

Conference 2: Knowledge of Self

I. Introduction

- a. We must sit at the feet of this Wisdom through the intercession of Our Lady Seat of Wisdom
- b. Wisdom: Gift of the Holy Spirit that allows us to see things from God's point of view.
- c. Christ reveals Himself and in doing so the Father and the Spirit (hence God); Mary ponders this and finds Herself and we should imitate this
- d. The One Necessary Thing: Receptivity towards the gift of God
 - i. Three fold path:
 1. Prayer (The Secret of the Rosary)
 2. Becoming a friend of the Cross (Friends of the Cross)
 3. Charity (Secret of Mary-The Care and Growth of the Tree of Life)
- e. Knowing yourself and becoming as Matthew Kelly would say, "the Best Version of Yourself" is holiness; living out your Baptismal vows.

II. Theological Basis for "The One Necessary Thing"

- a. Mary's Magnificat (Lk. 1: 49) shows One Necessary Thing
- b. This is why we can't separate beauty from God and when we do, we become like the beast, stuck in the 6th day but made for the 7th; thus view ourselves as beast, ugly, and unfulfilled! ¹
 - i. **Our helpmate must first be God and then we see things in their proper perspective and true beauty.**
 1. **We are called to be receptive to love; to God, but this not a passive receptivity that leads to domination. It is an active receptivity to receive God's love and bear the fruit of the love inside of her and ultimately to the world!**
- c. God makes us beautiful through gift of His Son-this allows us to participate in the family of God (2Pet. 1:3-4).
- d. **Hence, theologically speaking, we are most beautiful (holy) when we live out our Baptismal vows, when we live as children of our heavenly father, when we keep God as our helpmate and are receptive towards His love. In this we find completion and can flourish!**
- e. St. Louis-Marie De Monfort picks up on the One Necessary thing in his writings:
 - i. Three fold path:
 1. Prayer (The Secret of the Rosary)
 2. Becoming a friend of the Cross (Friends of the Cross)
 3. Charity (Secret of Mary-The Care and Growth of the Tree of Life)

¹ See JP II's footnote in *Theology of the Body* audiences 14, 15, and 21 accessed at: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/JP2TBIND.HTM>.

III. Prayer and the Secret of the Rosary

- a. Prayer:
 - i. It keeps us connected to Christ
 - ii. Imitation of Jesus and through imitation of Jesus we find inspiration and enthusiasm
 - iii. Imitation of Mary and obedience to her which brings us to God
 1. She also leaves us with the command to pray, to listen to the Lord and then, “Do whatever he tells you” (Jn. 2:5)
- b. Rosary Embraces all types of Prayer of these is “The Secret of the Rosary” and what St. Louis Marie de Monfort takes up
- c. **Secret of the Rosary**
 - i. Rosary is powerful. Will do more good in one month than several years of preaching (SR#1)
 - ii. The Rosary are like three little wreaths of flowers and should recite the Rosary everyday for two reasons:
 1. To honour the three crowns of Jesus and Mary
 - a. Jesus' crown of grace at the time of his Incarnation
 - b. His crown of thorns during his passion
 - c. His crown of glory in heaven
 - d. The three-fold crown which the Blessed Trinity gave Mary in heaven.
 2. So that we ourselves may receive three crowns from Jesus and Mary
 - a. A crown of merit during our lifetime
 - b. A crown of peace at our death
 - c. A crown of glory in heaven.
 - iii. The book is set up into Decades and each decade is labeled for some importance:
 1. 1st decade: The surpassing merit of the Rosary as seen its origin and name
 2. 2nd decade: The surpassing merit of the Rosary as seen in the prayers which compose-Commentary on Apostles Creed, Our Father, and Hail Mary (Angelic Salutation)-See SR#44 for comments on Hail Mary
 3. 3rd decade: The surpassing merit of the Holy Rosary as a meditation on the life and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ (Note SR#65 and 81/22nd and 27th Rose)
 4. 4th decade: The surpassing merit of the holy Rosary as seen in the wonders God has worked through it (Great stories about miracles happening through the Rosary)
 5. 5th decade: How to say the Rosary worthily(SR#131-132)!
 - iv. This is why he encourages joining the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary and why you can actually get a indulgence for praying the Rosary in a group
 1. **A Plenary Indulgence...** may be gained (under the usual conditions) when the Rosary is prayed in Church, in a family group or in a religious community. Also:
 - a. **Five (5) decades** of the Rosary must be prayed continuously.

- b. The prayers of the Rosary must be prayed vocally and one must meditate upon the Mysteries of the Rosary.
 - c. If the recitation of the Rosary is public, the Mysteries of the Rosary must be announced.
2. **A Partial Indulgence...** One may gain a partial indulgence for the Rosary's recitation in whole or in part in other circumstances.

IV. The Cross (Friends of the Cross)

- a. If Jesus tells us, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and come follow me" (Lk. 9:23); we must become friends of the Cross
 - i. A Friend of the Cross is one chosen by God
 - ii. A Friend of the Cross is an all-powerful king, a champion who triumphs over the devil, the world and the flesh in their three-fold concupiscence.
 - iii. A Friend of the Cross is one who is holy and set apart from the things that are visible, for his heart is raised above all that is transient and perishable, and his homeland is in heaven.
 - iv. A Friend of the Cross is a glorious trophy gained by the crucified Christ on Calvary, in union with his holy Mother.
 - v. In short, a perfect Friend of the Cross is a true Christ- bearer, or rather another Christ." (Friends of the Cross#3-4).
- b. **Christian holiness consists in this:**
 - i. Resolving to become a saint: "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine;"
 - ii. Self-denial: "Let him renounce himself;"
 - iii. Suffering: "Let him take up his cross;"
 - 1. Freud's Pleasure Principle mocks Christian love in 2 Ways
 - a. It is a mockery of the Cross
 - b. It is a mockery of the meaning of life
 - iv. Acting: "Let him follow me." (FC#13)

V. Follow the Lord through Charity (Secret of Mary)

- a. "It is only a sincere giving of one's self that one finds one's self" (Gaudium et Spes#24)
- b. See Secret of Mary #37-give our poor gift as peasants to our queen so she can beautify them and present them to the king

VI. Conclusion

- a. Mary helps us to find ourselves and our identity by pointing us to Christ.
- b. St. Louis Marie De Monfort shows us that there is one essential thing to find ourselves: being receptive towards the Gift of God and there are three essential venues to do this: prayer, to become a friend of the cross, and charity
- c. So let us embrace these and become the person God has made us to be and embrace the joy we were made for.