

Week Four/Day One: *And the Word was made flesh*

1. **Place yourself in God's presence.**
2. **Ask for the grace that you seek in this meditation:** *knowledge of Jesus Christ so as to love Him more deeply and serve Him with greater fidelity.*
3. **Introduction:**

“Christ the new Adam, in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love, *fully reveals man to himself* and brings to light his most high calling”
(*Gaudium et Spes*, 22).

As Fr. Gillespie points out in his introduction to this final week, the whole purpose of this total consecration to Mary is centered in Jesus. This is how St. Louis de Montfort intended it. Long before the Second Vatican Council reminded us that in Christ we discover the mystery of our own humanity, Montfort wrote that Jesus is Incarnate Wisdom. Additionally, the reason we have been examining ourselves so much and asking for the grace of self-knowledge is so that we may come to recognize our need for Christ.

We need Christ. In Him alone we find salvation. He is the bedrock of our salvation. *No other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ* (1 Cor 3:11). This is what makes St. Louis de Montfort's Marian spirituality, authentic. The saint writes, “Jesus, our Savior, true God and true man must be the ultimate end of all our other devotions; otherwise they would be false and misleading” (*True Devotion*, 61).

Thus, St. Louis de Montfort's thinking is this: We need Jesus Christ. Christ came to us through Mary. Ergo, as He came to us, we must return to Him: through Mary. As Christ is the sole mediator between God and men, so Our Blessed Mother is the mediator *par excellence* between us and Christ. We belong to Mary to belong to Christ. It is simply the mystery of Cana playing itself out in our lives. But in order to follow Mary's advice at Cana—*Do whatever He tells you*—we must grow in our knowledge of Christ; for in knowing Him better we will love Him more deeply and serve Him with greater fidelity.

4. Today's Meditation:

Let us begin where the mystery of Jesus Christ begins: the *Incarnation*.

“By his Incarnation,” writes St. John Paul II, “he, the son of God, *in a certain way united himself with each man*. He worked with human hands, he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will, and with a human heart he loved. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like to us in all things except sin, he, the Redeemer of man” (*Redemptor Hominis*, 8).

Much of this statement, St. John Paul II takes from the Second Vatican Council, but we could also say that in a certain sense he is indebted to St. Louis de Montfort as well.

Montfort's "true devotion" to Mary is anchored in the sacrosanct mystery of Christ's Incarnation. And as we should know already, St. John Paul II was greatly influenced by Montfort's devotion.

About the centrality of this mystery St. Louis writes, "The Incarnation is the first mystery of Jesus Christ; it is the most hidden; and it is the most exalted and the least known.

It was in this mystery that Jesus, in the womb of Mary and with her co-operation, chose all the elect. For this reason the saints called her womb, the throne-room of God's mysteries.

It was in this mystery that Jesus anticipated all subsequent mysteries of his life by his willing acceptance of them. Consequently, this mystery is a summary of all his mysteries since it contains the intention and the grace of them all.

Lastly, this mystery is the seat of the mercy, the liberality, and the glory of God" (*True Devotion*, 248).

It was in this mystery that Jesus anticipated all subsequent mysteries of his life. In choosing to become man, with the full knowledge of God that He possessed as the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, the Word knew everything that He was surrendering Himself to. In choosing to become one of us, He chose His poor birth in Bethlehem, He chose the obedient life at Nazareth, He chose the suffering on the road to Jerusalem, He chose the cross on Calvary, He chose the tomb in the garden, He chose the resurrection on the third day.

If the mystery of the Incarnation is so central to the mystery of the life of Christ, then it should be central to the mystery of our life as well. In the Word's becoming man we find our answer to all of life's most important questions, especially that of our life's meaning. He who had Life in and of Himself does not take on a human life for any other purpose than to enlighten us, to show us the path of life.

But are we aware of this? Does the mystery of Christ and especially that of His Incarnation have such an impact on your life? Does it influence how you navigate life...how you make decisions...wherein you place your hope?

"For in [Christ] alone dwells the entire fullness of the divinity and the complete fullness of grace, virtue and perfection. In him alone we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing; he is the only teacher from whom we must learn; the only Lord on whom we should depend; the only Head to whom we should be united and the only model that we should imitate. He is the only Physician that can heal us; the only Shepherd that can feed us; the only Way that can lead us; the only Truth that we can believe; the only Life that can animate us. He alone is everything to us and he alone can satisfy all our desires" (*True Devotion*, 61).

Further questions to guide your meditation (choose either one):

And the Word became flesh. Go back and read St. John's prologue (Jn 1:1-18). Have you "beheld His glory"? Have there been moments in the past when Christ tried to come into your life and you "received Him not"? Can you honestly say that He is the "true light" that enlightens your life, or are you grasping at false lights?

You will conceive and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. Go back and read through St. Luke's account of the Incarnation (Lk 1:26-38), and then *contemplate* the mystery. Imagine you are watching and hearing this mystery unfold before your very eyes and ears. Listen to the angel's words. Share in Mary's awe. Bask in the power of the mystery. What fruit can you draw from this contemplation?

- Today's Prayer -

O Jesus living in Mary, come and live in your servant in the Spirit of your holiness, in the fullness of your gifts, in the perfection of your ways, in the truth of your virtues, in the communion of your mysteries. Subdue within me the power of flesh and demon by you Holy Spirit, for the glory of God the Father. Amen.