

The Secret of the Rosary

A Book Review by John P. Stratford

The amateurs of meditations and Marian prayers would do well to learn to appreciate the new edition of a classical title of Saint Louis Mary Grignon de Montfort, edited by "Traditions Monastiques". This compendium is as instructive as it is edifying: in a few words, it's a treatise of the methods of reciting the Rosary, and a "rosary" of authoritative anecdotes that will edify you and deepen your appreciation for this so popular devotion.

It is not by coincidence that so many men and women saints have utilized this means of sanctification. Like a ladder of Jacob, it brings us, step by step, mystery by mystery, towards a greater knowledge and love of Jesus and Mary through the course of their pilgrimage from earth to heaven. Therefore, by definition, it is a means of contemplation. This narrative is so savory that it delights us a little each day – by the way – it is divided into "Roses" – of mini chapters – of which you may cheerfully scent the sweetness.

For those whose soul contemplates visual images while praying and meditating, the work contains beautiful polychrome illustrations (twenty in all) in an antiquated style, radiating colors which remind one of the stained-glass windows of some churches, in their qualities of contrast and brilliance. These illuminations were inspired from an ancient psalter from Ingeburge of the 12th century, by the monks of the ancient "Abbey of Our Lady of Fidelity" (Jouques). They breathe of a freshness which captivates us and transports us into the mystery being meditated.

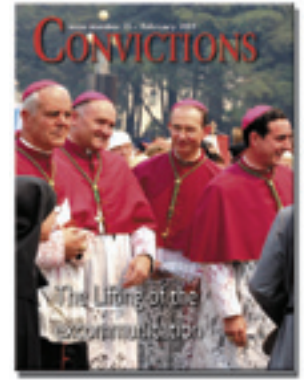
I cite for you here a brief extract of the Twenty-fifth Rose so you can have a taste of this book, which, I think, must be taken "to the letter" in order to savor its spirit. "Never will anyone really be able to understand the marvelous riches of sanctification which are contained in the prayers

and mysteries of the Holy Rosary. This meditation on the mysteries of the life and death of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the source of the most wonderful fruits for those who use it...

The meditation on the mysteries and the prayers of the Rosary is the easiest of all prayers, because the diversity of the virtues of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the different stages of His life which we study refresh and fortify our mind in a wonderful way and help us to avoid distractions. For learned people, these mysteries are the source of the most profound doctrine, but simple people find in them a means of instruction well within their reach" (pp 100-101).

After having read this book, you will have a new perspective of what the Rosary is, and if you are not familiar with it yet, this book will be a good starting point for approaching the subject.

In conclusion, I end with a reflection which is not in the text, but which is completely within the context, the extract of an interview held in 1957 between Father Fuentes and Sister Lucy, a seer of Fatima (1917) who became a religious. "...Father, the Holy Virgin, in these latter times in which we are living, has given a new effectiveness to the usage of the Rosary. Its usage proves to be so effective that there is no problem, whatsoever the difficulty, be it in temporal affairs or above all of a spiritual nature, that affects us personally, our families, the world or religious communities, as well as the lives of the people and the nations, which cannot be resolved through the use of the Rosary; there is no problem, I tell you, whatever it may be, which cannot be resolved through the prayer of the Holy Rosary. With the Holy Rosary, we are sanctified, and we are saved. With the Holy Rosary, we console Our Lord and we obtain the salvation of a great number of souls..."



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THE SECRET OF THE ROSARY
ST LOUIS DE MONTFORT \$1.00