



PERIOD FOUR – DAYS 27-33

KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS

REFLECTIONS

Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary
2020

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PERIOD FOUR – KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS REFLECTION

MAY THE SPOKEN WORDS OF OUR MOUTHS AND THE HIDDEN THOUGHTS OF OUR HEARTS WIN FAVOR WITH YOU, ALMIGHTY GOD, SO THAT YOU MAY SEE AND LOVE IN US WHAT YOU SAW AND LOVED IN YOUR SON, JESUS CHRIST. (Psalm 19. Prayer in the Liturgy)

We offer to God all who are making this 33 Day Consecration Journey with us. We number almost 30,000 across the world and we give honor and glory to God through Our Lady as we march as a great army under the banner of Our Mother. If her Sacred Spouse, the Holy Spirit inspires us to do so, may we offer the merits that she showers on each of us to pass through us to bless instead.....(name these souls who are brought to mind)

"Come... it is I." (Matthew 14:27, 29)

The Spirit of God has beckoned us to make the 33 Day Consecration To Jesus Through Mary with St Louis de Montfort. We've been drawn to find Him in the womb of Mary. And now, in this final week of our Consecration, we hear Him speak those beautiful words:

"COME... IT IS I."

Our glorious Lord, our Blessed Redeemer, the Name above all Names, Emmanuel is asking us to come to Him. Our hearts have been prepared on our pilgrimage. We may have staggered a little on the journey, faltered under the weight of self-knowledge in this world where its spirit seeks power over our souls but our Mother has taken hold of us at each hurdle and now, this week, she, the Queen who "stands at your right hand" (Psalm 45:9) presents us to our Lord and He calls,

"Come... it is I... I and the Father will love (you) and We will come to (you) and make Our home with (you).". (John 14)

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PERIOD FOUR – KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS REFLECTION

In this coming week, Period Four, St. Louis De Montfort spreads out spiritual treasures like a banquet before us when he takes us into Knowledge of Jesus, He Who is the Final Destination of our souls, the "home" which the Savior and the Father long to own. We are on this pilgrimage together. There are almost 30,000 Catholic Christians from all across the world on this journey and each one of us "knows" this saving Lord in different ways. How well do we know him?

We find help to answer that question in the meditations from our past reflections. One statement in particular from Saint Pope John Paul II provides a most profound Insight which we have prayed through...

"God seeks man in the womb of Mary".

How can we enter that holy womb?

In Sacred Scripture, Nicodemus was greatly perplexed by just such a question when the Lord was trying to teach him the difference between religion and relationship with God. Their conversation could be exactly our own 2000 years later when we hear those words from St. John Paul II. Can we enter the womb of Mary and so enter into a relationship with God within her?

Nicodemus' reply to the Lord is our own:

"How can a man be born when he is old? Surely he can't enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born?"

Jesus answered him,

"...the SPIRIT gives birth to spirit." (John 3:3)

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St. Louis De Montfort leads us into that same dialogue with the Lord when he has us pray this petition in the Litany to Jesus:

" Through the Mystery of Thy Holy Incarnation, Jesus Deliver Us"

The Spirit of God overshadowed Mary and "the Word became Flesh". Mary was filled with the same Spirit Who desires us to meet Him in her womb. "God seeks man in the womb of Mary" where "the SPIRIT gives birth to spirit".

How can we meet Him there? Do we know what God looks like within the Silence of that Immaculate Space? How can we learn what He is asking of us? How can we allow the SPIRIT to give birth to our spirit if He finds us in Mary's womb?

We wonder what He looks like, The Holy One who created the entire universe, yet Who allows Himself to be confined in that Mother's womb. When we are given the grace of the Holy Spirit to behold Him with our spiritual eye, we can learn something of what He is asking of us.

We first have to remember that Jesus Our Lord descended from the beauty of Heaven to come to earth to redeem us. His Kingdom is a celestial paradise (Pope Benedict XII) filled with inconceivable beauty (The Father to Catherine of Siena) where the Lord of Love receives constant exaltation, where there's jubilation in His Presence and Perfect Love reigns.

From this paradise of God, Christ came to earth to reign in a different paradise which was the womb of Mary, and

- * His greatness became littleness
- * His power became powerlessness
- * His riches became poverty

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These are His chosen conditions and they reveal something of what God looks like when He was being formed in Mary's womb.

THESE REVEAL DEPTHS OF GOD'S PROFOUND HUMILITY.

Are we called to look like Him and so learn what He is asking of us in His descent from Heaven so that the SPIRIT can give birth to our spirit?

Mary was called to an act of kenosis (self-emptying, suffering love). She was imitating the Son who was dwelling and growing within her.

Whatever the Father asks of the Mother He also asked of the Son. We learn about this truth when we read St Paul:

Jesus, "emptied himself, taking the form of a bond slave, coming in the likeness of men". (Philippians 2:5-11).

These acts of self-emptying find their Source in the ever-flowing actions of the Holy Trinity....

"....a fountain that flows, like an ocean sized waterfall which is Father surrendering to Son, Son self-emptying to Father, Spirit-water spilling out to create a universe; the cosmos comes to sip it... a God whose love is bursting its banks." (Fr. Ian Matthew OCD)

In this week of "Knowledge of Jesus" we are filled with awe when we hear the Lord say, "Come... it is I. Come, sip at my ocean-sized waterfall of loving self-giving. Come, empty yourself into My Father as He surrenders into Me. " (Adapted)

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What does He ask of us? To imitate His humility in the womb of Mary? We can tell Him with joy that we have already begun. We have already offered the beginnings of self-emptying, our very own kenosis when we prayed our daily prayer to Mary in the third week of our Consecration.

"I give myself wholly to you without keeping anything back for myself or for others....destroy in me anything that may displease God; root it out and bring it to nothing... (I wish) to suffer joyfully without human consolation, to die continuously to myself".

THIS WAS OUR COURAGEOUS PRAYER OF KENOSIS. AND IN OUR EMPTYING OF SELF, WE GIVE GOD SPACE.

"Love transforms the Lover into the object loved". In kenosis, self-emptying and suffering love, the Wisdom of God flows freely into the one who is willing to receive Him...you and I. The love of God flows then from Him through us into all who meet us and they too "sip at the ocean-sized waterfall" who is Christ, the Self-lavishing God dwelling within that space in our souls.

Perhaps the space we want to give Him is only a corner of our souls. He will accept that with love. "He submits to your will" (St. Teresa of Avila).

Even that small space gives Him deep delight. He will grasp it, move in with gratitude, and then He will entice us with the sweetness of His Presence to allow Him more room. The expression, "watch this space" takes on an eternal meaning.

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During the last years, thousands of souls have made this Consecration journey and that same number have given what they could to Jesus through Mary as a small token of their love.

Courageous souls have approached Altars throughout the world to offer bouquets of flowers, days of fast, credit cards and placed them at the feet of the Lord at the Offertory of the Mass of their Consecration.

One such person was a woman who became most agitated during the preparatory evenings when the reflections were being presented. She was a strong woman, in control of her life, her family, her career. And she held these gifts from God jealously to herself. But in the five weeks of the Consecration Journey, God touched her soul through the gentle Heart of Mary.

That woman was the last person to approach the Altar to offer her "space" to the Lord on the Consecration Day.

With great emotion, she walked forward. In her left hand, raised so high so that the Lord could see her coming, we all saw that she held a photograph of her greatest treasures...her two little daughters. In her right hand, also raised high above her head, she held the other gift that gave her life meaning, purpose, drive. She held her Ph. D submission thesis.

She placed these treasures that filled her heart and her mind at the feet of the Master that day. Her world was now His.

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When the Lord moves into the space we allot to Him, He comes bearing "a plethora of gifts of the SPIRIT". (St. Teresa of Avila)

One which He may gift to us is His mystical gift of Divine Silence so that we will feel and hear the love and wisdom of the Indwelling God.

"TO JESUS, THROUGH THE WOMB OF MARY."

...THIS IS A PATH INTO GOD OUTLINED BY TWO GIANTS OF OUR FAITH WHO LOVED OUR LADY DEEPLY. ST. LOUIS DE MONTFORT AND ST. JOHN PAUL II LEAD US INTO A SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SAVIOR WHICH TAKES US SAFELY INTO KNOWLEDGE OF HIM AND INTO ETERNITY WITH HIM.

THEY RECOGNIZED THAT OUR MOTHER WAS THE BONDSLAVE OF GOD.

SHE WAS FILLED WITH SELF-EMPTINESS AND SUFFERING LOVE AND SHE CARRIED WITHIN HERSELF THE HOLY ONE WHO EMBODIED HUMILITY.

SHE IS THE SEAT OF WISDOM.

WE GO TO JESUS THROUGH THE WOMB OF MARY.

"Do whatever He tells you". (John 2:5)

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What more can we know about Jesus in our journey into Himself?

In the "Litany of Jesus " St. Louis De Montfort asks us to pray,

"Through Thy labors, Jesus deliver us".

Jesus the Christ is Divine and also fully human. Human nature has principal passions. These are love, desire, fear, joy, sadness. In our lives, which we desire to live in, through and with Christ,

"...the Holy Spirit himself accomplishes His work by mobilizing the whole being, with all its sorrows, fears and sadness, as is visible in the Lord's agony and passion. In Christ, human feelings are able to reach their consummation in charity and divine beatitude". (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1769).

Jesus was fully human. He is Love but He also felt desire, fear, joy, sadness, like us. He must therefore have been a man of great and pure joy. Do we know Him as joyful?

We get a glimpse of this if we step into a particular moment in His life in the Gospels. In Mark 10: 13-16, a group of children waited to approach Him but "the disciples rebuked them".

We then read that Jesus called them to Himself, embraced them, blessed them.



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When we use Lectio Divina to enter into that scene, can we get to know Jesus more in this remarkable moment of His "labors"?

Where there are children there is also much noise, unexpected movement, laughter. Children run to people who make funny faces at them, who speak to them by bending down to their height, someone who allows them to climb up on him until he becomes a human Christmas tree with children suspended from every limb.

In this scene, are we one of the children? Are we one of the reprimanding disciples? Are we one of the parents?

"Through Thy labors, Jesus deliver Us".

Everything recounted in Sacred Scripture is for the salvation of our souls. What does the SPIRIT want to bring to birth when He draws us prayerfully into this scene?

As we move in prayerful silence from character to character captured in this Gospel moment, our reaction to Jesus as a child, or as a parent or as a disapproving disciple will reveal much to us about our relationship with Jesus and our knowledge of Him.

"We cannot ignore the humanity of Christ without hobbling ourselves in our prayer and severely limiting our knowledge of Him. This familiarity goes both ways." (St. Teresa of Avila)

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In His Risen Body, the Savior is not subject to space and time and He "...is now at work in the hearts of men through the energy of His SPIRIT". (Second Vatican Council)

When we meditate on His Actions in the Gospels and approach Him in His Sacred Humanity, His SPIRIT works to heal, transform, raise us to Himself.

"Through Thy labors, Jesus deliver us".

Our final meditation as we enter into our last week of the Consecration revolves around a petition in the Litany of Jesus which culminates the Mission of His life on earth: Montfort has us pray,

"Through Thy sufferings, Jesus Deliver Us".

Everyone who has been embraced by Christ Jesus as His friend has been touched by His suffering:

"Pain , sorrow , suffering are but the kiss of Jesus....a sign that you've come so close to Him that He can kiss you". (Saint Teresa of Calcutta)

"I do not know what will happen to me; I only know one thing for certain, That the Lord will never fall short of His promises. 'Do not fear, I will make you suffer, but I will also give you the strength to suffer,' Jesus tells me continually. 'I want your soul to be purified and tried by a daily hidden martyrdom... How many times,' Jesus said to me a little while ago, 'would you have abandoned me, my son, if I had not crucified you?' " (Saint Pio Pietrelcina)

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St. Catherine of Siena teaches us that Love transforms the Lover into the object loved. By this we understand that our souls are transformed when we are invited into the "apostolate of suffering" (St. Jose Maria Escriva).

Can we say, YES to that invitation?

"I desire to suffer, Lord, because Thou did suffer". (St. Teresa of Avila)

What does suffering mean for us? Do we "suffer well" ? (St. Therese of Lisieux)

We may have discovered during these astonishing weeks that suffering is involved when we make acts of self-surrender in order to welcome Christ. (Luke 9:23)

Suffering may be involved when we are invited to renounce our material possessions. (Matthew 19:21)

Letting go of our disordered attachments to the world and to our own life to make God our only priority may also be a time of suffering. (Luke 14:26)

"You must give up all other love for Jesus' love since He wishes to be loved alone above all". (Total Consecration, Day 32)

The Savior sees our desire for Him and we hear Him say,

"I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God" (Exodus 20:5). You are..."My chosen one. I call you by name--
- I AM THE LORD AND THERE IS NO OTHER; There is no God but Me. I will equip you for battle, though you have not known Me". (Isaiah 45:5)

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And we learn that being "equipped for battle " involves these opportunities of purification through our suffering. Suffering can teach us that our love for Him is conditional, or how much we need to be in control, or how far short of holiness we really are. And we become better "equipped for battle".

"I want the fragrance of your suffering to be pure and unadulterated....I want you to detach yourself from yourself. The more you will come to love suffering, the purer your love will be for Me." (Diary of St Faustina)

Through suffering, whether purgative or redemptive, we become "servants of the Cross....one with the Crucified". (Imitation of Christ, Day 30).

"If you suffer with Him, you will reign with Him. If you cry with Him, you will have joy with Him. If you die with Him on the Cross of tribulation, you will possess the eternal dwelling place in the splendor of the saints. And your name, written in the Book of Life will be glorious among men". (St. Claire of Assisi)

"I GIVE YOU THANKS, THAT YOU HAVE ANNIHILATED YOURSELF, TAKING THE FORM OF A SLAVE IN ORDER TO RESCUE ME FROM THE CRUEL SLAVERY OF THE DEVIL: THAT YOU HAVE BEEN PLEASED TO SUBMIT YOURSELF TO MARY, YOUR HOLY MOTHER IN ALL THINGS TO MAKE ME YOUR FAITHFUL SLAVE THROUGH HER." (St. Louis de Montfort prayer)

"ALL THAT I AM AND ALL THAT I HAVE IS YOURS, MOST LOVING JESUS, THROUGH MARY, YOUR MOST HOLY MOTHER". (St. Louis de Montfort prayer)

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TO JESUS, THROUGH MARY.