be delighted to remain in Mary ... rest there peacefully, rely on her confidently, hide ourselves there with safety, and abandon ourselves unconditionally to her, *so that within her virginal bosom*: 1. We may be *nourished* with the milk of her grace and her motherly compassion. 2. ... *Delivered* from all anxiety, fear and scruples. 3. ... *Safeguarded* from all our enemies ... 4. ... *Formed in our Lord and our Lord formed in us* ...²⁴⁹

The *theological foundation* for this is that *it is in her womb that both “Jesus and all the elect have been conceived. ‘This one and that one were born in her’ (cf. Ps.87:5-6).”*²⁵⁰ In Mary’s bosom (“sein”) we grow “in enlightenment, holiness, experience and wisdom, and in a short time reach the fullness of the age of Christ. *For it was Mary’s womb which encompassed and produced a perfect man.*”²⁵¹ St. Louis likewise gives the *purpose*:

²⁴⁶ Cf. TD 261: p. 373.

²⁴⁷ TD 262: p. 374.

²⁴⁸ Cf. TD 263: p. 374.

²⁴⁹ TD 264: p. 374.

²⁵⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁵¹ Cf. TD 156: p. 338.

*In order to be conformed to the image of the Son of God all the predestinate, while in the world, are hidden in the womb of the Blessed Virgin where they are protected, nourished, cared for and developed by this good Mother, until the day she brings them forth to a life of glory after death ...*²⁵²

Those who “*cast themselves into her virginal bosom,*” “are filled with pure love,” “purified from the least stain of sin,” and “*they find Jesus in all his fullness. For he reigns in Mary as if on the most glorious of thrones.*”²⁵³ “Those who dwell spiritually in Our Lady will never commit a serious sin.”²⁵⁴

Mary is “a spiritual vessel,” and “ever since God personally hid himself with all his perfections in this vessel, it has become completely spiritual, *and the spiritual abode of all spiritual souls.*”²⁵⁵

7. Acting in Mary and Hiding in Mary

One of the interior practices of the Marian devotion St. Louis teaches is precisely to “*act in Mary.*” This involves “acquiring the habit of *recollecting* ourselves *interiorly* and so *form within us an idea or a spiritual image of Mary,*” and thus enabling us to do everything “*in Mary*”:

She must become, as it were, *an Oratory for the soul where we offer up our prayers to God ...* She will be a burning lamp *lighting up our inmost soul* and inflaming us with love for God ... When we pray we will pray *in Mary.* When we receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we will *place him in Mary* for him to take his delight in her. If we

²⁵² TD 33: p. 299; cf. LEW 213: p. 109; *Hymn* 159,12: pp. 625-626.

²⁵³ TD 199: p. 352.

²⁵⁴ TD 264: p. 374.

²⁵⁵ TD 178: p. 346.

do anything at all, *it will be in Mary*, and, in this way, Mary will help us to forget self everywhere and in all things.²⁵⁶

We are called to “*offer*” ourselves to Mary, “*happily lose*” ourselves in her, and as a result we shall always “*find God in her*.”²⁵⁷

St. Louis yearns for the time when the devotion he teaches “is understood and practiced,” when the “age of Mary” comes, and as a result, “*many souls*, chosen by Mary and given her by the most High God, will *hide* themselves completely *in the depths of her soul*, becoming *living copies of her*, loving and glorifying Jesus ...”²⁵⁸

8. *Jesus and Mary Dwell in Our Hearts*

In some Hymns, St. Louis speaks about *both Jesus and Mary dwelling in our hearts*. In one he proclaims how he has rejected money, pleasure and fame in order to have, living *in his heart*, Jesus and His Mother, his only loves:²⁵⁹

Live Jesus in my heart!
Live Mary in my heart! ...
Jesus is my love
Both night and day.
Mary is my love
Both night and day.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁶ SM 47: p. 275.

²⁵⁷ SM 70: pp. 281-282.

²⁵⁸ TD 217: p. 360.

²⁵⁹ Cf. *Hymn* 56,39-40: pp. 311-312.

²⁶⁰ *Hymn* 56,40: p. 312.

In his Hymn on the Rosary, St. Louis asks Mary, “Mother of Grace,” *to make herself at home “In his heart with Jesus Christ.”*²⁶¹ In another one, he asks *both Jesus and Mary alone to live forever in his heart.* Loving them, he possesses everything.²⁶² In yet another one he proclaims his most perfect joy, because *he has Jesus and Mary “etched in his heart.”*²⁶³

D. Mary and Jesus Formed in Our Hearts

St. Louis does not only speak about Jesus and Mary being present or dwelling in our hearts, but about *being formed in our hearts* and *growing into full maturity.*

1. Mary Formed in Our Hearts

Following his constant teaching on the need for Mary’s mediation, precisely because God has given her “the role to lead us safely” to Jesus, “just as it is the role of our Lord to lead us to the eternal Father,”²⁶⁴ St. Louis explains the need of Mary being formed in our hearts *so that Jesus may be formed in them by the Holy Spirit.* What is more, Mary’s presence in a soul is crucial for the Holy Spirit’s activity in forming Jesus in that soul.²⁶⁵ Here is a good synthesis of his thought:

It was with her, in her and of her that *he produced his masterpiece, God-made-man,* and that *he produces every day* until the end of the

²⁶¹ Cf. *Hymn* 90,11: p. 386.

²⁶² Cf. *Hymn* 91,33: p. 401.

²⁶³ Cf. *Hymn* 99,18: p. 425; also *Hymn* 77,15: p. 359, referred to Mary: “In my heart’s center I carry her / Etched with strokes of glory.”

²⁶⁴ Cf. TD 164: p. 341.

²⁶⁵ Cf. TD 20: p. 295; TD 217: p. 360; SM 36: p. 272.

world *the members of the body of this adorable Head*. For this reason, the more he finds Mary his dear and inseparable spouse *in a soul* the more powerful and effective he becomes *in producing Jesus Christ in that soul and that soul in Jesus Christ*.²⁶⁶

He explains this great truth with a simple analogy: “If we desire a ripe and perfectly formed fruit, we must possess the tree that bears it.” Then he applies this truth to Mary in relation to both Jesus and the Holy Spirit:

*If we desire the fruit of life, Jesus Christ, we must possess the tree of life which is Mary. If we desire to have the Holy Spirit working within us, we must possess his faithful and inseparable spouse, Mary.*²⁶⁷

St. Louis asks the Holy Spirit Himself to “*implant*” *in our souls* “the tree of true life, which is Mary,” and to “foster it and cultivate it so that it grows and blossoms and brings forth the fruit of life in abundance.”²⁶⁸ He explains how we are to cultivate this tree,²⁶⁹ and how its lasting fruit is always Jesus Christ.²⁷⁰

When he presents Mary as the Tree that bears the Fruit that is Jesus, St. Louis is actually explaining in simple terms

²⁶⁶ TD 20: p. 295; cf. SM 13: p. 266; TD 34.35-36: pp. 299-300; TD 164: p. 341: “One reason why so few souls come to the fullness of the age of Jesus *is that Mary* who is still as much as ever his Mother and the fruitful spouse of the Holy Spirit *is not formed well enough in their hearts*”; TD 269: p. 376.

²⁶⁷ Cf. TD 164: p. 341; also, TD 218: pp. 360-361: “*If Mary, the Tree of Life, is well cultivated in our soul* by fidelity to this devotion, she will in due time *bring forth her fruit* which is none other than *Jesus*”; it is a theme which he particularly developed in *The Secret of Mary*: 67.70-78: pp. 280.281-283.

²⁶⁸ SM 67: p. 280; cf. SM 70: p. 282.

²⁶⁹ Cf. SM 71-77: pp. 282-283.

²⁷⁰ Cf. SM 78: p. 283.

the Mystery of the Incarnation. As St. Elizabeth said, Jesus is “the blessed fruit of Mary’s womb” (Lk.1:42) because, being God, He became Man in her womb and of her flesh. Mary “conceived him and brought him forth *as the fruit of her womb.*”²⁷¹

But Jesus is not the Fruit of Mary, by the working of the Holy Spirit, only in the past, at the Incarnation; He continues to be so all through time:

... Jesus is the fruit and product of Mary wherever He is present, *be it in heaven, on earth, in our tabernacles or in our hearts ...* Therefore anyone who wishes to possess this wonderful fruit *in his heart* must first possess the tree that produces it; *whoever wishes to possess Jesus must possess Mary.*²⁷²

In *True Devotion to Mary*, St. Louis says something similar, and adds that, “If any of the faithful *have Jesus formed in their heart* they can boldly say, *‘It is thanks to Mary that what I possess is Jesus her fruit,* and without her I would not have him ...”²⁷³

The Hail Mary, the prayer which “brought to a dry and barren world the Fruit of Life,” well said, “*will cause the Word of God to take root in the soul and bring forth Jesus, the Fruit of Life.*” It is “a heavenly dew which *waters the earth of our soul and makes it bear fruit* in due season.”²⁷⁴

²⁷¹ Cf. LEW 204: p. 107.

²⁷² Cf. *ibid.*; cf. SM 56: p. 277: If Jesus is always Mary’s fruit “*for each individual soul as for all souls in general, he is even more especially her fruit and her masterpiece in the soul where she is present.*”

²⁷³ Cf. TD 33: pp. 298-299.

²⁷⁴ TD 249: p. 369; cf. TD 252-253: p. 370.

2. *Mary Forms Jesus in Us*

One of de Montfort's greatest contributions to Mariology is his fine exposition on Mary as the "inseparable associate of the Holy Spirit in all his works of grace." As such, God has given her the power "*to form the elect in Jesus and Jesus in them.*"²⁷⁵ Mary never "remains idle in a docile soul." "*She causes Jesus to live continuously in that soul and that soul to live in continuous union with Jesus.*"²⁷⁶

In fact, just as Mary cooperated with the Holy Spirit in the formation of Jesus Christ as Man, so now she continues collaborating with Him in the formation of Jesus in the members of His mystical Body. Those who have obtained the ineffable grace of being admitted to dwell in Mary, "within her virginal bosom," among other things, will be "nourished with the milk of her grace and her motherly compassion," and "*may be formed in our Lord and our Lord formed in them,*" because it is in her womb that Jesus and all the elect are conceived.²⁷⁷

In a Hymn in honor of Our Lady of Shadows, after proclaiming how we are "under Mary's wings / In the shade of her mercy," and "All hope is found / Under the shade of her mantle,"²⁷⁸ he affirms that

²⁷⁵ Cf. TD 37: p. 300.

²⁷⁶ SM 56: p. 277.

²⁷⁷ Cf. TD 264: p. 374; also, TD 33: p. 299; LEW 213: p. 109.

²⁷⁸ Cf. *Hymn* 155,2.10: pp. 609.610.

... *The Holy Spirit's shadow alone*
Formed Jesus Christ in her,
Made her His mother ...²⁷⁹

and he asks her,

Full of grace,
By the shadow of the Holy Spirit,
Form Jesus Christ in my heart.
Melt my frozen heart
So I may follow in your footsteps ...²⁸⁰

In another *Hymn*, he says that *the Holy Spirit* “*forms* Jesus Christ in the hearts of the wise virgins” and *Mary*, their perfect model, “*molds* them in God,” *gives birth* to them, and her Heart “*fills* them with the most tender love.”²⁸¹ St. Louis uses a striking image to explain this doctrine further: the mold:

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 ... 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 ...²⁸²

In his beautiful prayer to the Holy Spirit, he asks Him to give him “*a great trust in her maternal heart* and a continuous access to her compassion, *so that with her he may truly form*

²⁷⁹ *Hymn* 155,5: pp. 609-610.

²⁸⁰ Cf. *Hymn* 155,16: p. 611.

²⁸¹ Cf. *Hymn* 159,8.12: pp. 625.626.

²⁸² SM 17: p. 267; cf. SM 16.18: pp. 267-268; TD 219-221.260: pp. 361.372-373.

Jesus, great and powerful in him, until he attains the fullness of his perfect age.”²⁸³

3. *Jesus Born in Us*

Tradition insists that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary in order to “be conceived and born” in our souls.²⁸⁴ St. Louis also speaks in terms of Jesus “being born” in us. This birth, just like His birth in Bethlehem, takes place *with Mary’s co-operation*. In his Hymn on the Rosary, St. Louis proclaims Mary’s happiness at the birth of the Savior and asks her to “*Give birth to Jesus in his heart.*”²⁸⁵ He asks Jesus Himself to come “*be born in us / By His Holy Mother*”:

O Jesus, our dear spouse,
Our God, our brother,
Come, come, be born in us
By your Holy Mother,
So that by you we can
Go to your Father.²⁸⁶

²⁸³ SM 67: p. 280.

²⁸⁴ E.g., Origen, *In Genesim* 3,7: PG 12, 183 A-B.

²⁸⁵ Cf. *Hymn* 90,14: p. 386.

²⁸⁶ *Hymn* 87,12: p. 376; cf. 87,13: p. 376.

E. Winning Hearts for God, Jesus and Mary

1. Winning the Heart of God

St. Louis mentions several things which win over the Heart of God: humility,²⁸⁷ charity,²⁸⁸ penance,²⁸⁹ and almsgiving.²⁹⁰ But the most powerful one is Mary, in whom we have before God “an advocate so powerful that she is never refused anything.” “She is so resourceful *that she knows every secret way to win the heart of God.*”²⁹¹

An important concept in St. Louis is that Mary, as a result of our consecration to her, will share her perfect faith with us. This will bring about important consequences in our life of faith, among which is the fact that her “active and probing faith” will be like “some mysterious pass-key which admits us into the mysteries of Jesus Christ and of man's final destiny *and into the very heart of God himself.*”²⁹²

2. Mary Won the Heart of God

St. Louis explains how Mary, during the first years of her life, “grew so marvelously in the grace and wisdom of God and responded so faithfully to his love,” that She attracted Him to come to her. Desiring to become incarnate in her, He sent her the archangel Gabriel “*to declare to her that she had*

²⁸⁷ SM 36: p. 272.

²⁸⁸ *Hymn* 5,24: p. 20.

²⁸⁹ *Hymn* 13,39,42: p. 81.

²⁹⁰ *Hymn* 17,30: p. 119.

²⁹¹ Cf. TD 150: pp. 335-336.

²⁹² Cf. TD 214: p. 358.

won his heart” and to ask for her consent, which Mary wholeheartedly gave.²⁹³

3. *Winning Hearts for God and for Jesus*

Mary did not only win the Heart of God for herself with her love and holiness, but *she also has the mission of winning all hearts for God*. St. Louis affirms that “She is filled with tenderness,” precisely “*to win hearts for God.*”²⁹⁴ True Marian devotion never hinders our relation with God: “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.*”²⁹⁵

St. Louis also begs Mary to “give him gentleness,” and *pour into his heart* “That holy tenderness, / That wins for heaven / A sinful soul.”²⁹⁶ In another Hymn he asks Mary “to fill / her servants with tenderness” and “*Win our hearts for Jesus Christ.*”²⁹⁷

4. *Winning Hearts for Mary*

St. Louis declares that “He would surrender his life / *To win for Mary a single heart*”:

I love Mary ardently,
After God, my Savior;
I would surrender my life

²⁹³ Cf. LEW 107: pp. 79-80.

²⁹⁴ *Hymn* 88,18: p. 379.

²⁹⁵ SM 21: pp. 268-269; cf.; SM 66, p. 279: “I need her to help me save my soul and the souls of others”; TD 164: p. 341.

²⁹⁶ *Hymn* 9,29: p. 49.

²⁹⁷ Cf. *Hymn* 90,54: p. 394.

*To win for her a single heart.
Oh! what a kind Mistress!
If she were known
Everyone would rush
To serve her ...*²⁹⁸

IX. A Heart for Us

A. Mary's Maternal Care

St. Paul VI says something very beautiful: God “loved Mary for His own sake, and He loved her for our sake, too; *He gave her to Himself and He gave her also to us.*”²⁹⁹ The Immaculate Heart of Mary is indeed a gift from God to us. It is a Heart “*for us,*” a maternal Heart which Jesus willed to share with us, so that we could benefit from His Holy Mother’s maternal care.

St. Louis de Montfort puts these words in Jesus’ lips:

My mother, most dear to me,
I am filling you with gifts
*So that you may be the mother
And the refuge of sinners.*³⁰⁰

Our author wonders what causes Mary to take care of a sinner? His answer is: “*It is the love of her heart.*”³⁰¹ He calls himself “*the child of her heart*”:

²⁹⁸ *Hymn* 76,1: p. 355.

²⁹⁹ St. Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis cultus* (2-2-1974), no.56: http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19740202_marialis-cultus.html.

³⁰⁰ *Hymn* 41,7: p. 270.

³⁰¹ *Hymn* 79,12: p. 362; cf. *Hymn* 87,10: p. 375: Jesus and Mary love sinners: “we shall find a place” in their hearts.

She is my Queen and Princess
And I am her servant.
She is my Mother and Mistress,
I am the child of her heart.
I truly am her follower
For I honor and imitate her ...³⁰²

He invites all to come to her:

Children, come to her breasts,
Suck milk filled with tenderness;
Faithful people, come and rest
On her heart.
Come everyone, shelter your fervor
Under her wings.³⁰³

She is moved by the plight of her children because “*her heart is full of love,*” and she prays and speaks to her Son for them night and day.³⁰⁴

Within the context of his interesting parallel between Rebecca and Mary, and what they do for their faithful children,³⁰⁵ St. Louis has a wonderful text where he describes in detail the relationship that we should have with Mary as our true Mother. Among other things, he says that we should “*open our hearts to her* and tell her our troubles and our needs.”³⁰⁶

In a Hymn entitled *From a Child of Mary*, where he calls her “my good Mother,” he says that Mary’s beauty, which

³⁰² *Hymn* 139,62: p. 566.

³⁰³ *Hymn* 151,10: p. 602.

³⁰⁴ *Hymn* 127,56: p. 528.

³⁰⁵ Cf. TD 183-212: pp. 347-357.

³⁰⁶ Cf. TD 199: p. 352.

enflames him with charity, “*ravishes his heart.*”³⁰⁷ Her tenderness “*Constantly nourishes / His poor heart / With its grace and gentleness.*”³⁰⁸ What “riches, caresses and tenderness *in her holy Heart,*” and “how happy he is *to dwell there.*”³⁰⁹ May she “... permit / That her love / *Reign in all hearts* night and day.”³¹⁰

Calling it a little known “mystery of grace,” St. Louis says that in order to be conformed to Christ, the predestinate “*are hidden in the womb of the Blessed Virgin* where they are protected, nourished, cared for and developed by this good Mother, until the day she *brings them forth* to a life of glory after death.”³¹¹

B. Led by Mary’s Spirit

As we already mentioned, St. Louis does not speak about Mary’s “*spirit*” as often as he does about her *heart*, but the texts where this term appears referred to Mary are very important from the point of view of Marian Spirituality. One significant teaching is that *we are led by Mary’s spirit*. St. Louis affirms it in two settings.

1. In speaking about the great Saints that God will raise in the end times, a theme dear to him,³¹² he underlines that they will be “filled with the Holy Spirit *and imbued with the spirit of Mary* (“*remplis du Saint-Esprit et de celui de*

³⁰⁷ Cf. *Hymn* 82,1: p. 366.

³⁰⁸ *Hymn* 82,2: p. 367.

³⁰⁹ *Hymn* 82,6: pp. 367-368.

³¹⁰ Cf. *Hymn* 82,9: p. 368; also 82,1-2.5-6.9: pp. 366-368.

³¹¹ TD 33: p. 299.

³¹² Cf. TD 35.47-49: pp. 299.302-303.

Marie”).³¹³ “These great souls” will be “exceptionally devoted to the Blessed Virgin”:

Illumined by her light, strengthened by her food, *guided by her spirit* (“*conduites par son esprit*”), supported by her arm, sheltered under her protection, they will fight with one hand and build with the other ... By word and example they will draw all men to a true devotion to her ...³¹⁴

2. St. Louis also asserts that one of the interior practices of the Marian devotion he teaches is precisely the effort to depend on Mary,³¹⁵ to act always and in everything we do “*in Mary*,” “and in this way Mary will help us to forget self everywhere and in all things.”³¹⁶

We must do everything through Mary, that is, we must obey her always *and be led in all things by her spirit*, which is the Holy Spirit of God ...³¹⁷

The biblical foundation is Romans 8:14: “those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God,” and therefore, likewise, “*those who are led by the spirit of Mary are children of Mary, and, consequently children of God*,”³¹⁸ because, if we strive to become true children of Mary, it is in order to become true children of God. Therefore,

³¹³ SM 59: p. 277.

³¹⁴ TD 48: p. 302.

³¹⁵ Cf. SM 44: p. 274.

³¹⁶ Cf. SM 47: p. 275.

³¹⁷ TD 258: p. 371.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

“...Among the many servants of Mary only those who are truly and faithfully devoted to her *are led by her spirit ...*”³¹⁹

The justification for urging us “*to be led in all things by the spirit of Mary,*”³²⁰ or for saying that union with Christ necessarily follows upon union with Mary,³²¹ is that “*the spirit of Mary is the spirit of Jesus,*”³²² “*the spirit of Mary is the spirit of God*”:

... I have said that the spirit of Mary is the spirit of God because she was never led by her own spirit, but always by the spirit of God, who made himself master of her to such an extent that he became her very spirit ...³²³

St. Alphonsus Rodríguez (+1617) is a good example of the holiness we attain when we are “*completely possessed and governed by the spirit of Mary ...*”³²⁴ De Montfort describes the “*holy*” spirit of Mary³²⁵ as “*a spirit which is gentle yet strong, zealous yet prudent, humble yet courageous, pure yet fruitful.*”³²⁶

³¹⁹ Ibid.

³²⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

³²¹ Cf. TD 259: p. 372.

³²² Cf. *ibid.*

³²³ TD 258: pp. 371-372; cf. St. John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, III, 2, 10: *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, trans. K. Kavanaugh and O. Rodríguez (Washington D.C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies, ICS Publications, 1991), 271: “God alone moves these souls toward those works that are in harmony with his will and ordinance, and they cannot be moved toward others. ... Such was the prayer and the work of our Lady, the most glorious Virgin. Raised from the beginning to this high state, *she never had the form of any creature impressed in her soul, nor was she moved by any, for she was always moved by the Holy Spirit.*”

³²⁴ TD 258: p. 372.

³²⁵ Cf. TD 259: p. 372.

³²⁶ TD 258: p. 372.

He offers three conditions that have to be met by those who want to be led by her spirit: 1. We have to *renounce our own spirit*, for “the darkness of *our own spirit ... would hinder the holy spirit of Mary*,”³²⁷ and to “*adopt her intentions*,” and through her “*adopt the intentions of Jesus*.”³²⁸ 2. We have to “*give ourselves up to the spirit of Mary to be moved and directed as she wishes*.”³²⁹ “We must become *an instrument* in Mary's hands for her *to act in us and do with us* what she pleases.”³³⁰ 3. We should “*renew this same act of offering and of union*,” and the more we do so, “the quicker we shall grow in holiness and the sooner we shall *reach union with Christ*.”³³¹

C. Loving Mary

Mary's love for us should be repaid with our love for her. True devotion to Mary “comes from within the mind *and the heart*, and follows from the esteem in which we hold her, the high regard we have for her greatness, *and the love we bear her*.”³³² St. Louis teaches that we must have “*a great love for our Lady* and honour her truly as our Mother and Queen.” We must love her “not merely in word but in deed,” and honor her “not just outwardly, *but from the depths of our heart*.”³³³

³²⁷ TD 259: p. 372.

³²⁸ SM 46: pp. 274-275.

³²⁹ TD 259: p. 372.

³³⁰ SM 46: p. 275.

³³¹ TD 259: p. 372.

³³² TD 106: p. 322.

³³³ Cf. TD 197: p. 351.

*We should often repeat from the depths of our heart: “Dear Mother, it is to please you that I go here or there, that I do this or that, that I suffer this pain or this injury.”*³³⁴

St. Louis affirms that “*he loves her more than himself, more than his own heart, after Jesus, his Savior.*”³³⁵ He also teaches that we should love *both* Jesus and Mary: “They have but one heart, but one soul, / *One and the other should be loved.*”³³⁶

D. Pouring Our Possessions into Mary’s Heart

One of the main tenets of de Montfort’s Consecration to Mary is that we should “*pour into the bosom and heart of Mary*” *all our possessions*, in particular our charity, purity, graces, merits, and virtues, in order for her to keep them safely for us, so that they may not be plundered by the enemy or spoiled by our self-love, self-reliance, and self-will,³³⁷ and so that they may be truly pleasing to God and fruitful for our neighbor.

E. Consecration to Mary and Its Effects

1. Jesus’ Submission to the Father and to Mary

Jesus’ first act *in Mary’s womb* was to submit to His Father’s will (cf. Heb.10:7-10),³³⁸ and His presence there shows His ineffable subjection to His Mother and the sublime example He wished to give us in this regard. “Our

³³⁴ SM 49: p. 275.

³³⁵ *Hymn* 75,32: p. 355.

³³⁶ *Hymn* 40,36: p. 268.

³³⁷ Cf. TD 178: p. 346.

³³⁸ Cf. *Hymn* 41,3: p. 269.

good Master stooped to enclose himself *in the womb of the Blessed Virgin*, a captive but loving slave, and to make himself *subject to her* for thirty years ...”³³⁹

Jesus chose to have this wondrous dependence on Mary “*for the glory of his Father and for the redemption of man.*”³⁴⁰ Actually, all three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity willed to depend on Mary for the realization of their Economy of Salvation.³⁴¹ “What immeasurable glory then do we give to God when,” following the example of Jesus and the Blessed Trinity, “we submit to Mary!”³⁴² If we consecrate ourselves to her, it is precisely in order to consecrate ourselves more perfectly and effectively to Christ³⁴³

2. Giving Mary Body and Soul

St. Louis is very clear on the fact that we should give all *to God*, “the *supreme Lord* of all”: “*The whole heart, the whole mind, the whole soul, / Give all or give me naught.*”³⁴⁴ Jesus, “our dear friend, gave himself to us without reserve, *body and soul*, graces and merits.”³⁴⁵ But in order to accomplish such an ineffable work of infinite love, *He first gave Himself completely to Mary* at the Incarnation as “a captive but loving slave.”³⁴⁶

³³⁹ TD 139: p. 332; cf. TD 198: pp. 351-352; LEW 205: p. 107: her “authority” over Him as His Mother continues in heaven.

³⁴⁰ Cf. TD 243: p. 367.

³⁴¹ Cf. TD 140: pp. 332-333.

³⁴² TD 139: p. 332.

³⁴³ Cf. TD 43: p. 301; TD 61-64.75.257: pp. 307-309.312-313.371.

³⁴⁴ Cf. *Hymn* 153,2: p. 604.

³⁴⁵ Cf. TD 138: p. 332.

³⁴⁶ Cf. TD 139: p. 332.

With such a convincing and well-known example before us, can we be so foolish as to believe that there is a better and shorter way of giving God glory than by submitting ourselves to Mary, as Jesus did?³⁴⁷

Therefore, in order to practice the most perfect Marian devotion, and to truly find, love, serve, and acquire intimate union with Jesus and fidelity to the Holy Spirit,³⁴⁸ we should consecrate ourselves to Jesus through Mary, and this consecration involves *surrendering* without reserve to Mary *our body and soul ... “in order to belong entirely to Jesus.”*³⁴⁹ “The more one is consecrated to Mary, the more one is consecrated to Jesus.”³⁵⁰

And Mary, who is “more generous than even the kindest benefactor, *will in return give herself to you* in a marvelous but real manner ...”³⁵¹ When souls “abandon themselves to her, *she cannot but work wonders in them.*”³⁵² St. Louis develops at some length the idea that God wishes in the latter times to make Mary better known, loved and honored, and to have a special place in the formation of great saints, wholly consecrated to her.³⁵³ Among the characteristics of

³⁴⁷ Ibid.; cf. TD 198.140: pp. 351.332-333.

³⁴⁸ Cf. TD 62: p. 308; TD 43: p. 301; also, TD 64: p. 309; TD 75: pp. 312-313: We become “the loving slaves of our Blessed Lady *in order to become more perfect slaves of Jesus*”; TD 120: “The more one is consecrated to Mary, *the more one is consecrated to Jesus*”; TD 152-168: pp. 336-342.

³⁴⁹ Cf. TD 55: p. 306; also, LEW 219-220: p. 110-111; SM 28-29: p. 270; TD 121: p. 327; TD 197: p. 351: We have to “love Jesus and Mary enough to consecrate to them our body with its senses and our soul with its passions”; TD 204-205.207.208: pp. 354.355-356.

³⁵⁰ TD 120: p. 327.

³⁵¹ TD 216: p. 359-360; cf. TD 181: p. 347; SM 38: p. 273.

³⁵² TD 222: p. 362.

³⁵³ Cf. TD 50-59: pp. 303-307.

these “servants, slaves and children of Mary” that he mentions are:

1. They “will carry *the gold of love in their heart*, the frankincense of prayer in their mind, and the myrrh of mortification in their body.”³⁵⁴

2. They will be “true disciples of Jesus Christ” who, among other things, *will have hearts that will not be troubled, nor will they show favour to anyone; they will not spare or heed or fear any man*, however powerful he may be ... They will carry the crucifix in their right hand and the rosary in their left, *and the holy names of Jesus and Mary on their heart*.³⁵⁵

Among the eight motives which, according to de Montfort, recommend his Marian devotion, several have to do with the heart. One is that total Consecration to Jesus through Mary gives us “great liberty of spirit—the freedom of the children of God.”³⁵⁶ “The Mother of fair love *will rid our heart of all scruples and inordinate servile fear*. She will open and enlarge it to obey the commandments of her Son with alacrity and holy freedom,” and “*she will fill our heart with pure love*,” so that our relationship with God the Father will be based on filial trust and love.³⁵⁷

Another of these effects is that we give greater glory to Christ because, since we do not rely on our thoughts and

³⁵⁴ TD 56: p. 306.

³⁵⁵ TD 59: p. 307.

³⁵⁶ Cf. TD 169: p. 342: “To reward us for this enslavement of love,” Jesus “*opens our hearts and fills them with holy confidence in God*.”

³⁵⁷ Cf. TD 215: p. 359; also, SM 41: 274: Mary “out of gratitude *opens wide our hearts* enabling us to walk with giant strides in the way of God’s commandments.”

actions but solely on Mary for everything, we thereby act with “far greater humility than others,” and “consequently we give greater glory to God, *for perfect glory is given to him only by the lowly and humble of heart.*”³⁵⁸

St. Louis also mentions five services which “*Mary, the beloved Mother of chosen souls,*”³⁵⁹ performs on behalf of her faithful servants: loving them, providing for all their needs, leading and guiding them according to her Son’s will, defending and protecting them, and interceding for them.³⁶⁰

X. Through Mary’s Heart We Love Jesus’ Heart

A. Jesus’ Love for Us in de Montfort’s *The Love of Eternal Wisdom*

Love is the concept that appears more in the *Hymns* we analyzed: around 68 times; 99 times if we unite it with the theme of the fire, which is another way of speaking about love. St. Louis expresses in a wonderful way God’s infinite love for us, the terrible response He has obtained from our part, and true Marian devotion as the surest way to respond to God’s love as we should.

Love is the main theme of de Montfort’s book *The Love of Eternal Wisdom*, written during one of the most difficult periods of his life, when he had been abandoned by everyone, and was suffering dire poverty. Paradoxically, instead of questioning God, in this book he proclaims with sublime ardor God’s infinite love for man, in particular as demonstrated by the Incarnation, the Passion of Christ and

³⁵⁸ Cf. TD 223: p. 362; also, TD 143: pp. 333-334.

³⁵⁹ Cf. TD 210: p. 357.

³⁶⁰ Cf. TD 201-212: pp. 353-357.

the Eucharist. We shall concentrate on those texts in this book where the term “*heart*” is employed.

1. Jesus’ Love for Us as Demonstrated in the Incarnation

Right at the beginning of his book, St. Louis presents what Jesus Christ does for man and ends with an appeal to *our heart*:

How gentle, attractive and approachable is eternal Wisdom who possesses such splendour, excellence and grandeur. He invites men to come to him because he wants to teach them the way to happiness. He is forever searching for them and always greets them with a smile. He bestows blessings on them many times over and forestalls their needs in a thousand different ways, and even goes as far as to wait at their very doorstep to give them proofs of his friendship. *Who could be so heartless as to refuse to love this gentle conqueror?*³⁶¹

Inspired in the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament, he says that:

This eternal beauty, *ever supremely loving*, is so intent on winning man's friendship that for this very purpose he has written a book in which he describes his own excellence and his desire for man's friendship.

This book reads like a letter written by a lover to win the affections of his loved one, *for in it he expresses such ardent desires for the*

³⁶¹ LEW 5: p. 50; cf. LEW 45: p. 61; LEW 64: p. 67: “The bond of friendship between eternal Wisdom and man is so close as to be beyond our understanding. Wisdom is for man and man is for Wisdom ... Since Wisdom, *out of an excess of love*, gave himself up to death to save man, he loves man as a brother, a friend, a disciple, a pupil, the price of his own blood and co-heir of his kingdom. *For man to withhold his heart from Wisdom or to wrench it away from him would constitute an outrage.*”

heart of man, such tender longings for man's friendship, such loving invitations and promises, that you would say he could not possibly be the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth and at the same time need the friendship of man to be happy.³⁶²

Everything in Jesus is love:

If we consider him in his origin he is everything that is good and gentle. *He is a gift sent by the love of the eternal Father and a product of the love of the Holy Spirit. He was given out of love and fashioned by love (Jn. 3:16). He is therefore all love, or rather the very love of the Father and the Holy Spirit.* He was born of the sweetest, tenderest and the most beautiful of all mothers, Mary, the divinely favoured Virgin ...³⁶³

Jesus, “meek and charitable,” is all beautiful in order to “*charm the eyes and hearts of men.*”³⁶⁴

Wisdom “*moves and satisfies the heart* at the same time as it enlightens the mind.”³⁶⁵ He is ‘the source of purest joy and consolation for man who possesses him.’ He “*pours into his heart an indescribable joy, sweetness and peace* even when he is in the midst of the most harrowing grief and suffering.”³⁶⁶

St. Louis de Montfort does not tire in extolling the gentleness and kindness of Jesus. In relation to the Incarnation, he says: “As the divine Wisdom *became man*

³⁶² LEW 65: p. 67.

³⁶³ LEW 118: p. 82.

³⁶⁴ LEW 126: p. 85; cf. LEW 121: p. 83: “Gentle is Jesus in his looks, and in his words and actions. The face of our loving Saviour is so serene and gentle *that it charmed the eyes and hearts of those who beheld it.*”

³⁶⁵ LEW 94: p. 75.

³⁶⁶ LEW 98: p. 76.

only to stir the hearts of men to love and imitate him, he took pleasure in gracing his human nature with every kind of quality, especially an endearing gentleness and a kindness without any defect or blemish.”³⁶⁷

The prophets referred to him as a sheep “because of his gentleness.” St. John the Baptist did not point Him out as “the King of glory” but as the Lamb of God, who, “*to captivate our hearts* and to take away our sins, has gathered into his person all that is meek in God and in man, in heaven and on earth.”³⁶⁸

This gentleness characterizes His dealings with sinners, like Mary Magdalene, the Samaritan woman, the adulterous woman, public sinners, and even Judas (“whose *heart* he tried to win over”) and his executioners, whom he excused before the Father.³⁶⁹

... How loving and gentle he is with men, and especially with poor sinners whom he came upon earth to seek out in a visible manner, and whom he still seeks in an invisible manner every day.³⁷⁰

If Jesus thus loves us, ungrateful sinners that we are, can we imagine how much He loves His most holy and faithful Mother? “*In his heart he esteemed and loved her above all men and angels,*” affirms de Montfort.³⁷¹

³⁶⁷ LEW 117: p. 82.

³⁶⁸ Cf. LEW 119: pp. 82-83.

³⁶⁹ Cf. LEW 125: p. 85.

³⁷⁰ LEW 126: p. 85.

³⁷¹ Cf. TD 5: p. 292; also *Hymn* 41,7: p. 270: “My mother, *most dear to me.*”

2. Jesus' Love for Us as Demonstrated on Calvary and in the Eucharist

St. Louis invites people to come to the Eucharist to see “*the Saviour of our souls,*” the “*Sacred Heart* aflame with ardor divine.”³⁷² He unites Calvary and the Eucharist in a wonderful manner: Jesus Christ wished to prove His love for us by dying in order to save us, but He could not bear to leave us. So, “*in order fully to satisfy his love,*” He “*devised a marvelous way of dying and living at the same time, and of abiding with man until the end of time*”: the Eucharist, where He hides not under a sparkling diamond, but “*under the appearance of a small piece of bread--man's ordinary nourishment--so that when received he might enter the heart of man and there take his delight.*”³⁷³

He says the same thing synthetically in two of his *Hymns*, referring to *His Heart* as the source, and *our heart* as the end:

Love robs Jesus of life
Yet bestows life after death:
He lives on in the Eucharist.
*O Heart, how strong your love!*³⁷⁴

He whose beauty ravishes
All the saints in glory,
Dwells on our altars day and night,
Hidden in the tabernacle.
The All-Powerful, in His grandeur
One with God His Father,

³⁷² Cf. *Hymn* 131,1: p. 539.

³⁷³ Cf. LEW 71: pp. 68-69.

³⁷⁴ *Hymn* 41,23: p. 271.

*Is present in this mystery
To ravish our hearts.*³⁷⁵

In another Hymn he insists again on the fact that love moved Him to hide His majesty in this Sacrament in order to “*ravish our hearts.*”³⁷⁶

3. In Order to Love We Should Go to Jesus

If we truly want to love, we have to lose ourselves in Jesus’ Heart, “the furnace aflame with winning Love.”³⁷⁷

Let us go deep within the Temple,
Let us enter this marvelous Heart,
So that we may love as it does,
Let us gaze at its excess of love.³⁷⁸

In *Hymn* 132 he develops more this theme: Jesus Himself, “this loving Savior,” invites sinners to come to Him, who is “a consuming fire.” His Heart “ardently desires / To set *their souls* aflame.” He became incarnate to set souls aflame, He whose *heart* “is all afire.”³⁷⁹ If we want “to share this fire” with others, we have to *go to His Heart*, “where it is found.” “There the saints were inflamed.” We only have to ask for it, because Jesus wants to grant us everything.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁵ *Hymn* 129,1: p. 535.

³⁷⁶ Cf. *Hymn* 132,2: p. 541.

³⁷⁷ Cf. *Hymn* 42,26: p. 276: “To blaze joyfully with love, / Would that be your desire? / *Quickly, lose yourself in my Heart*, / The furnace aflame with winning Love.”

³⁷⁸ *Hymn* 41,1: p. 269.

³⁷⁹ Cf. *Hymn* 132,5: p. 542.

³⁸⁰ Cf. *Hymn* 132,6: p. 542.

We should also ask the Sacred Heart “to set us on fire,” to consume our hearts, and make them an acceptable sacrifice.³⁸¹ The same thing is true if we want to love Mary: we should have recourse to Jesus *and love her with His Heart*.³⁸²

B. Our Response to Jesus’ Love

1. A Heart-Breaking Response

St. Louis wonders at something truly incomprehensible: our lack of response to God’s love. In his book *The Love of Eternal Wisdom*, he wonders “how long will our hearts remain heavy and earthbound, loving vain things and seeking what is false” instead of turning to Jesus, Who has demonstrated for us His true love in so many ways.³⁸³

He dedicated his *Hymns* 43, 47, 133 and 136³⁸⁴ to expound on the outrages suffered by the Sacred Heart in the Blessed Sacrament and the need for Reparation thereof. He has very strong words on this subject which should make us reflect very seriously, because the same thing continues happening today:

While the Sacred Heart plans
To shower us with favors,
We really do not care,
And even treat Him harshly ...

³⁸¹ Cf. *Hymn* 132,9: p. 543.

³⁸² Cf. *Hymn* 42,27: p. 276; cf. TD 67: p. 310.

³⁸³ Cf. LEW 181: p. 100.

³⁸⁴ He also mentions it in *Hymn* 44.

But no one is shocked by this,
The greatest crimes are nothings.
*Who pities Jesus? Alas! no one,
We're only thinking of ourselves ...*

*My heart loves you, desires you;
It is for you that it was pierced.
It sighs so strongly for your heart,
And what! Shall I be forsaken?*³⁸⁵

St. Louis asks for forgiveness not only for the sacrileges that Jesus suffers, but also for us, Catholics, who forget Him in the Tabernacle, and are negligent and indifferent regarding Holy Communion.³⁸⁶

In Jesus' Heart "reside His treasures." He wants "To bestow them with kindness / Provided we place no obstacle."

*... This Sacred Heart ardently desires
To give, to pour Himself out,
He calls us incessantly;
But who really wants to hear Him?*³⁸⁷

I have given everything, even my own life
To win you over and unite myself to you,
*Yet you cruelly flee from me and forget me
And in return, you arm yourself against me.*³⁸⁸

³⁸⁵ *Hymn* 43, 17.21.38: pp. 279.281.

³⁸⁶ Cf. *Hymn* 47,6.13: pp. 294.295.

³⁸⁷ *Hymn* 129,6: p. 536.

³⁸⁸ *Hymn* 98,8: p. 420.

He puts in the Holy Spirit's lips something terrible and yet true: "*You would love me, had I loved you less.*"³⁸⁹

The Holy Spirit begs and exhorts us
To return to Him wholeheartedly;
He yearns to enter. *He is knocking at our door.*
*Will we always be busy elsewhere?*³⁹⁰

"The good God for loving us" deserves that we love Him back. "Anathema to sinners / *Who do not give their hearts to Him!*"³⁹¹

O God of love, consuming fire,
Be our gentle conqueror,
Set us afire with your divine flames.
*Let our hearts be your dwelling ...*³⁹²

Denouncing in detail the outrages done against the Eucharist, St. Louis bemoans how man offends "*The loving Heart of the Savior.*"³⁹³ Love should be repaid with love. We should love His Heart, because it loves us:³⁹⁴

Since Jesus lowers himself
Through an excess of love,
His love urges us
To make a like return.
Let us visit Him often in this great mystery;

³⁸⁹ *Hymn* 98,14: p. 420.

³⁹⁰ *Hymn* 98,15: p. 420.

³⁹¹ *Hymn* 135,4: p. 548.

³⁹² *Hymn* 135,5: pp. 548-549.

³⁹³ Cf. *Hymn* 43,30-32.37-38: pp. 280-281.

³⁹⁴ Cf. *Hymn* 44, 2.3.8: p. 282.

Amen to all He says there,
To all he does there day and night
To honor his Father.³⁹⁵

Let us say gently and tenderly:
O Sacred Heart, set us on fire!
O Divine Flame,
Here are our hearts, consume them,
Making them, upon your altar,
An acceptable sacrifice ...³⁹⁶

2. *The Reasons*

The immensity of Jesus' love for us and the poverty of our response do not correspond at all. Something very important must be lacking. St. Louis gives a threefold answer: the abandonment or the lack of appreciation of the Eucharist,³⁹⁷ the lack of a true and ardent devotion to Mary, which is the reason he develops more and to which he gave an outstanding contribution, and our inordinate self-love, which often dominates our life.³⁹⁸ We shall speak about the second motive only.

Jesus is not well known and does not reign as He should, *because Mary is not enough known and does not reign in the*

³⁹⁵ *Hymn* 128,6: p. 534; cf. SM 69: p. 281: the idea of saying "amen" referred to Mary and all that she does.

³⁹⁶ *Hymn* 132,9: p. 543.

³⁹⁷ Cf. his *Hymns* on the Eucharist; also, St. Manuel González García (+1940), a master on this theme, whose works comprise three volumes: *Obras Completas*, ed. Tomás Álvarez (published by the Editorial Monte Carmelo / Editorial El Granito de Arena): Vol. I *Escritos Eucarísticos* (Burgos² 2001); Vol. II *Escritos de espiritualidad sacerdotal* (Burgos³ 2005); Vol. III *Escritos catequísticos y de Liturgia* (Burgos² 2001).

³⁹⁸ Cf. TD 78-82; 87-89; 173-182: pp. 313-315; 317-318; 344-347; LEW 220-222: pp. 111-112.

*hearts of men as She should.*³⁹⁹ *The Holy Spirit* does not work all His wonders in us, *because He does not find Mary present in us.*⁴⁰⁰ St. Louis demonstrates repeatedly how the Three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity willed Mary's collaboration in the formation of both Christ the Head and the members of His mystical Body.⁴⁰¹

... *The Father* gave and still gives his Son only through her. He raises children for himself only through her. He dispenses his graces to us only through her. *God the Son* was prepared for mankind in general by her alone. Mary, in union with the Holy Spirit, still conceives him and brings him forth daily. It is through her alone that the Son distributes his merits and virtues. *The Holy Spirit* formed *Jesus* only through her, and he forms the members of the *Mystical Body* and dispenses his gifts and his favours through her ...⁴⁰²

At the theoretical level, many theologians do not recognize and attach to Mary's place in the Economy of Salvation the importance it is entitled to; and at the practical level, many people do not have enough recourse to her help in order to be true Christians. Invoking her occasionally does not suffice. Praising or even imitating some of her virtues

³⁹⁹ Cf. TD 13: pp. 293-294; also, TD 49-50.113.217: pp. 303-304.323-324.360: The reign of Jesus will come about only through the reign of Mary; TD 264: p. 374.

⁴⁰⁰ Cf. TD 164-165: pp. 341-342; TD 269: p. 376.

⁴⁰¹ Cf. SM 12: p. 266: "Since Mary produced the head of the elect, Jesus Christ, she must also produce the members of that head, that is, all true Christians."

⁴⁰² TD 140: pp. 332-333; cf. TD 29: p. 297: "*God the Father* wishes Mary to be the mother of his children until the end of time ..."; TD 31: p. 298: "*God the Son* wishes to form himself, and ... become incarnate every day in his members through his dear Mother"; TD 34: p. 299: "*God the Holy Spirit* wishes to fashion his chosen ones in and through Mary. He tells her, 'My well-beloved, my spouse, let all your virtues take root in my chosen ones'"

does not suffice. As Frank Duff (+1980) explains so well, only a true “*community of life*” with her fulfills God’s Will in her regard and would produce the fruits that God envisioned from all eternity that would come through her.⁴⁰³

St. Louis demonstrates that devotion to Mary is necessary “simply and solely because it is a way of reaching Jesus perfectly, loving him tenderly, and serving him faithfully.”⁴⁰⁴

I do not believe that anyone can acquire intimate union with our Lord and perfect fidelity to the Holy Spirit *without a very close union with the most Blessed Virgin and an absolute dependence on her support.*⁴⁰⁵

C. Through Mary’s Heart We Love the Heart of Jesus

Mary’s Mediation is one of the main Marian themes developed by St. Louis. The Consecration he teaches is actually *a way of life* in which everything is done “*through Mary.*” It is a “secret” of the spiritual life that has as its end perfect union with God:

To love Jesus night and day,
The secret is to love Mary.

⁴⁰³ Cf. Frank Duff, *The Official Handbook of the Legion of Mary* 6,3, rev. ed. (Dublin: Concilium Legionis Mariae, 2005). 31-34: “All these tributes of respect are due to her and must be given to her, but they are no more than parts of the whole. Adequate devotion to her is only achieved by union with her. Union necessarily means community of life with her” (p. 32).

⁴⁰⁴ TD 62: p. 308.

⁴⁰⁵ TD 43: p. 301.

For she is the mother and the glow
Of fair and perfect love.⁴⁰⁶

We mention here only the texts where the term “heart” is found. Speaking about honoring Jesus, he says:

... Through the Sacred Heart of Mary,
*Honor to your Heart, my Jesus ...*⁴⁰⁷

He frequently recommends having recourse to her intercession.⁴⁰⁸ His most interesting teaching regards loving Jesus’ Heart through Mary’s Heart. He develops it in his *Hymn 40, Treasures of the Sacred Heart*. First, he makes a clear affirmation: “Christians, by *Mary’s Heart / We love the Heart of Jesus.*”⁴⁰⁹ Then he gives several arguments to sustain it.

The first one is the Divine Maternity: “*Since Jesus took life / In her most virtuous heart.*”⁴¹⁰ We could not love the Sacred Heart at all if first the Son of God had not become incarnate; if first Mary had not given Him a Heart: “*From the blood of her flaming heart, / The Heart of Jesus was formed...*”⁴¹¹

The second argument is the inseparable union that binds these two Hearts: “*They have but one heart, but one soul, /*

⁴⁰⁶ *Hymn 5,38*: p. 22; cf. TD 64.82: pp. 309.315; SM 1.20: pp. 264.268.

⁴⁰⁷ *Hymn 47,27*: p. 296; cf. *Hymn 160,2*: p. 628: “*Glory to Jesus Christ through his Mother / On earth and in heaven, / At the right of God the Father, / And in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar ...*”

⁴⁰⁸ Cf. *Hymn 47,27*: “*Listen to Mary’s Heart, my Jesus*”; 28: p. 296.

⁴⁰⁹ *Hymn 40,35*: p. 268.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹¹ *Hymn 40,36*: p. 268.

One and the other should be loved.”⁴¹² We should “lose ourselves entirely / in these two miraculous hearts,” both of which convince us “*To see but one in the two.*”⁴¹³

He insists that it is “*by this tender Heart* that we should mount to the Heart Most High.”⁴¹⁴ Speaking of the “*Heart Most High*” is a beautiful way of affirming the Humanity (Heart) and Divinity (Most High) of Christ, the Son of the Most High, as the angel called Him at the Annunciation (Lk.1:32). We have to mount to Him by “*this tender heart*”: *Mary’s Heart*. If we do so, we will soon become perfect, because, as St. Louis affirms elsewhere: “We advance more in a brief period of submission to Mary and dependence on her than in whole years of self-will and self-reliance.”⁴¹⁵

Perfection is attained by loving God and neighbor as one should, and nobody can teach and help us to do it like Mary. Another interesting brief reference is found in *Hymn 82, Child of Mary*:

It is through her
That I adore and love,
It is through her
That I speak to the Lord ...⁴¹⁶

Holiness is first of all the work of God in us. In relation to the Sacred Heart, St. Louis expresses it by saying that:

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ *Hymn* 40,37: pp. 268-269.

⁴¹⁴ *Hymn* 40,38: p. 269.

⁴¹⁵ TD 155: p. 337.

⁴¹⁶ *Hymn* 82,6: pp. 367-368.

... All the virtues
Have for their sole source
The Heart of most loving Jesus:
*He alone bestows them.*⁴¹⁷

That is why he asks Jesus:

To form in us His virtues
And His living image,
Our hearts will no longer resist
This labor all divine.⁴¹⁸

But it is God's Will that Mary also should have a very important part in our sanctification. She has received from God "rights and authority over souls," among other things, to "*implant in their heart the roots of her virtues,*" and "be the inseparable associate of the Holy Spirit" in all the works of grace conducive to our attaining holiness.⁴¹⁹ St. Louis asks her to lavish "All her virtues in our hearts," so that Jesus "May enjoy being with us"; and to "Lavish her love in us / *So we may love her dear Son through her.*"⁴²⁰

In sum, loving Jesus' Heart through Mary's Heart is not a mere possibility among others for those who are very devoted to Mary, but an indispensable condition for all Christians who want to love Jesus as deeply, truly, and faithfully as He deserves.

⁴¹⁷ *Hymn* 130,8: p. 538.

⁴¹⁸ *Hymn* 130,10: pp. 538-539.

⁴¹⁹ Cf. TD 37: p. 300.

⁴²⁰ Cf. *Hymn* 134,12: p. 547.

D. Through Jesus' Heart We Love Mary

Most texts speak about going to Jesus through Mary. In *Hymn 42* we have the opposite: Jesus helping us to love Mary:

*If you want to love Mary
With almost infinite love,
Love with my Heart, I beg you,
For my Heart is one with hers.*⁴²¹

XI. Conclusion

“*By Mary’s heart we love the Heart of Jesus.*” This categorical affirmation sums up well de Montfort’s Marian doctrine.

Love. St. Louis calls our attention to an ineffable Mystery: *God’s love for humankind*. All his writings vibrate with this central truth. And the term *heart*, amply used by him, conveys it very well. God the Father loves us with an infinite, paternal love, amply demonstrated by His Divine Economy.⁴²² God the Son loves us with an infinite, spousal, brotherly love, keenly demonstrated by His Incarnation, Work of Redemption, and Presence in the Eucharist, and

⁴²¹ *Hymn 42,27*: p. 276.

⁴²² Cf. his beautiful *Hymns* in honor of God the Father, where he proclaims, among other things, His mercy and love: *Hymn 50 On the Perfections of God*: pp. 300-301; *Hymn 51 Praises of God for His Deeds*: pp. 302-304; *Hymn 52 Praises of God for His Blessings*: pp. 304-305 (in particular vv. 2.7-11: “2. Oh! How good a Father! / He takes great care of us!” (p. 304); “8. He is my dearest Father, / He takes good care of me, / He holds me close to Himself, / Helping me in my distress”; “9. His kindness upholds me, / His light instructs me”; “10. His gentleness caresses me, / His grace heals me” (p. 305); *Hymn 53 Evensong*: p. 306; *Hymn 117 Of the Predestined Soul Yearning for Heaven*: pp. 492-493; *Hymn 160 Laudate Dominum Omnes*: pp. 627-628; also *Hymn 27 Thanksgiving for God’s Gifts*: pp. 186, where he refers to the Three Divine Persons.

perfectly embodied by His Sacred Heart.⁴²³ God the Holy Spirit loves us with an infinite, vivifying love, daily demonstrated by His Divine Providence and consummate work of sanctification of each one of us.⁴²⁴

Loving God. How are we not going to correspond to this infinite Divine love? But with such fickle hearts as our own, how are we going to achieve it?

By Mary's Heart. God's love shines forth in the fact that He chose from all eternity to make one of His creatures, Mary of Nazareth, His inseparable Associate⁴²⁵ in His Work of Salvation, and the perfect and supreme exemplar of the union with Him and the collaboration in His Economy to which he calls all of us. What a munificent love!

In a masterful way, in his capacity as both a great mystic and theologian, de Montfort explains the unutterable union that God willed to have with the Blessed Virgin. Time and again he insists on the mystery of her mediation: The Blessed Trinity acts always *through her*.⁴²⁶ *Through her* the Son of God became incarnate and came to us. "Only *through Mary*, can we possess divine Wisdom."⁴²⁷ The reign of Jesus will come about *only through Mary*.⁴²⁸ *Through her Heart* we honor the Sacred Heart.⁴²⁹ "Since she is the sure means, *the*

⁴²³ Besides his book LEW, e.g., *Hymn 55 Lover of Jesus*: pp. 308-310.

⁴²⁴ Cf. *Hymn 141 Invocation of the Holy Spirit*: pp. 569-572: "7. Speak, Holy Spirit, create / A fountain in my heart, / Whose pure, healthful water / Saves the greatest sinner, / Heals the most incurable /... And pardons the most guilty" (p. 570); 141,14-16: p. 572: cf. *Dossier of Texts* (2); also, *Hymn 27,9-11*: p. 185.

⁴²⁵ Cf. "Compagne indissoluble" of Jesus: TD 74: p. 312, and of the Holy Spirit: TD 37: p. 300; *French original*: pp. 534; 507.

⁴²⁶ Cf. TD 140: pp. 332-333, an outstanding text.

⁴²⁷ Cf. LEW 209: p. 108.

⁴²⁸ TD 217: p. 360.

⁴²⁹ Cf. *Hymn 47,27*: p. 296; cf. *Hymn 160,2*: p. 628: "*Glory to Jesus Christ*

direct and immaculate way to Jesus and the perfect guide to him, *it is through her* that souls ... must find him.”⁴³⁰ “We must do everything *through Mary* ... and be led in all things by her spirit ...”⁴³¹ We should “adopt her intentions,” and *through her* “adopt the intentions of Jesus.”⁴³² We should consecrate ourselves to Jesus *through Mary* “in order to belong entirely to Jesus.”⁴³³ The examples could be multiplied. The following petition would suffice: “Lavish your love in us / *So we may love your dear Son through you.*”⁴³⁴

The more we meditate upon this union, the more we shall comprehend the greatness of Mary, and the importance of her maternal mission on behalf of the Son of God and of humanity. The more we open ourselves to her maternal mediation and pedagogy, the better and faster She will unite us to the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, here on earth and forever in heaven.

Author Biography

Dr. Deyanira Flores holds a BA in Theology and Classical languages from Boston College and an STL and STD in Dogmatic Theology, with specialization in Mariology, from the Pontifical Theological Faculty *Marianum* in Rome. She teaches at Our Lady of the Angels National Seminary-Catholic University of Costa Rica, the

through His Mother.”

⁴³⁰ TD 50: p. 303.

⁴³¹ TD 258: p. 371.

⁴³² SM 46: pp. 274-275.

⁴³³ Cf. TD 55: p. 306.

⁴³⁴ Cf. *Hymn* 134,12: p. 547.

Theological University of Central America, The Servite Marian Center (Mexico), and the International Marian Research Institute (Dayton, Ohio). She has been a member of the Mariological Society of America since 1996.

