

**THE EUCHARIST, CENTRE
OF THE GREAT JUBILEE AND OF THE LIFE OF THE PRIEST
CONSECRATED TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY**

The Church is a great mystery, that of the Mystical Christ Jesus Himself, to our Mother Her Child. That mystery was expressed by St. Paul:

“To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27).

“Christ in you”, His Presence. We have just contemplated one aspect of His Presence, namely the Priesthood, and our Mother’s desire that it be renewed, so as to be lived to honour the One High Priest, Whose Priesthood we share. But this fundamental mystery is supremely realised in the Most Blessed Eucharist, and just as our Mother is *the little Handmaid of the Lord* (Lk. 1:38), so our Priesthood exists to serve the Eucharistic Presence of Jesus.

That Presence defines us, and we can hear the joy in our Mother’s words before this Mystery when She says, speaking of the transsubstantiation which occurs in the Mass:

“I am therefore also true Mother of the Most Blessed Eucharist. Not because I beget Him again to this mysterious reality upon the altar. That task is reserved only to you, My beloved sons!” (M. 330, 8th. August 1986)

The Mother with the Priestly Heart recognises so very well the mystery of Her own life reproduced in Her priest-sons, and so treasures the gift which they exercise, as She recognises its supreme privilege and the reason why it must be exercised in as perfect a manner as possible:

"It is, however, a task which assimilates you very much to My motherly task, because you too, during Holy Mass and through the words of consecration, *truly generate My Son.*

For Me, it was the cold manger in a poor and bare cave which received Him; for you, it is now the cold stone of an altar which welcomes Him. But you too, like Me, generate My Son. For this reason, you cannot be other than sons of a special, indeed most special, predilection on the part of Her Who is the Mother, truly the Mother of Her Son Jesus." *(ibid.)*

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When we speak of renewal in terms of the Blessed Eucharist, which the Immaculate Heart of our Mother seeks in this Jubilee Year, it means first and foremost a deep faith in this wonderful reality. Following the Council, there has been much effort made at the renewal of the liturgy, but what our Mother is seeking not simply the perfection of liturgical practice, but an interior renewal, a celebration of the Holy Mass which is both understanding of the mystery and deep in adoration, formed in our Mother's Heart. In other words, it is the fruit of much prayer.

Our Mother describes Her own prayer before Her Divine Son as the Model of adoration of Him in the Blessed Sacrament. She speaks of Her adoration of Him at the various stages of His life: beneath the ceil of His humanity, She adored His divinity:

"I adored Him when He was still enclosed in My virginal womb. I loved Him, I gave Him growth ... I adored Him after His birth, contemplating Him in the manger ... in the growing adolescent, when rejected and put aside, when condemned and despised ... crucified, beneath the Cross". *(M. 360, 21st. August 1987)*

For our Mother, it was so in the presence of Her living Son, but also, no doubt, in memory after He left the earth. But, She reminds us, it is that same Jesus, not a memory, even a liturgically-celebrated memory, Who enters our lives:

"Beloved sons, through a miracle of love which you will be able to understand only in Paradise, *Jesus has made you the gift of remaining always in your midst in the Eucharist. In the Tabernacle, beneath the veil of the consecrated Bread, the very same Jesus is kept Whom I, the first to do so, saw after the miracle of the Resurrection: the very same Jesus Who, in the blaze of His divinity, appeared to the eleven apostles, to many disciples, to the weeping Magdalene, to the holy women who had followed Him right to the Sepulchre. ...*

Beloved sons, today you must believe all the more in His Presence among you; you must spread, courageously and powerfully, your priestly invitation to everyone to come back to a strong and witnessed faith in the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist". *(M. 360, 21st. August 1987)*

Our Mother speaks many times about our involvement in the offering of Holy Mass. Many times, She emphasises that the Mass must be lived. In other words, the heart and spirit of the Mass is not something which lasts only during the liturgical celebration, but must be carried with us into life, and that the spirit of that life must, in turn, feed the moment of the celebration itself:

"Holy Mass must be celebrated well, and it must be lived by My Priests". *(M. 47, 20th. May)*

Then, most importantly: "The Sacrifice of the Holy Mass must be lived interiorly by you, in your life and at the moment of its celebration. It is above all at the altar that each of you comes to be like Jesus Crucified". *(M. 148, 11th. February 1978)*

Let us understand that our Mother is saying that the offering of Holy Mass is not simply a task which we perform, in however perfect a manner, but that it actually forms us interiorly if we try to enter into the heart of the mystery.

It is a moulding with a particular character: it speaks of an intimate participation of life with the One Who is both High Priest and Victim: *Sacerdos et Victima*. The Mystery of the Holy Mass in our hands is the one and eternal Sacrifice of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in which, with His wounds, eternally imprinted in His

Glorious Body, He pleads eternally for the salvation of God's children. That Sacrifice is renewed in every Mass:

"Jesus redeemed you for always on the cross, suffering and dying for you. His Sacrifice has an infinite value, beyond time. His Blood, His Wounds, His painful Agony, His atrocious Death on the Cross have a salvific value even for this generation of yours which, without Him, would be lost. This Sacrifice of His is mystically renewed in every Holy Mass which is celebrated". (M. 281, 1st. January 1984)

It is at the point of Sacrifice that the interior union of the priest with Jesus in the Eucharist takes place, in the way in which the whole of our life is brought to offering, with Jesus and in Jesus, at the altar. Speaking of the cross in our lives, our Mother describes it as:

"It is faithfulness in carrying out to perfection even the smallest of things, of doing everything with love (we remember our union with our little sister, St. Thérèse, here); in living out every moment of the day in fulfilment of the Divine Will. How precious this second step of suffering is, above all, for you, My beloved sons! In it, you become configured to Jesus crucified and this interior crucifixion occurs every day and in every moment of your priestly day: in the time of prayer, which is so necessary and which must be the centre of your priestly life; at the moment of the celebration of the holy Mass which is so precious, in which, with Jesus, you too become interiorly sacrificed for the life of the world ..." (M. 260, 5th. March 1983)

In what sense are we "interiorly conformed" to the sacrifice of Jesus crucified? This consideration leads one to think of the answer given by the Angel to the little children who asked him "What is a sacrifice?" "Make everything into a sacrifice", was the answer. In other words, suffering is not the essence of sacrifice, though it may be its occasion; it is the offering to the glory of God of whatever this moment, given by His Will, contains. The cross was the supreme offering was the Cross, because it was His obedience even to that point to His Father's Will. For us too, we are conformed to that reality as we offer each day the memorial of His Passion. But our conformity

to the inner heart of the Mass depends upon our living each moment of our life (not just during the celebration) in His spirit. Each moment an offering. Here we find our Mother's purpose for us:

"Cooperate with My action, the purpose of which is to transform you interiorly, in order to make you all Priests according to the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus". (M. 176, 14th. June 1979)

This can recall for us the lesson of the life of Saint Charbel Makhlof, whose priestly day was spent partly in thanksgiving for his Mass of the day, the rest in preparation for the Mass of the following day. In an exceptional, unique manner, he lived his Mass. His canonisation is a sign for our times, and we must know how to read that sign. Our Mother warns us against losing the sense of prayer which must animate our Mass, indeed every part of our lives:

"It is a lack of discipline to be wanting in interior docility to the will of God, a lack of discipline which is manifested by the flouting of those obligations which are proper to your state of life: the obligation to pray, to give good example to lead a holy and apostolic life. How many there are among the Priests, who allow themselves to become absorbed in excessive activity and no longer pray! They habitually neglect the Liturgy of the Hours, meditation and the recitation of the Holy Rosary. They limit their prayer to a hurried celebration of Holy Mass". (M. 169, 2nd. February 1979)

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Our Mother points to the spirit of the new age, which is to come with Her Triumph. That Triumph and therefore, and necessarily, the Year of the Great Jubilee, is directed to the glory of Our Lord Jesus Christ:

"The glorious Reign of Christ will coincide with the triumph of the Eucharistic Reign of Jesus because, in a purified and sanctified world, completely renewed by Love, Jesus will manifest Himself, above all, in the Mystery of His Eucharistic Presence. The

Eucharist will release all Its divine power, and will become the new sun, which will reflect its luminous rays into hearts and souls and then into the lives of individuals, families and peoples, forming one single sheepfold from them all, docile and meek, of which Jesus will be the only Shepherd". (M. 505, 21st. November 1993)

It is to this that the whole work of our Mother is leading: to lead Her children to the Kingdom of Her Son on earth. That Kingdom will exist in the Church as founded by Her Son, and in the way in which He has chosen to be among us: the Most Holy Eucharist. We know, of course, that that Presence is perceptible only to the eyes of faith (*Visus tactus gustus in te fallitur* - seeing, touching, tasting are in Thee deceived). Our normal means of knowing have no power to discern His Presence "*Sed auditu solo tuto creditur* - only trusty hearing (belief in the Word) safely is believed".

But our Mother seems to be suggesting something more here. "The Eucharist will release all Its divine power and will become the new sun which will reflect its luminous rays ...". Her words appear to suggest a new awareness (one can say no more) of the place of the Eucharistic Jesus in our lives. Our senses will still have no place in this awareness, but there is the impression of a new interior awareness, a spiritual sense, which will orientate our minds to the Presence of the Hidden Lord and direct our wills to His service.

"Let your prayer always be directed to Jesus in the Eucharist. Let it be a prayer of continuous adoration, reparation, praise and thanksgiving to Jesus in the Eucharist. Let love and adoration for Jesus present in the Eucharist come back to flower everywhere". (M. 387, 31st. August 1988)

How is "prayer always to be directed to Jesus in the Eucharist"? At first, it can seem rather forced and less spontaneous to be thinking of all these intentions. The answer, I think, is very simple. Our Heavenly Mother is always in adoration before the Eucharistic Jesus in every tabernacle on earth.

"Just as His glorious Body, being outside the limitations of time and space, allows Him to be here before you in the Tabernacle of this little mountain church, but at the same time allows Him to be present in all the Tabernacles scattered in every part of the world, so your Heavenly Mother, with Her glorious Body which allows Her to be here and everywhere, is truly beside every Tabernacle where Jesus is kept. My Immaculate Heart offers Him a living, throbbing, motherly Tabernacle of love, adoration, thanksgiving and unceasing reparation". (M. 330, 8th. August 1986)

We have heard Her request that we do everything with Her, and so it is that, by placing our prayer in Her Heart, it must be placed by Her in the Heart of Her Eucharistic Son in Her own act of perpetual adoration.

Here we are in the presence of the Saviour of the world, from Whom flows the world's entire hope. It is no surprise that the efforts of the demon have been directed in such great measure to the destruction of faith in the truth of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Most Blessed Eucharist and in the reality of His one and eternal Sacrifice in the Holy Mass.

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Our Mother is giving us the spirit of the new times, which is essentially a eucharistic spirit. The roots of the Movement in Fatima are themselves eucharistic: the apparitions there began on the Feast of Our Lady of the Eucharist, the Angel drew the children to adoration of the Eucharist, and taught them to pray in reparation to Jesus in the Eucharist, Francisco became a model for us all of adoration and of reparation. Now that the times of the Triumph foretold at Fatima are about to be realised, our Mother tells us that that Triumph is to be built around Jesus in the Eucharist. We are entering into times founded on the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as St. John Bosco's dream foretold.

“Then, My beloved ones and children consecrated to My Heart, you must today be *a powerful call* for the complete return of the whole Church militant to Jesus present in the Eucharist. Because it is only there that there is the fountain of living water, which will purify its aridity and will renew the desert to which it has been reduced; only there is the secret of Life, which will open up for it again a second Pentecost of grace and light; only there is to be found the fountain of its renewed holiness: *Jesus in the Eucharist!*

It is not your pastoral plans and your discussions, it is not the human means in which you place your trust and so much security, but it is only Jesus in the Eucharist Who will give the entire Church the strength for a complete renewal which will bring it to be poor, evangelical, chaste, stripped of all the supports in which it trusts, holy, beautiful, without stain and spot, in imitation of your Heavenly Mother”.
(M. 330, 8th. August 1986)

The Church is to be renewed in the Sacred Heart of the Eucharistic Jesus, prepared and placed there on the Immaculate Heart of our Heavenly Mother.

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If this is the spirit of the times to come, it also remains true that it has been prepared in the hearts of the priest-sons of Mary and of the children consecrated to Her throughout the world. Our Mother tells us that She “wants to make us into the new heart of the new Church”. (M. 547, 28th. June 1995).

That heart is there to live and beat now. It is to be lived especially by us priests, and this time of the Jubilee is a call to us from the Heart of Christ to come to Him to be renewed in our faith, our understanding and in the purity of our priesthood. It is, as we have seen, a renewal through our union with Jesus in the Eucharist, before Whom our Mother wishes to place us.

Speaking of adoration, She refers to the fact that, in the Tabernacle, He “is kept above all for you” (M. 330, 8th. August

1986). We must be profoundly convinced of the fact that *we have been entrusted with the Presence of Jesus on earth, as His custodians and guardians, just as truly as our Heavenly Mother and St. Joseph*. We can perhaps find encouragement in our love for the Divine Little One in the Blessed Sacrament in the way our Mother speaks of St. Joseph:

“Entrust yourselves to the powerful protection of My most chaste Spouse Joseph. Imitate his industrious silence, his prayer, his humility, his trust and his work. Let there be in you his docile and precious cooperation with the plan of the Heavenly Father, in giving help and protection, love and support to His divine Son Jesus”.
(M. 567, 19th. March 1996)

But He is kept above all for us for adoration. The heavenly call of the Jubilee Year is, above all, interior, to renew our union with God. Our Mother wants us to understand the need for us to recover our love for seeking out His Presence in the Tabernacle. In Fatima, She gave us the example of Francisco, who would go day after day, to the parish church, and there remain under the pulpit, for hours at a time, “in order to console the Hidden Jesus”. He sensed the pain in the Heart of Jesus at being ignored by many and left alone in churches which were empty and he wanted to make satisfaction for that pain, by seeking to become the friend of the Hidden Jesus.

This is not a sentimentality: through a little child, our Mother showed us reality (*And a little child shall lead them, says Isaiah*) (*Out of the mouths of babes*). We have to be little enough and simple enough to understand. We may be clever enough at expressing the theology of the Eucharist, but must be simple enough to want it.

Let us remember that our Mother saw these times fifty five years before the Marian Movement of priests began, and told us that it was for us of today that She gave the prayer through the Angel and the children:

"These times were foretold by Me at Fatima, through the voice of the Angel, who appeared to the children, to whom he taught this prayer: 'Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore You profoundly. I offer You the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for all the outrages, sacrileges and indifferences with which He is surrounded ...'". (M. 330, 8th August 1986)

Especially for priests, then, this is a time for return to adoration, and it is a measure of the devil's apparent success in diminishing faith in the Real Presence that so many churches have had to be closed during the day in order to avoid the vandals.

There are so many things which occupy the lives of priests to-day that it can sometimes demand a real act of courage and faith to leave other things aside in order to spend time in the Presence of Our Lord.

But our Mother's purposes, in renewing our lives, is to draw us inwards, into the Presence, love and communion with Her Son, to remind us that the priestly life is, first and foremost, a *spiritual* life:

"Make Jesus your dearest friend, the Person you trust most of all, desire most of all and love most of all. ... *In fact, the Presence of Christ in the Eucharist has, above all, the function of causing you to grow in an experience of true communion of love with Him, Who remains here on earth to be always with you, so that you may not ever feel yourselves to be alone*". (M. 360, 21st August 1987)

"Today Jesus is surrounded by *emptiness*, which is particularly formed by you Priests who, in your apostolic action, go about, often uselessly, and very much on the edge of things, going after things of lesser and more secondary importance, forgetting that the centre of your priestly day must be *here*, before the Tabernacle, where Jesus is present and is kept above all for you". (M. 330 8th August 1986)

Emptiness, because we are not there, and we should be there. It can be so much easier to recite the Breviary in the armchair, but we give great joy to Our Lord when we choose His company instead of our comfort.

"If only you knew how Jesus in the Eucharist loves you, how a little gesture of your love fills Him with joy and consolation". (M. 360, 21st August 1987)

In fact, it is to be hoped that each one of Mary's priests would find an hour for Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament each day. These things may seem small, but the ability to see the value of little things is something our Mother wishes to form in us.

Our Lord comes to us in a form which is so little that is best recognised by those who are little in spirit. In order to truly recognise the Presence of Our Lord requires a certain concentration of faith, which takes us inwards.

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As Pastors, this spirit is entrusted to us for the people given into our care, and it is for us to promote it. For some years now, the practice of daily hours of adoration in parish churches has grown, and among priests of our Movement in particular.

Clearly, our Movement should be one of the leaders in this activity, and again this requires our deep faith in the value of this adoration and our being willing to give the example, which will be seen both from our own adoration and for our way of treating Our Lord. Our Mother gives us some indications:

"Your priestly prayer must become entirely an eucharistic prayer. I am asking that you come back again to making hours of adoration everywhere, before Jesus exposed in the Most Holy Sacrament. I desire that the homage of love for the Eucharist should grow and become manifest also through the visible signs, so meaningful, of your piety.

Surround Jesus in the Eucharist with flowers and lights; surround Him with careful attention; approach Him with profound gestures of genuflection and adoration". (M. 360, 21st August 1987)

“Now the Heavenly Mother wishes to bring to Jesus, present in the Eucharist, an even greater number of Her children, because these are the times in which Jesus in the Eucharist must be adored, loved, thanked and glorified by everyone”. *(ibid.)*

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