
MANUAL *for*
MARIAN
DEVOTION



The Dominican Sisters of Mary,
Mother of the Eucharist

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With profound gratitude to God,
this manual is lovingly dedicated to
the Blessed Virgin Mary,
Patroness of the Order of Preachers,
on this eight hundredth anniversary
of the Order's founding.

Mary is the safest, easiest, shortest and most perfect way of approaching Jesus. The more a person joins himself to her, the more effectively she unites him to God.

ST. LOUIS MARIE GRIGNON DE MONTFORT

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HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

hoever humbles himself will be exalted” (Mt 23:12). This statement from our Lord is most perfectly fulfilled in the Blessed Virgin Mary, His mother. By a singular gift of God’s grace, no one other than her Son was ever so meek, humble, or grace-filled as the Blessed Virgin. Yet because of this, God has exalted her to a position of unique privilege and influence unparalleled in salvation history. This book focuses on several aspects of Mary’s special role in Christian life.

First, as an exemplary role model for every Christian. Mary conformed her life to Jesus Christ more perfectly than any other human being who has ever lived; because of this, she is the perfect role model for Christians to imitate in our efforts to be like the Lord. Every Christian should strive to be a true child of Mary in this regard.

Second, as a powerful intercessor before the throne of God. Due to the fullness of grace she possesses, Mary has traditionally been invoked as the most powerful intercessor among all the saints. So precious are her prayers in the sight of God that the Church sees her as mediatrix of God’s graces to

the Church. Christians should feel unbounded confidence when they come to Mary in need.

Third, as a type of the Church. All the gifts of grace have been entrusted to the Church collectively, and the fullness of grace has been poured out on Mary personally. Mary and the Church thus become types of one another, the mystery of the Blessed Virgin shedding light upon the mystery of the Church and vice versa. Christians can grow in their understanding of the Church by contemplating Mary.

The first part of this book lays out the biblical, theological, and historical foundations for the Church's devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The second part offers aids for this devotion: Church documents, scriptural texts, words and anecdotes from the saints and popes, prayers and hymns, and resources for further study.

The primary purpose of this manual, then, is to provide Catholics with a basic framework for understanding the Church's veneration of Mary and fostering it in their own devotional lives. It is an appropriate introduction to the basics of Mariology and a rich resource of devotional material to nourish your private devotions to the Mother of God.

It is our hope that Catholics—and anyone interested in Marian devotion—will carry this book with them and make frequent use of it, especially in Holy Hours or devotional times. For this reason, this book has been provided in a sturdy, compact

edition that allows you to keep it handy and refer to it often.

As you grow in devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, we encourage you to heed the words she once gave to the servants at the wedding of Cana: “Do whatever He tells you” (Jn 2:5). Mary is the surest route to Christ, as attested by countless saints. May your path to Christ be blessed as you travel under the mantle of Our Lady.

THE EDITOR



PART ONE

Preparing for
Marian Devotion

I

MARY IN GOD'S PLAN

The original cell of all redeemed mankind is Mary, in whom first took place the purification and sanctification through Christ and impregnation by the Holy Spirit. Before the Son of Man was born of the Virgin, the Son of God conceived of this very virgin as one full of grace, and He created the Church in and with her.

ST. TERESA BENEDICTA OF THE CROSS



ary's place is at the center of God's plan. Christ's story is hers; she is mother to God's people. As we enter more deeply into the mystery of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, we find Mary walking before us. She is the one chosen from all eternity to bring God's Son into the world, and she is the perfect believer who teaches us to love her Son.

Mary in the Old Testament

When God established the human race, He created a man and a woman, Adam