

JOURNEY TO OUR FATHER

FULFILLING HIS DIVINE WILL ON THE PATH TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

Discerning and Living the Authentic Faith and Moral Teachings of the Catholic Church in Our Modern World

GROWING SPIRITUALLY IN THE CLIMATE OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

By James P. Wasel

Several years ago there was a television program about the creation and development of our planet earth and the universe. They were talking about billions and trillions of years. From this program, we came to realize how extremely short our life times are compared to the age of the universe, and even more, the immensity of eternity which is time without end. After the very small time of living our earthly lives, we are to spend eternity in the spiritual world. How we spend this short time in our mortal bodies, and what our final relationship is with God, will determine where and how we will spend our eternal spiritual lives.

Just as we grow and develop physically and mentally in the process of living our mortal lives, we must also grow in a similar way in our relationship with God. Our lives here on earth can be described as a constant journey to the home of our Father, toward what we hope is our eventual salvation and ultimate spiritual living in the presence of God and His infinite love for us. Since the length of our mortal lives is known only to God, we all need to take time each day to partake in our own spiritual journey with the hope of being prepared to meet and dwell with our loving God for all eternity.

Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, tells us the best and most effective way to grow in holiness, as we each partake in our own spiritual journey to our Father in heaven. He states that: **"our essential commitment in life is to grow spiritually in the climate of the Holy Eucharist."** He goes on to explain: **"Our communal worship at Mass, must go together with our personal worship of Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration, in order that our love may be complete,"** --- And this can be done by not only receiving Jesus Christ worthily in Holy Communion, but also by praying and adoring, and developing a personal and intimate relationship with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

About a year before Christ died for us on the cross, He introduced us to the forthcoming gift of His Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist in the Gospel of St. John Chapter 6, verse 51:

"I myself am the living bread come down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread he shall live forever; the bread I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world." (Jn 6:51) When the Jews argued among themselves, asking, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (Jn 6:52) Jesus then pointed out to them that His words are to be taken

literally. "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you; (Jn 6:53) he who eats my Flesh and drinks my Blood has life eternal, and I will raise him up on the last day. (Jn 6:54) For my Flesh is food indeed, and my Blood is drink indeed. (Jn 6:55) He who eats my Flesh and drinks my Blood abides in me, and I in him. (Jn 6:56) As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on me will live because of me. (Jn 6:57) This is the Bread which came down from Heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and died nonetheless; he who eats this Bread shall live forever." (Jn 6:58)

In these words prefaced with "Truly, truly," Jesus stresses the repetition of the ideas of flesh and blood, of eating and drinking. St. John states that many of the people declared that this doctrine was too hard to believe. "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" (Jn 6:60) He also states that "many of His disciples drew back and no longer went about with Him." (Jn 6:66) But Jesus did not call them back to make a correction as if they had misunderstood Him. He let them go. He was ready to allow even the Apostles to depart if they refused to believe in Him and His word, for He asked them, "Do you also wish to go away?" (Jn 6:67) Simon Peter therefore answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed, and have come to know, that You are the Holy One of God." (Jn 6:68-69)

Jesus found a means to make us all spiritually rich and to remain with us to the end of the world. By the institution of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, He gave us Himself in the Holy Eucharist. At the Last Supper, on the night He was handed over, Our Lord instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice of His Body and Blood, to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages until He should come again.

We are all familiar with receiving the real Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist during Mass. Holy Communion is a Sacrament instituted by Christ to give us grace. It is meant to bring to the soul the graces of spiritual nourishment. It preserves the spiritual life of our soul and protects us from the spiritual disease of mortal sin. Through our partaking of the Eucharist in a worthy manner, that is without a mortal sin on our soul, we become one in Christ in union with the whole church, and the soul is filled

with Sanctifying grace which helps make our souls more holy and pleasing to God.

As Pope John Paul II said, in order to grow spiritually in the climate of the Eucharist, we must also partake in personal worship of Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration by praying and adoring, and developing a personal and intimate relationship with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. As we spend more and more time with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration, to make Jesus more and more the center of our life, we will grow in holiness, develop a deeper love for Jesus, and be able to feel His love for us. Jesus is like a good friend that we can depend upon to help us with what ever problem that may come our way. He will never let us down and is always concerned for our welfare because He loves us so much. As we spend more and more time before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, He will give us the strength and hope that we all need on a day-to-day basis in our lives.

In the Blessed Sacrament Jesus is present with His true human body, in which dwells the fullness of Divinity. His Sacred Humanity is now radiant with heavenly glory and free from all suffering. Yes, Jesus is here present with the same body which He assumed from Mary, the Immaculate Virgin, with the same body in which He endured heat and cold, hunger and thirst, hardships and fatigue, and which He finally sacrificed amidst nameless woe upon the Cross.

Behold, here are the same loving **eyes** that looked upon men with mercy and compassion! Now their tender, fatherly gaze rests upon you as you kneel before the Blessed Sacrament. Here are those **lips** which once spoke such sweet, entrancing words. Now they speak to your heart, but their soft, mysterious whisper is heard only by the ears of your soul.

Here are the same **hands** that once blessed the sick, the afflicted, the repentant sinners and the little children, the blessed hands which wrought so much good. Now He extends them to you, to draw you to His loving Heart, to bless you and to enrich you with His graces.

Here are the sacred **feet** that wearied and fatigued themselves in search of souls; the feet, that, bruised and bleeding, climbed Calvary's heights, and were pierced on the Cross for the salvation of men. From the Blessed Sacrament they invite you to follow in the footsteps of your Divine Savior and to keep far from the pathways of sin.

Here is present that **Sacred Heart** which beat for sinners in unspeakable love until It broke upon the Cross. In the Sacred Host this merciful and compassionate Heart still beats for you and for each human soul as warmly and tenderly as It once beat upon the Cross.

Here is present the **Precious Blood** which coursed through every member of the sacred Body of Jesus and which, in love, He shed to the last drop for the world's Redemption. Now It is your nourishment in Holy Communion, and It daily flows in a mystical manner upon the altar to wash away your sins and to adorn your soul with heavenly graces.

The presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is true, actual, and miraculous. He can be here and in Heaven and in a thousand places. To the outward senses, He willed to be but a little piece of bread, at the same time living in all the completeness and beauty of His sacred humanity. He makes Himself so small that a child's hand can hold Him, and yet even Heaven itself cannot contain Him. Only His love and His power could work such wonders.

In the Blessed Sacrament God is most generous, ready to hear and grant our petitions and to impart to us His superabundant graces. Here is God, the all-knowing and all-wise, who sees what is most profitable and necessary for us. Here is God, waiting to receive repentant sinners with kindness and love. Here is God, Eternal Love, who wills only what is best for us for time and eternity.

If you sincerely go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament on a regular basis and resolve to make a change in your life, to make Jesus more the center of your life, to move Him up on your priority list, to where He belongs, you can grow in a deeper love of Jesus, and to better feel His love for you, and to get the help, strength and hope from Him that we all need in our lives. With each hour we spend with Jesus before the Blessed Sacrament, He stretches out His hand and touches us with His healing power.

There is a wonderful quotation from the book "Christ's Appeal for Love", by Sister Josefa Menendez, where Jesus says to all of us: "If you seek happiness you will find it in me. If you desire peace, in Me alone is peace to be found. I am mercy and love. How often I have told you that my one longing is for souls to bring Me their miseries! Come ... and let love consume you. The more miseries I find in you, the more love you will find in Me. I require nothing of you beyond what is already yours. Give me an empty heart and I will fill it. Give it to me with all it's miseries and I will consume them. If you possess nothing but miseries and weaknesses these I desire. I beg you to give them to Me. Give them to Me, yes, give all to me and keep nothing, but trust My Heart: I forgive you, I love you, I will sanctify you Myself."

Pope John Paul II says: "The best the surest and the most effective way of establishing everlasting peace on the face of the earth is through the great power of Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament." Eucharistic Adoration, particularly Perpetual Adoration, is the key to the unlocking of God's Graces to come upon the earth and bring purity, peace, and holiness to all people. When we adore Him here on earth as He is adored in Heaven, when every parish in the world has Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration, He will claim His Kingdom and renew the face of the earth.

(Reverend Lawrence G. Lovasik, "The Basic Book of the Eucharist", Sophia Institute Press, Manchester, NH; Rev. Vincent Lucia and Msgr. Josefino Ramirez "Letters to a Brother Priest", Missionaries of the Blessed Sacrament, PO Box 1701, Plattsburgh, NY 12901)

Journey to Our Father

P O Box 24658,

Jacksonville, FL 32241