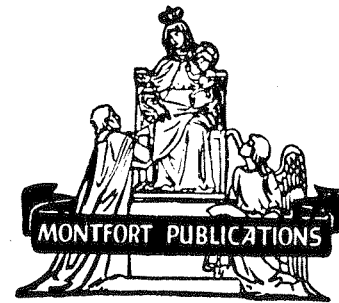


*Leading the Little Ones
to Mary*

by

SISTER MARY LELIA, S.S.N.D.

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PREFACE

This Marian program has but one purpose, to imbue the little ones with a genuine devotion to Mary. Therefore, it is not intended as a pious practice for May or October. It is rather a copying of Mary—a way of life. It is the De Montfort Method simplified for young minds.

There are sixteen series in all. If begun in the fall, the entire series can be covered in a school year. A day or two should elapse between talks to allow time for the children to assimilate the matter. During this time they are gently and joyously reminded of the little practices by slogans which are a tiny digest of something spiritually worthwhile—something the children can cherish in the memory through the years. The teacher's encouraging commendations are also a spur to greater effort as—I saw a little Mary doing something kind today. Our Lady will be looking for her Marios at Mass on Sunday. How many copied Mary over the weekend? etc.

It is not expected that the children retain all the story facts. The real object will be attained if they imbibe a holy and happy love for their holy Mother and can grasp, according to each one's capacity, the meaning of the consecration they make so frequently.

According to the principle, "no impression without its corresponding expression," the children must participate in these talks. This they can do by the comments they give. Thus the matter becomes their own. In this way, the teacher gets a fair estimate of the comprehension of her little listeners.

The program has been widely used in first, second, and third grades with gratifying results. Teachers have enthusiastically reported about the appreciation evinced by their eager little groups.

Mothers and teachers truly in love with Our Lady will be ingenious in including all visual and other aids available in the guidance of their little Marys and Marios to our Holy Mother.

The Author

LEADING THE LITTLE ONES TO MARY

By SISTER MARY LELIA, S.S.N.D.

CHAPTER I

MARY

First Talk

Once upon a time there was a certain little girl. God and His angels used to look down from heaven to see this dear little girl. They were so pleased with her. They could hardly take their eyes off her.

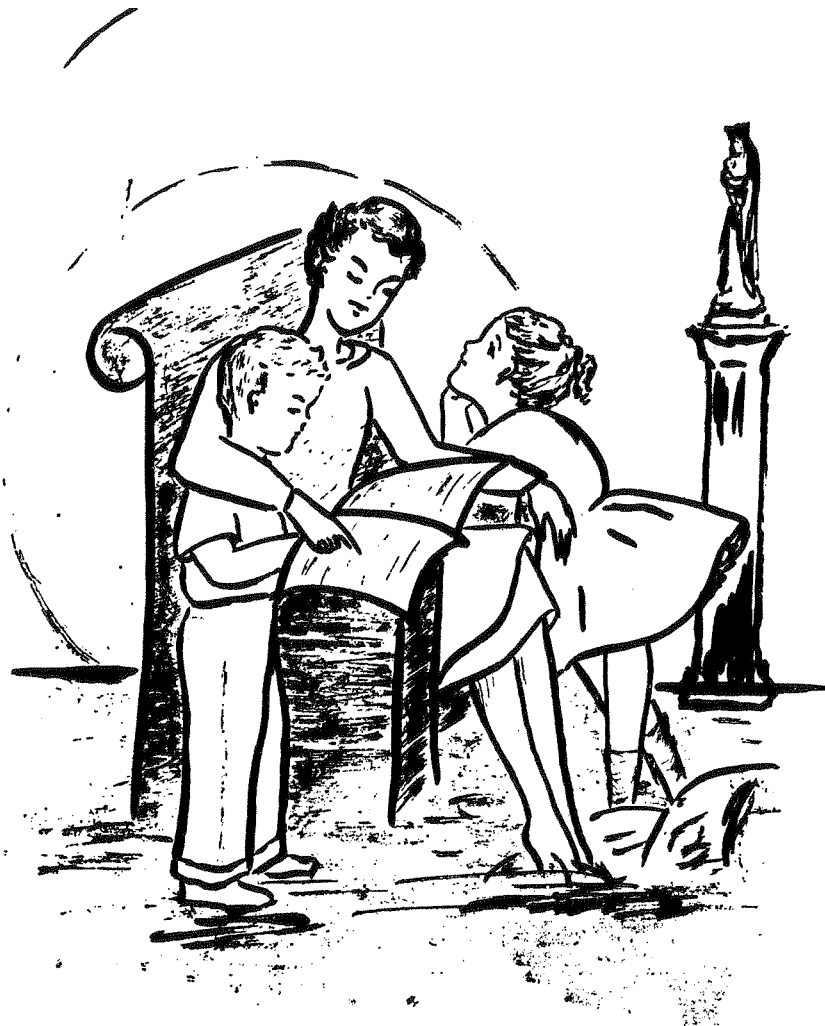
They loved to see her pray. And they liked the way she ran when her mother called. She helped at home, too. In school she always listened. She did not miss a thing. There were so many good things she did. (Let children supplement.) All this pleased God and His angels.

Now, can you guess who this little girl was? Yes, it was Mary. God loved her very much. All the angels loved her. And so do we. Don't we? Well, then, let us tell Mary that we, too, love her. (Have children fold their hands and each one whisper her little secret to Mary.)

(This first talk may be reviewed the next day before going on to the second point.)

Second Talk

Who was the little girl we have been talking about? Why did God and all His angels keep looking down at her? (Get children's comments. Ask: "Where is Mary now?") Yes, in heaven. And now she is looking down, too, along with God and the angels. Do



LITTLE MARY AND LITTLE MARIO

you want to know why? Well, they are looking for little girls who act just like Mary. And when Our Lady sees a little girl acting that way, she has a special name for her. She calls her "little Mary." Isn't that lovely?

(Where there are boys in the classes, the teacher can insert.) . . . And when Our Lady sees a little girl or a little boy acting that way she has a lovely name for each of them. She calls the girl little Mary. And she calls her boy Mario, my knight, my page, lieutenant, scout, etc. (as the teacher may see fit).

Our Lady wants many, many little Marys. She can't have enough. The more she can find the better. Do you think she finds many? Oh, yes, I know some right here in this room. But couldn't we have more? Wouldn't it be lovely if all our angels could say, "This room is filled with little Marys"?

How many want to be little Marys? Very well, all we have to do is to copy Mary.

Play like Mary
Pray like Mary
Help like Mary
Obey like Mary
Share like Mary

But we must tell her about it. Let us fold our hands and each little girl talk to Our Lady. Be sure to ask her to help you to keep your promise.

(Very slowly say the following aloud for the children. They will follow in thought.) Dear Holy Mary, I know you are looking for little Marys. I do want to be a little Mary. I promise you that I will

act like you
pray like you
play like you
help like you
obey like you
share like you

Please help me to keep my promise.

(Review the foregoing by questions for the length of time it seems necessary without boring the children.)

Third Talk

We told Holy Mary that we want to be little Marys. What does that mean? (Let children talk.)

To be little Marys we must do something else. There is something else that Mary wants. She wants each little girl to belong to her. And besides that, she wants everything we do—everything. She wants all the good things we do

at home
at school
in church
on the playground

We must give her everything. Then we shall really belong to her.

If we do all this, our angels will say, “Now all these little Marys really belong to God’s Mother. When Communion Day comes she will be so glad to

give them her little Jesus. And dear Jesus will be glad to come to them because they are little Marys.”

So now we shall tell Our Lady another nice surprise. Let us fold our hands and mean just what we say.

Consecration—Holy Mary I want to belong to you. I give you my whole self and all the good things I do,

at home
at school
in church
on the playground

My Mother, I am all yours, and all I do belongs to you. (Review and get pupils’ comments, using as many days as you see fit.)

Fourth Talk

Now we are little Marys. We belong to Mary. From now on, no matter what good things we do, Mary will take them. She will touch them up and make them look nicer. Then she will give them to our dear Lord. (Renew the consecration.)

(To make this series of talks bear fruit, the children will need little reminders now and then. Gentle remarks such as these will help:)

I saw a little Mary (or Mario) do something very kind today.

Our Lady will be looking for her little Marys in church on Sunday.

How many little Marys copied Our Lady over the week-end?

I see some little Marys doing very neat work in their books, etc.

Suggested Reading

"Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin" by St. Louis De Montfort: Montfort Publications, Bay Shore, N.Y. 11706.

"True Devotion to Mary" (adapted) by Eddie Doherty: Montfort Publications, Bay Shore, N.Y. 11706.

"Queen of All Hearts" (magazine): Montfort Fathers, Bay Shore, N.Y. 11706.

CHAPTER II

MARY AT HOME

First Talk

(Have children repeat their consecration to Mary. Then show a picture of Mary with St. Anne.)

This is holy Mary with St. Anne. St. Joachim was Mary's father. Anne and Joachim loved their dear child more than anyone can tell. When Mary went to fetch a jar of water or do some other errand they always missed her. But as soon as Anne heard Mary coming in she would say, "Here comes our darling."

You see Mary helped a lot to make the home a happy place. She made her mother and father happy. And I am sure she made her angel happy, too.

Now don't you think Our Lady wants her little Marys to copy her? (Children's comments.) How fine it would be if each mother could say, "My, how I miss my little girl when she is not at home. I am glad when week-ends come and I can have her with me." (More comments.)



MARY AT HOME

Well, let us fold our hands and tell Our Lady that we will try to be like her. (Renew consecration.)

Second Talk

How did St. Anne feel when Mary was not at home? What did she say when she heard Mary coming in? What kind of home did Mary help to make? I wonder what it was that she did? (Children's comments.)

Yes, Mary did all those nice things. She came right away when her mother called her. She put away her clothes and toys, etc. She jumped out of bed when she was called. And she was not fussy about eating what was good for her. Her mother did not have to ask her to set the table. Mary offered to do it. And here is something lovely: Mary always did all these things with a sweet smile. Why did Mary do all this? (Children's comments.) Yes, to please God. St. Anne must have been very happy about all that. But what about Mary's angel? (Children's comments.)

Let us pick out all the nice things Mary did and each one ask herself, "How many of these things am I doing?" See if we can guess the best thing of all. This may help you. It tells how Mary did things. (If children cannot guess, tell them.) Mary did all with a smile. We want to remember this. So we shall write it on the blackboard. (Have the children whisper the slogan many times.) Do you think we can act like that? (Renew consecration.)

Third Talk

Tell me some of the things Mary did at home. Were they just the same things that any child does? Who can tell me the slogan?

Mary had neighbors, too. Some of the children were her friends. How do you think she treated her little friends? (Children's comments.)

Some of Mary's little neighbors were not always good. They did not obey their mothers. Some told lies and called names. And some made fun of people. These children copied from naughty boys and girls.

The mothers told their children to see how Mary acted. And do you know, many of these boys and girls really began to copy holy Mary, because she always did the better thing. They all loved her for that.

I wonder if we little Marys always do the better thing? It would be sad if we copied bad children. That would be pleasing the bad angel. We don't ever want to do that. We want to please Our Lady. And how can we do that? (Children's comment.)

So we shall write another thing about Mary. What shall it be? Slogan: *Mary always did the better thing.* (Have children take turns reading it.) (Renew consecration.)

Suggested Reading

"St. Anne, Cult and Shrines" by Myles V. Ronan: P. J. Kenedy, New York.

"Simple Life of Our Lady" by A Sister of Notre Dame: B. Herder Co., St. Louis, Mo.

"The Secret of Mary Explained to Children" Montfort Publications, Bay Shore, N.Y. 11706