

The Secret  
*of* the Rosary



# The Secret *of* the Rosary

By  
Saint Louis Mary De Montfort

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TAN Books  
Charlotte, North Carolina

Nihil Obstat: Gulielmus F. Hughes, S.T.L.  
Censor Librorum

Imprimatur: Thomas Edmundus Molloy, S.T.D.  
Archiepiscopus-Episcopus  
Brooklyniensis

Brooklyni die XVI Julii 1954

Retypeset and republished in 2016 by TAN Books.

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ISBN: 978-1-61890-923-7

Printed and bound in the United States of America

TAN Books  
Charlotte, North Carolina  
[www.TANBooks.com](http://www.TANBooks.com)  
2016

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## Preface

**B**IOGRAPHERS have already told us much about St. Louis De Montfort and the Rosary; now, with this first English edition of *THE SECRET OF THE ROSARY*, we can listen to Montfort speaking for himself. Drawing upon his own experience as well as upon the experience of others,<sup>1</sup> he endeavors to bring home to the reader, “in a simple and straightforward manner,” as he himself tells us, the authentic message of the Rosary—namely, that it is a veritable school of Christian life. He sees it as including essentially the meditation of the mysteries of the life, death,

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1 See “Tenth Rose” for some of his sources.

and glory of Jesus and Mary, with a view not only to honoring but especially imitating their virtues as held up to our consideration in each mystery.

For our Saint, the Rosary was not simply a method of prayer: It was his most effective tool and weapon in his apostolic work. Fittingly has the Church called him an “Extraordinary preacher of the Rosary.” He preached it in season and out of season, established it in every parish where he gave a mission,<sup>2</sup> and judged the fruits of the mission by the subsequent perseverance in its recitation. There was no limit to the power of the Rosary, and to it he attributed much of his success with sinners. “Let me but place my rosary around a sinner’s neck,” he was wont to say, “and he will not escape me.”

A Dominican Tertiary himself, De Montfort represents the best in the Dominican Rosary tradition. Speaking of our Saint’s contribution to the Rosary, Father R. Poupon, well-known Dominican

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<sup>2</sup> It is estimated that he enrolled over 100,000 persons in the Rosary Confraternity. S. M. M. Le Crom, “St. L-M. de Montfort,” Ch. XV, 311.

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writer, says, “Montfort’s genius prolongs in one straight line that of Blessed Alan de la Roche and of St. Dominic. He completes them by bringing forth a personal grace and interpretation.” Commenting on De Montfort’s book, Father Willam says, “It goes far beyond mere research. We might say that it contains everything that can be said about the rosary, about its content and form, its real worth, about the instruction necessary for its appreciation and use.”<sup>3</sup>

THE SECRET OF THE ROSARY was written almost two and a half centuries ago, it is true, but it has lost none of its freshness and timeliness. Indeed, today, in the light of the specific requests of Our Lady of Fatima, it will be doubly welcomed by all true clients of Our Lady. We feel confident that it will bring many souls to a better understanding of the Rosary not only as a prayer but especially as a way of spiritual life.

THE EDITORS

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<sup>3</sup> F. M. Willam, *The Rosary: Its History and Meaning*, Benziger Bros., 1952, p. 115.





# Dedication

## To Priests: A White Rose

**D**EAR MINISTERS of the Most High, you, my fellow priests who preach the truth of God and who teach the gospel to all nations, let me give you this little book as a white rose that I would like you to keep. The truths contained in it are set forth in a very simple and straightforward manner, as you will see. Please keep them in your heart so that you yourselves may make a practice of the Holy Rosary and taste its fruit; and please have them always on your lips too, so that you will always preach

the Rosary and thus convert others by teaching them the excellence of this holy devotion.

I beg of you to beware of thinking of the Rosary as something of little importance—as do ignorant people and even several great but proud scholars. Far from being insignificant, the Rosary is a priceless treasure inspired by God.

Almighty God has given it to you because He wants you to use it as a means to convert the most hardened sinners and the most obstinate heretics. He has attached to it grace in this life and glory in the next. The Saints have said it faithfully, and the Popes have endorsed it.

When the Holy Spirit has revealed this secret to a priest and director of souls, how blessed is that priest! For the vast majority of people fail to know this secret or else only know it superficially. If such a priest really understands this secret, he will say the Rosary every day and will encourage others to say it. God and His Blessed Mother will pour abundant grace into his soul, so that he may become God's instrument for His glory; and his word, though simple, will

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do more good in one month than that of other preachers in several years.

Therefore, my dear brethren and fellow priests, it will not be enough for us to preach this devotion to others; we must practice it ourselves. Even if we firmly believed in the importance of the Holy Rosary but never said it ourselves, people could hardly be expected to act upon our advice, for no one can give what he does not have: “Jesus began to do and to teach.” (Acts 1:1). We ought to pattern ourselves on Our Blessed Lord, who began by practicing what He preached. We ought to emulate Saint Paul, who knew and preached nothing but Jesus Crucified. This is really and truly what you will be doing if you preach the Holy Rosary. It is not just a conglomeration of Our Fathers and Hail Marys, but on the contrary, it is a divine summary of the mysteries of the life, Passion, death, and glory of Jesus and Mary.

I could tell you at great length of the grace God gave me to know by experience the effectiveness of the preaching of the Holy Rosary and of how I have seen, with my own eyes, the most