



## Meditation

For this third week, Saint Louis Marie says, “They should endeavor in all their prayers and works to acquire an **understanding of the Blessed Virgin and ask the Holy Spirit for this grace**. They may read and meditate upon what we have already said about her. They should recite the Litany of the Holy Spirit and the *Ave Maria Stella* [Hail, Star of the Sea]. In this week you can **also offer prayers that can be habitually done** (Morning Offering, praying three Hail Mary’s, the *Angelus* ...) and (as possible) reciting the Holy Rosary.”

- 1) Place yourself in the presence of God.
- 2) Ask the grace of the Holy Spirit to know the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- 3) Exhortation to Trust by Saint Bernard
- 4) The Litany of the Holy Spirit
- 5) Conclude praying the Ave Maris Stella

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## Twenty Fourth Day

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Treatise of True Devotion to the Virgin Mary [169-172]

**Sixth Motive: This consecration makes us grow in the freedom of the children of God.**

Being slaves of Mary makes us authentically free. It unites us intimately with God, the supreme Truth and great Good. This union makes us fully free. Saint Louis explains, “This devotion gives those who faithfully practice it a great inner freedom: the freedom of the children of God. By becoming the slave of Jesus Christ and consecrating ourselves to Him

through this devotion, the Lord will reward us for this enslavement of love.”

(1) Our Lord frees us from every scruple and servile fear which might restrict, imprison, or confuse us.

(2) He opens our hearts and fills them with holy confidence in God, helping us to regard God as our Father.

(3) He inspires us with a generous and filial love.

St. Louis tells a story of the life of Mother Agnes of Jesus, a Dominican nun: “She was barely seven years old and was suffering great spiritual anguish. She heard a voice telling her: *If you want to be free of all your anguish and be protected against all your enemies, become as soon as possible a slave of Jesus and his Blessed Mother.* Upon returning home, she hastened to consecrate herself entirely as a slave to Jesus and Mary, although she had never known anything about this devotion before. After this, all her sufferings and scruples disappeared, and she found great peace of soul. This led her to teach this devotion to many others.”

**Seventh Motive: This consecration is of great benefit to our neighbor.**

The fruits of this true devotion are not exhausted in us. They overflow to the point of benefiting our neighbor. We offer to the Blessed Virgin Mary the satisfactory and impetratory [from the Latin *impetratio*, the action of obtaining by request] value of all our good works, including the smallest good thoughts and the slightest sufferings. She disposes all this for the benefit of the souls in most need. Saint Louis defines this great truth:

*“We give consent that all we have already acquired or will acquire until death should be used in accordance with our Lady’s will for the conversion of sinners or the deliverance of the souls from Purgatory.”*

And he asks himself: “Is this not perfect love of our neighbor? Is this not being a true disciple of our Lord, one who should always be recognized by his love? Is this not the way to convert sinners without any danger of vainglory, and deliver souls from purgatory by doing hardly anything more than what we are obliged to do by our state of life?”

And he continues: “To appreciate the excellence of this motive, we must understand what a wonderful thing it is **to convert a sinner or to deliver a soul from purgatory. It is an infinite good, greater than the creation of heaven and earth**, since it gives a soul the possession of God. If by this devotion we secured the release of only one soul from purgatory or converted only one sinner in our whole lifetime, would that not be enough to induce any person who really loves his neighbor to practice this devotion? It may well be that at the hour of death a person who has been faithful to this devotion will find that he has freed many souls from purgatory and converted many sinners, even though he performed only the ordinary actions of his state of life. Great will be his joy at the judgment. Great will be his glory throughout eternity!”



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## Twenty Fifth Day

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Treatise of True Devotion to the Virgin Mary [173-182]

**Eighth Motive: This devotion is a wonderful means of perseverance.**

Perseverance in faith and in grace until death is such a great grace that, in order to obtain it, it is necessary to ask for it in prayer. This was stated by the Curé of Ars: “Prayer is absolutely necessary to persevere.”

Many times we meet people who have a conversion, but only stay firm for a few months. We fall back into sin instead of progressing in virtue; we seem to go backwards. We know that we are weak. We carry the faith “in earthen vessels.”

Saint Louis compares the Virgin Mary with an anchor which holds souls steadfast. She saves them from shipwreck in the raging seas of the world where so many people perish through lack of such a firm anchor. Mary resembles the Ark of Noah. The flood waters of sin which engulf so many will not harm them. She will not allow those who take refuge in her to be lost.

*“By this devotion we entrust all we possess to Mary. We choose her as the guardian of all our possessions in the natural and supernatural sphere. Moved by pure love, this good Mother always accepts whatever is given her in trust, and, once she accepts*

## Exhortation to Trust

*by Saint Bernard*

“Oh! You, whoever you are, who feel far from land, dragged by the waves of this world, in the midst of storms, if you do not want to capsize, do not take your eyes off the light of this Star.

If the wind of temptation rises, if the stumbling block of tribulations gets in your way, look at the Star, invoke Mary.

If you are unbalanced by the agitations of pride, of ambition, of murmuring, of envy, look at the Star, invoke Mary.

If anger, avarice, impure desires shake the fragile vessel of your soul, raise your eyes to Mary.

If, disturbed by the memory of the enormity of your crimes, confused before the awkwardness of your conscience, terrified by the fear of Judgment, you begin to let yourself be swept away by the whirlwind of sadness, to throw yourself into the abyss of despair, think of Mary.

In the dangers, in the anxieties, in the doubts, think of Mary, invoke Mary.

May her name never depart from your lips, never leave your heart; and to reach the relief of her intercession, do not neglect the examples of her life.

Following her, you will not get lost; praying, you will not despair; thinking about her, you will avoid all mistakes.

If she sustains you, you will not fall; if she protects you, you will have nothing to fear; if she leads you, you will not get tired; if she is favorable to you, you will reach the end. And so you will verify, from your own experience, how right it was said: *And the name of the Virgin was Mary.*”

(Saint Bernard, *Super missus*, 2nd homily, 17)

## Litany of the Holy Spirit

Lord have mercy, *Lord have mercy*  
Christ have mercy, *Christ have mercy*  
Lord have mercy, *Lord have mercy*  
Christ hear us, *Christ hear us*  
Christ graciously hear us, *Christ graciously hear us.*

God the Father of heaven, *have mercy on us.*  
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, *have mercy on us.*  
God the Holy Spirit, *have mercy on us.*  
Holy Trinity, one God, *have mercy on us.*

***(Repeat after each invocation: Have mercy on us)***

Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son, *have mercy on us.*  
Spirit of the Lord, who at the beginning of creation, breathed over the waters, made them fertile.  
Spirit under whose inspiration God's saints spoke.  
Spirit whose unction teaches us everything.  
Spirit who gives testimony of Jesus Christ.  
Spirit of truth who inspires everything.  
Spirit who descended upon Mary.  
Spirit of the Lord who fills all the earth.  
Spirit of God who dwells in us.  
Spirit of wisdom and understanding.  
Spirit of counsel and fortitude.  
Spirit of knowledge and piety.  
Spirit of fear of the Lord.  
Spirit of grace and mercy.  
Spirit of virtue, esteem and sobriety.  
Spirit of faith, hope, love and peace.  
Spirit of humility and chastity.  
Spirit of goodness and meekness.  
Spirit of all the forms of grace.  
Spirit who scrutinizes the divine depths.

Spirit who prays for us with inexpressible pleading.  
 Spirit who descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove.  
 Spirit by whom we receive new birth.  
 Spirit who fills hearts with charity.  
 Spirit of adoption of the sons of God.  
 Spirit who appeared over the Disciples in the form of tongues of fire.  
 Spirit with which the Apostles were filled.  
 Spirit who gives to each one according to His will.

Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,  
   *spare us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,  
   *graciously hear us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,  
   *have mercy on us.*

## Ave Maris Stella

1. Hail, bright star of ocean, God's own Mother blest, Ever sinless Virgin, Gate of heavenly rest.	Hear our prayers through thine.
2. Taking that sweet Ave Which from Gabriel came, Peace confirm within us, Changing Eva's name.	5. Virgin all excelling, Mildest of the mild, Freed from guilt, preserve us, Pure and undefiled.
3. Break the captives' fetters, Light on blindness pour, All our ills expelling, Every bliss implore.	6. Keep our life all spotless, Make our way secure, Till we find in Jesus, Joy forevermore.
4. Show thyself a Mother; May the Word Divine, Born for us thy Infant,	7. Through the highest heaven To the Almighty Three, Father, Son and Spirit, One same glory be. Amen.