

Saint Louis Grignion de Montfort

1673 - 1716

PURGATORY

Saint Louis Grignion de Montfort, in his famous “Treatise on the True Devotion to Mary”, dealt with the theme of Purgatory in regard to the intercession of the Virgin: “Others perhaps would say: ‘If I surrender to the most Holy Virgin all the value of my actions so that she may apply it to whom she wills, perhaps I will have to suffer for a long time in Purgatory.’ This objection, that comes from the love of oneself and from the ignorance in regard to the generosity of God and of His Holy Mother, is self-destructive. Is it ever possible, indeed, that a fervent and generous soul, more attentive to the interests of God than to his own; who gives to God all that he has, without holding back, to the point of not being able to give Him anything more, *non plus ultra*; who desires only the glory and the reign of Jesus Christ by means of His Holy Mother and he sacrifices himself completely to attain it; is it ever possible, I say, that such a noble and generous person would be more punished in the other world for having been, down here, more generous and selfless than others? On the contrary. With this person – we shall see it further on –, Our Lord and His Mother will be very generous in this world and in the other one, in the order of nature, grace and glory.”

And again, the Saint writes with regard to the seventh motive for which it is worthwhile to entrust and give ourselves entirely to the Virgin Mary: “Also the great goods which will come to our neighbor may persuade us to embrace this form of devotion. With it, indeed, the charity towards our neighbor is practiced in an outstanding manner, since we offer him, through the hands of Mary, all that we hold most dear that is the satisfactory and impetratory (entreat) value of all our good works, not excluding the smallest good thought and the smallest light suffering. It is accepted that all the reparations that are acquired and will be acquired until death, may be utilized according to the will of the Holy Virgin, either for the conversion of sinners or for the liberation of the souls of Purgatory. Is not this to love perfectly our neighbor? Is not this to be among the number of the true disciples of Jesus Christ, who are recognized by their charity? Is not this the way to convert sinners, without the danger of vanity, and to liberate the souls of Purgatory accomplishing nothing else than the duty of our own state?”

“To understand all the superiority of this motive we would need to understand the great value of the conversion of a sinner or the liberation of a soul of



Purgatory. It is an infinite good – that surpasses the creation of heaven and earth – since it confers to a soul the possession of God. Even if over an entire lifetime, only one soul would be liberated from Purgatory through such a devotion or a single sinner would be converted, would this not be enough to move every truly charitable person to embrace it? Moreover we must note that our good works, passing through the hands of Mary, receive an increase of purity and thus of merit and satisfactory and impetratory (entreat) value.”

