

Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham
under the Patronage of Blessed John Henry Newman

CALLED TO BE CATHOLIC
bathed in the merciful love of the Father

Was ever another command so obeyed? For century after century, spreading slowly to every continent and country and among every race on earth, this action has been done, in every conceivable human circumstance, for every conceivable human need from infancy and before it to extreme old age and after it, from the pinnacle of earthly greatness to the refuge of fugitives in the caves and dens of the earth. Men have found no better thing than this to do for kings at their crowning and for criminals going to the scaffold; for armies in triumph or for a bride and bridegroom in a little country church; for the proclamation of a dogma or for a good crop of wheat; for the wisdom of the Parliament of a mighty nation or for a sick old woman afraid to die; for a schoolboy sitting an examination or for Columbus setting out to discover America; for the famine of whole provinces or for the soul of a dead lover; in thankfulness because my father did not die of pneumonia; for a village headman much tempted to return to fetich because the yams had failed; because the Turk was at the gates of Vienna; for the repentance of Margaret; for the settlement of a strike; for a son for a barren woman; for Captain so-and-so wounded and prisoner of war; while the lions roared in the nearby amphitheatre; on the beach at Dunkirk; while the hiss of scythes in the thick June grass came faintly through the windows of the church; tremulously, by an old monk on the fiftieth anniversary of his vows; furtively, by an exiled bishop who had hewn timber all day in a prison camp near Murmansk; gorgeously, for the canonisation of S. Joan of Arc—one could fill many pages with the reasons why men have done this, and not tell a hundredth part of them. And best of all, week by week and month by month, on a hundred thousand successive Sundays, faithfully, unflinchingly, across all the parishes of Christendom, the pastors have done this just to make the plebs sancta Dei—the holy common people of God.

Dom Gregory Dix *The Shape of the Liturgy* A & C Black, London 1945, p. 744



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I remember very well the first occasion on which I was present at Benediction. This happened many years ago at what was, for me, an important moment in life. I was serving in the British army [Macquarrie was a Scottish Presbyterian at this time] and had received notice of posting overseas. I had been home for my last leave and was now waiting with other troops in a transit centre in the London area until we would be ordered to the ship that was taking us to Egypt. On the Sunday evening before we sailed, I was wandering through the streets of a sprawling suburban area near to where we were stationed. I came to an Anglican church, St Andre's, Willesden Green, I think it was. The bell was summoning the people, and I went in. The first part of the service was familiar to me, for it was Evensong, with its splendid collects and canticles, its psalms and readings from Scripture. But then followed something new to me, though I had indeed read about it and was able to understand what was going on - the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. No doubt I was in an impressionable mood that night, but this service meant a great deal to me. Evensong had already meant much, but now, as it were, an additional dimension, the sacramental dimension, was also opened up. I did not know what lay ahead of me or when I might come back to these shores again, but I was assured of our Lord's presence and had received his sacramental blessing.

John Macquarrie *Paths in Spirituality* SCM Press, London 1972, p. 94



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In ordinary usage, we seem to talk of presence in three main ways. First, there is temporal presence, or presence now. This kind of presence is opposed both to the past, which is no longer, and to the future, which is not yet. The presence of a pain, for instance, means that I am feeling it now, though perhaps I was not feeling it yesterday and will not be feeling it tomorrow. Next, there is spatial or local presence. This is presence here, as opposed to distance. That which is locally or spatially present is near me or beside me. The presence of butterflies in my garden means that they are congregated in this spot. Thirdly, there is personal presence. When one person is present to another, there is more than their congruity in space. Latin has a special preposition to express the notion of personal presence: *coram*. To be *coram vobis* is to be in your presence; to be *coram Deo* is to be in the presence of God. [. . .] Christ is present *par excellence* in the consecrated bread and wine. This is the centre of Eucharistic presence. [. . .] But what about the reservation of the sacrament in churches, as a focus of devotion, a centre of real presence? [. . .] I would venture to say that these devotions have a special place at the present time, namely, that they teach us that sometimes there is the need for passivity before God. Here one has to stand against the trend of the times and not conform to the fashion. That fashion is activism, but there are occasions when our action has to be suspended before Christ. Activists are in constant danger of becoming too intense, too politicised, too polarised, too self-righteous. I hope it does not sound frivolous to say: 'Relax a little in the presence of Christ!'

John Macquarrie *Paths in Spirituality* SCM Press, London 1972, p. 82ff



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The worship of the Eucharist outside of the Mass is of inestimable value for the life of the Church. This worship is strictly linked to the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The presence of Christ under the sacred species reserved after Mass – a presence which lasts as long as the species of bread and of wine remain⁴⁵ – derives from the celebration of the sacrifice and is directed towards communion, both sacramental and spiritual.⁴⁶ It is the responsibility of Pastors to encourage, also by their personal witness, the practice of Eucharistic adoration, and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in particular, as well as prayer of adoration before Christ present under the Eucharistic species.⁴⁷

It is pleasant to spend time with him, to lie close to his breast like the Beloved Disciple (cf. Jn 13:25) and to feel the infinite love present in his heart. If in our time Christians must be distinguished above all by the “art of prayer”,⁴⁸ how can we not feel a renewed need to spend time in spiritual converse, in silent adoration, in heartfelt love before Christ present in the Most Holy Sacrament? How often, dear brother and sisters, have I experienced this, and drawn from it strength, consolation and support!

Saint Pope John Paul II *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* 2003, n. 25



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In a certain sense Mary lived her *Eucharistic faith* even before the institution of the Eucharist, by the very fact that *she offered her virginal womb for the Incarnation of God's Word*. The Eucharist, while commemorating the passion and resurrection, is also in continuity with the incarnation. At the Annunciation Mary conceived the Son of God in the physical reality of his body and blood, thus anticipating within herself what to some degree happens sacramentally in every believer who receives, under the signs of bread and wine, the Lord's body and blood.

As a result, there is a profound analogy between the *Fiat* which Mary said in reply to the angel, and the *Amen* which every believer says when receiving the body of the Lord. Mary was asked to believe that the One whom she conceived "through the Holy Spirit" was "the Son of God" (*Lk* 1:30-35). In continuity with the Virgin's faith, in the Eucharistic mystery we are asked to believe that the same Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Mary, becomes present in his full humanity and divinity under the signs of bread and wine.

"Blessed is she who believed" (*Lk* 1:45). Mary also anticipated, in the mystery of the incarnation, the Church's Eucharistic faith. When, at the Visitation, she bore in her womb the Word made flesh, she became in some way a "tabernacle" - the first "tabernacle" in history - in which the Son of God, still invisible to our human gaze, allowed himself to be adored by Elizabeth, radiating his light as it were through the eyes and the voice of Mary. And is not the enraptured gaze of Mary as she contemplated the face of the newborn Christ and cradled him in her arms that unparalleled model of love which should inspire us every time we receive Eucharistic communion?

Saint Pope John Paul II *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* 2003, n. 55



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Allow me, dear brothers and sisters, to share with deep emotion, as a means of accompanying and strengthening your faith, my own testimony of faith in the Most Holy Eucharist. *Ave verum corpus natum de Maria Virgine, vere passum, immolatum, in cruce pro homine!* Here is the Church's treasure, the heart of the world, the pledge of the fulfilment for which each man and woman, even unconsciously, yearns. A great and transcendent mystery, indeed, and one that taxes our mind's ability to pass beyond appearances. Here our senses fail us: *visus, tactus, gustus in te fallitur*, in the words of the hymn *Adoro Te Devote*; yet faith alone, rooted in the word of Christ handed down to us by the Apostles, is sufficient for us. Allow me, like Peter at the end of the Eucharistic discourse in John's Gospel, to say once more to Christ, in the name of the whole Church and in the name of each of you: "Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (*Jn* 6:68).

At the dawn of this third millennium, we, the children of the Church, are called to undertake with renewed enthusiasm the journey of Christian living. As I wrote in my Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, "it is not a matter of inventing a 'new programme'. The programme already exists: it is the plan found in the Gospel and in the living Tradition; it is the same as ever. Ultimately, it has its centre in Christ himself, who is to be known, loved and imitated, so that in him we may live the life of the Trinity, and with him transform history until its fulfilment in the heavenly Jerusalem".¹⁰³ The implementation of this programme of a renewed impetus in Christian living passes through the Eucharist.

Every commitment to holiness, every activity aimed at carrying out the Church's mission, every work of pastoral planning, must draw the strength it needs from the Eucharistic mystery and in turn be directed to that mystery as its culmination. In the Eucharist we have Jesus, we have his redemptive sacrifice, we have his resurrection, we have the gift of the Holy Spirit, we have adoration, obedience and love of the Father. Were we to disregard the Eucharist, how could we overcome our own deficiency?

Saint Pope John Paul II *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* 2003, n. 59b-60



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In the Eucharist, the Son of God comes to meet us and desires to become one with us; eucharistic adoration is simply the natural consequence of the eucharistic celebration, which is itself the Church's supreme act of adoration. Receiving the Eucharist means adoring him whom we receive. Only in this way do we become one with him, and are given, as it were, a foretaste of the beauty of the heavenly liturgy. The act of adoration outside Mass prolongs and intensifies all that takes place during the liturgical celebration itself. Indeed, "only in adoration can a profound and genuine reception mature. And it is precisely this personal encounter with the Lord that then strengthens the social mission contained in the Eucharist, which seeks to break down not only the walls that separate the Lord and ourselves, but also and especially the walls that separate us from one another."

Pope Benedict XVI *Sacramentum Caritatis* 2007, n.66



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From the beginning Christians were clearly conscious of this radical newness which the Eucharist brings to human life. The faithful immediately perceived the profound influence of the eucharistic celebration on their manner of life. Saint Ignatius of Antioch expressed this truth when he called Christians "those who have attained a new hope," and described them as "those living in accordance with the Lord's Day" (*iuxta dominicam viventes*). This phrase of the great Antiochene martyr highlights the connection between the reality of the Eucharist and everyday Christian life. The Christians' customary practice of gathering on the first day after the Sabbath to celebrate the resurrection of Christ - according to the account of Saint Justin Martyr (205) - is also what defines the form of a life renewed by an encounter with Christ. Saint Ignatius' phrase - "living in accordance with the Lord's Day" - also emphasizes that this holy day becomes paradigmatic for every other day of the week. Indeed, it is defined by something more than the simple suspension of one's ordinary activities, a sort of parenthesis in one's usual daily rhythm. Christians have always experienced this day as the first day of the week, since it commemorates the radical newness brought by Christ. Sunday is thus the day when Christians rediscover the eucharistic form which their lives are meant to have. "Living in accordance with the Lord's Day" means living in the awareness of the liberation brought by Christ and making our lives a constant self-offering to God, so that his victory may be fully revealed to all humanity through a profoundly renewed existence.

Pope Benedict XVI *Sacramentum Caritatis* 2007, n. 72



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At the beginning of the fourth century, Christian worship was still forbidden by the imperial authorities. Some Christians in North Africa, who felt bound to celebrate the Lord's Day, defied the prohibition. They were martyred after declaring that it was not possible for them to live without the Eucharist, the food of the Lord: *sine dominico non possumus*. (252) May these martyrs of Abitinae, in union with all those saints and beati who made the Eucharist the centre of their lives, intercede for us and teach us to be faithful to our encounter with the risen Christ. We too cannot live without partaking of the sacrament of our salvation; we too desire to be *iuxta dominicam viventes*, to reflect in our lives what we celebrate on the Lord's Day. That day is the day of our definitive deliverance. Is it surprising, then, that we should wish to live every day in that newness of life which Christ has brought us in the mystery of the Eucharist?

Pope Benedict XVI *Sacramentum Caritatis* 2007, n. 95



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This evening we are the crowd of [which] the Gospel [tells]: let us also strive to follow Jesus to listen to him, to enter into communion with Him in the Eucharist, to accompany Him and in order that He accompany us. Let us ask ourselves: how do I follow Jesus? Jesus speaks in silence in the Mystery of the Eucharist and every time reminds us that to follow Him means to come out of ourselves and make of our own lives, not a possession, but a gift to Him and to others. Tonight, once again, the Lord distributes for us the bread which is His body, He makes a gift of Himself. We, too, are experiencing the “solidarity of God” with man, a solidarity that never runs out, a solidarity that never ceases to amaze us: God draws near to us; in the sacrifice of the Cross He lowers Himself, entering into the darkness of death in order to give us His life, which overcomes evil, selfishness, death. Jesus this evening gives Himself to us in the Eucharist, shares our same journey – indeed, He becomes food, real food that sustains our life even at times when the going is rough, when obstacles slow down our steps. The Lord in the Eucharist makes us follow His path, that of service, of sharing, of giving – and what little we have, what little we are, if shared, becomes wealth, because the power of God, which is that of love, descends into our poverty to transform it. Let us ask ourselves this evening, adoring the Christ truly present in the Eucharist: do I let myself be transformed by Him? Do I let the Lord who gives Himself to me, guide me to come out more and more from my little fence, to get out and be not afraid to give, to share, to love Him and others? Discipleship, communion and sharing. Let us pray that participation in the Eucharist move us always to follow the Lord every day, to be instruments of communion, to share with Him and with our neighbour who we are. Then our lives will be truly fruitful.

Pope Francis *Homily for Corpus Christi* 2013



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I don't know and can't imagine what the disciples understood our Lord to mean when, His body still unbroken and His blood unshed, He handed them the bread and wine, saying they were His body and blood...

Yet I find no difficulty in believing that the veil between the worlds, nowhere else (for me) so opaque to the intellect, is nowhere else so thin and permeable to divine operation. Here a hand from the hidden country touches not only my soul but my body. Here the prig, the don, the modern, in me have no privilege over the savage or the child. Here is big medicine and strong magic...the command, after all, was Take, eat: not Take, understand.

C S Lewis, 1898 - 1963

Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer



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Out of the darkness of my life, so much frustrated, I put before you the one great thing to love on earth: the Blessed Sacrament... There you will find romance, glory, honour, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves on earth, and more than that: Death. By the divine paradox, that which ends life, and demands the surrender of all, and yet by the taste - or foretaste - of which alone can what you seek in your earthly relationships (love, faithfulness, joy) be maintained, or take on that complexion of reality, of eternal endurance, which every man's heart desires.

The only cure for sagging or fainting faith is Communion. Though always Itself, perfect and complete and inviolate, the Blessed Sacrament does not operate completely and once for all in any of us. Like the act of Faith it must be continuous and grow by exercise. Frequency is of the highest effect. Seven times a week is more nourishing than seven times at intervals.

Also I can recommend this as an exercise (alas! only too easy to find opportunity for): make your communion in circumstances that affront your taste. Choose a snuffling or gabbling priest or a proud and vulgar friar; and a church full of the usual bourgeois crowd, ill-behaved children - from those who yell to those products of Catholic schools who the moment the tabernacle is opened sit back and yawn - open necked and dirty youths, women in trousers and often with hair both unkempt and uncovered. Go to communion with them (and pray for them). It will be just the same (or better than that) as a mass said beautifully by a visibly holy man, and shared by a few devout and decorous people. It could not be worse than the mess of the feeding of the Five Thousand - after which our Lord propounded the feeding that was to come.

J R R Tolkien, 1892 - 1973

letter to his sons



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Come now to a garden. This is a garden unique. No other is like it. It is in the outskirts of the city of Jerusalem. We go there on a night one April, when the moon is shining. In the light of the moon we see the native olive trees of Palestine; and under the trees we see one whom we know to be Jesus. He falls to the ground, crushed by terrible sorrow, and the sweat pours from his head like drops of blood. His grief seems like a great burden weighing him down. He prays: 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup of sorrow pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will but thy will be done.'

This garden is the garden of Christ's obedience. He bent his will obediently. He made the final decision, that on the next day he would die nailed to a cross on the mound of Calvary. By that death on the cross he draws back again to our God mankind, hiding, frightened, estranged. He had said: 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.' The love shining out on to the world from the cross draws us back into fellowship with God our maker. But the decision had been made in that garden called Gethsemane, the garden of Christ's sacrifice.

Michael Ramsey, 1904 - 1988

Durham Essays & Addresses: The Miners' Gala



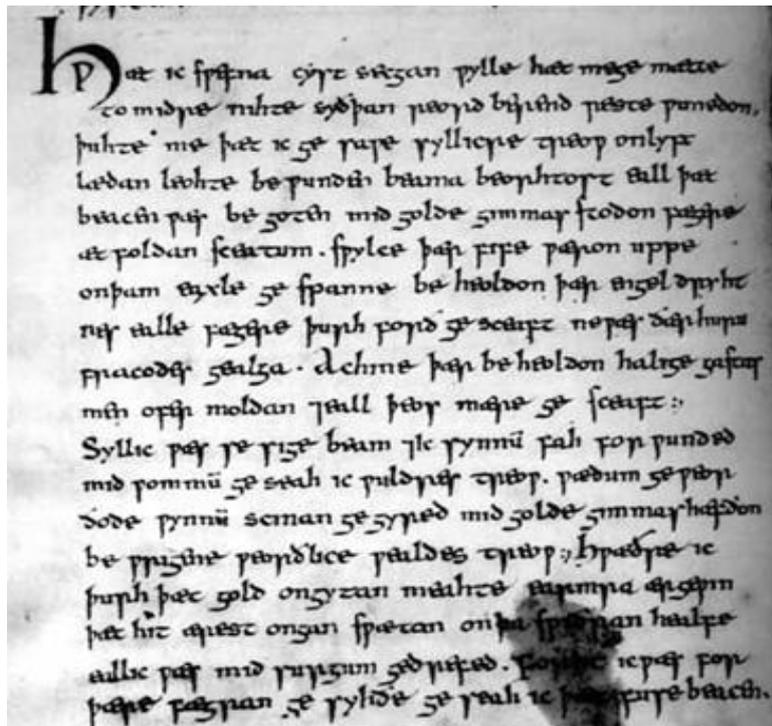
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The Cross speaks:

There they bore me, the men, on their shoulders, then on a hill they stood me;
there many foes fastened me. Then I saw the Lord of all mankind
come quickly and eagerly, for his will was to climb me.
There, I dared not break or bow down
against the Lord's words, when I saw the earth quake.
I could have felled all the enemies, but still I stood fast.
He stripped himself then, the young hero (that was God Almighty!),
steadfast and strong. He mounted my high gallows,
and many there saw his valour: his desire was
to set mankind free.
I trembled at the hero's embrace, but still I dared not bow down to the earth,
or fall to the ground, but I had to stand fast.
I was raised as a Cross: I held high the mighty King,
Lord of the heavens.

The Dream of the Rood, Old English, possibly 8th century



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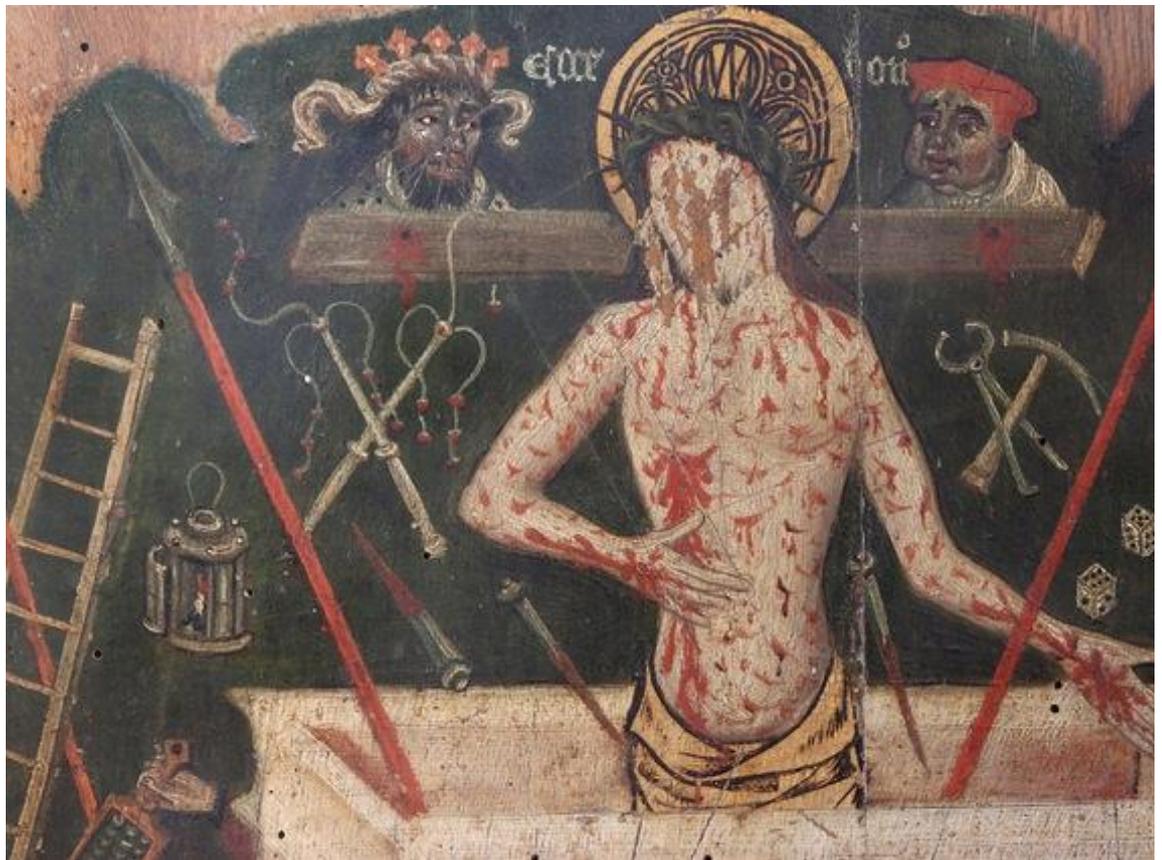
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O! Mankinde
Have in thee minde
My passion smert
And thou shall finde
Me full kinde
Lo! Here my heart

(O! Mankind
Keep in mind
My intense love
And you shall find
Me more than generous in return
Lo! Here is my heart)

English, early 15th century



'Image of Pity', from an English altarpiece. Note the face scratched out by iconoclasts.

Christ's blood would have seemed to run down into the chalice when Mass was celebrated beneath the mage.

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Love bade me welcome. Yet my soul drew back
Guilty of dust and sin.

But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,

Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
If I lacked any thing.

A guest, I answered, worthy to be here:
Love said, You shall be he.

I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah my dear,
I cannot look on thee.

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
Who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame
Go where it doth deserve.

And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?
My dear, then I will serve.

You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat:
So I did sit and eat.

George Herbert, 1593-1633 *Love III*

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I believe there is a very rightful kind of anxiety among lots of good lay people about preparing worthily for their Communion. So there should be. We ought to examine our conscience. We ought to detest our sins. We ought to beg our Lord to make us fit for our Communion. But never suppose that apart from His mercy we ever could be fit.

Don't let a sense of unworthiness keep you from communicating. The dreadful thing would be if you really thought you were worthy. On the other hand if you wait until you are worthy you'll never receive Communion again. So don't let a sense of unworthiness keep you from Communion.

We so often think about receiving our Lord in Communion. Of course, that is one way of looking at it. But there is a much truer way, you know. We don't bring down His greatness to our littleness. We can't pull His strength down to our weakness. We don't drag down His holiness to our sinfulness. No, it's the other way about. We are taken up, lifted up, out of our littleness into His greatness, our sinfulness is swallowed up in His holiness, our weakness is poured out into His strength. It isn't we who receive Him, it's He who receives us.

Dom Gregory Dix, 1901 - 1952

Mission address in the United States, 15 February 1951



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GOD, unto whom all hearts be open,
and unto whom all will speaketh,
and unto whom no privy thing is hid.
I beseech Thee so for to cleanse the intent of mine heart
with the unspeakable gift of Thy grace,
that I may perfectly love Thee,
and worthily praise Thee. Amen.



The Cloud of Unknowing, 14th century English

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Then said our good Lord Jesus Christ: *Art thou well pleased that I suffered for thee?* I said: Yea, good Lord, I thank Thee; Yea, good Lord, blessed mayst Thou be. Then said Jesus, our kind Lord: *If thou art pleased, I am pleased: it is a joy, a bliss, an endless satisfying to me that ever suffered I Passion for thee; and if I might suffer more, I would suffer more.*

.....

For I saw full surely that where our Lord appeareth, peace is taken and wrath hath no place. For I saw no manner of wrath in God, neither for short time nor for long; for in sooth, as to my sight, if God might be wroth for an instant, we should never have life nor place nor being. For as verily as we have our being of the endless Might of God and of the endless Wisdom and of the endless Goodness, so verily we have our keeping in the endless Might of God, in the endless Wisdom, and in the endless Goodness. For though we feel in ourselves frail wretches, debates and strifes, yet are we all-mannerful enclosed in the mildness of God and in His meekness, in His benignity and in His graciousness. For I saw full surely that all our endless friendship, our place, our life and our being, is in God.

.....

Wouldst thou learn thy Lord's meaning in this thing? Learn it well: Love was His meaning. Who shewed it thee? Love. What shewed He thee? Love. Wherefore shewed it He? For Love. Hold thee therein and thou shalt learn and know more in the same. But thou shalt never know nor learn therein other thing without end. Thus was I learned that Love was our Lord's meaning.

Julian of Norwich, c. 1342 - c.1416

Revelations of Divine Love



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The perfection of brotherly love lies in the love of one's enemies. We can find no greater inspiration for this than grateful remembrance of the wonderful patience of Christ.

He who is *more fair than all the sons of men* offered his fair face to be spat upon by sinful men. He allowed those eyes that rule the universe to be blindfolded by wicked men. He bared his back to the scourges. He submitted that head which strikes terror in principalities and powers to the sharpness of the thorns. He gave himself up to be mocked and reviled, and at the end endured the cross, the nails, the lance, the gall, the vinegar, remaining always gentle, meek and full of peace.

In short, *he was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb before the shearers he kept silent, and did not open his mouth.*

Who could listen to that wonderful prayer, so full of warmth, of love, of unshakeable serenity - *Father, forgive them* - and hesitate to embrace his enemies with overflowing love? Father, he says, forgive them. Is any gentleness, any love, lacking in this prayer?

Yet he put into it something more. It was not enough to pray for them: he wanted also to make excuses for them. *Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.* They are great sinners, yes, but they have little judgment; therefore, *Father, forgive them.* They are nailing me to the cross, but they do not know who it is that they are nailing to the cross: if they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. Therefore, *Father, forgive them.* They think it is a lawbreaker, an impostor claiming to be God, a seducer of the people. I have hidden my face from them, and they do not recognise my glory. Therefore, *Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.*

If someone wishes to love himself he must not allow himself to be corrupted by indulging his sinful nature. If he wishes to resist the promptings of his sinful nature he must enlarge the whole horizon of his love to contemplate the loving gentleness of the humanity of the Lord. Further, if he wishes to savour the joy of brotherly love with greater perfection and delight, he must extend even to his enemies the embrace of true love. But if he wishes to prevent this fire of divine love from growing cold because of injuries received, let him keep the eyes of his soul always fixed on the serene patience of his beloved Lord and Saviour.

Aelred of Rievaulx, 1110 - 1167:

Speculum Caritatis 3,5



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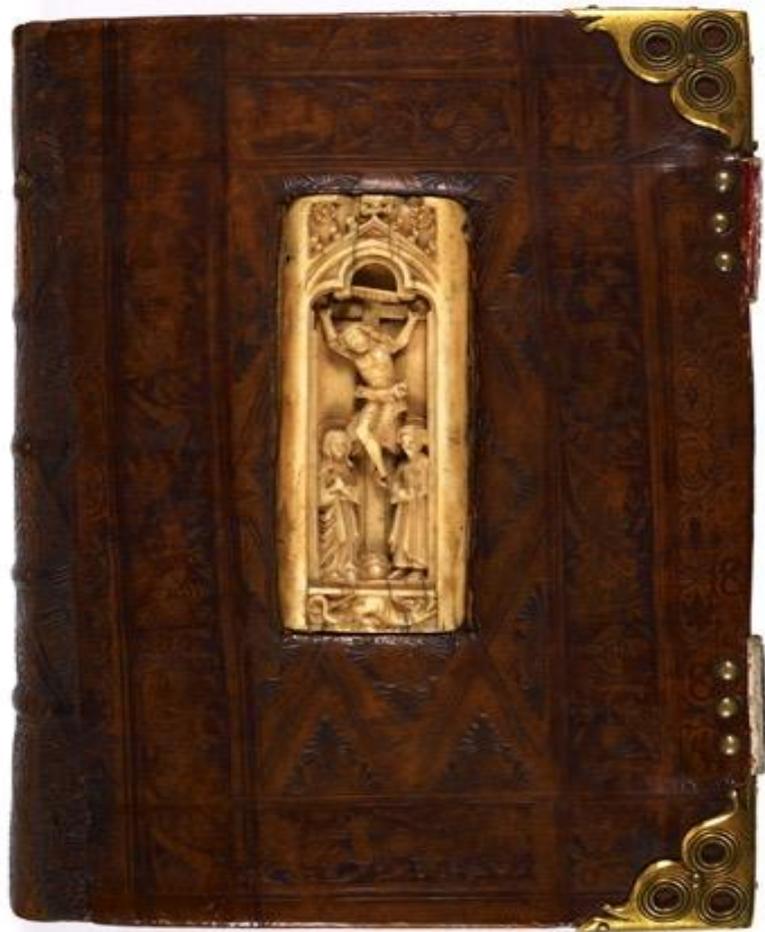
CALLED TO BE CATHOLIC
bathed in the merciful love of the Father

Then shall I come as a king, crowned with angels,
and have all men's souls out of hell.
Demons great and small shall stand before me
And be at my bidding where I will.
My kinship demands that I have mercy
On man, for we all be brethren
in blood, if not in baptism.

My righteousness and right shall rule
in hell, and mercy over all mankind before me
in heaven. I were an unkind king
if I did not help my kin.

William Langland, c. 1330 - c. 1386

The Vision of Piers Plowman, lines 372-8, 397-9 (modernised)



Ivory panel of the Crucifixion on a book binding

English. 14th century. British Library (Additional 10301. front binding)

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CALLED TO BE CATHOLIC
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Batter my heart, three-person'd God, for you
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;
That I may rise and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend
Your force to break, blow, burn, and make me new.
I, like an usurp'd town to another due,
Labor to admit you, but oh, to no end;
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,
But is captiv'd, and proves weak or untrue.
Yet dearly I love you, and would be lov'd fain,
But am betroth'd unto your enemy;
Divorce me, untie or break that knot again,
Take me to you, imprison me, for I,
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

John Donne, 1572 -1631

Holy Sonnets, vi



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CALLED TO BE CATHOLIC
bathed in the merciful love of the Father

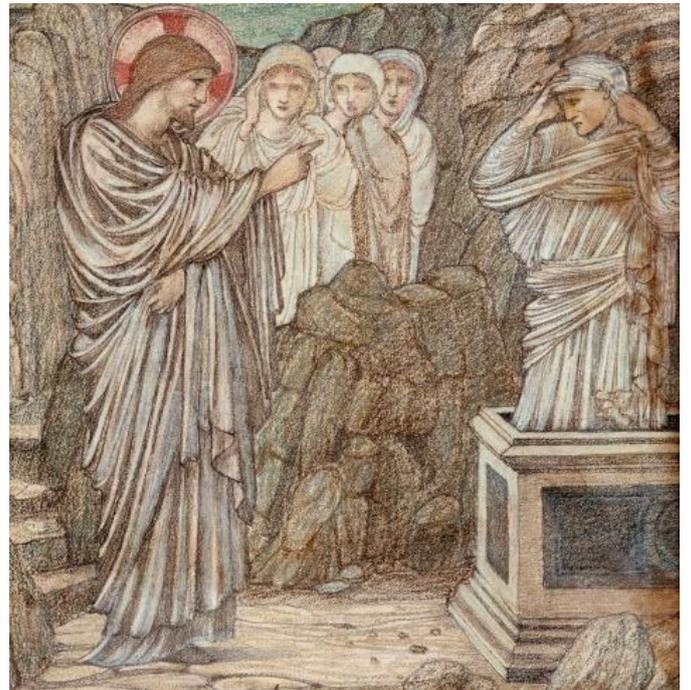
I have no wit, no words, no tears;
my heart within me like a stone
is numbed too much for hopes or fears;
look right, look left, I dwell alone;
I lift mine eyes, but dimmed with grief
no everlasting hills I see;
my life is in the falling leaf:
O Jesus, quicken me.

My life is like a faded leaf,
my harvest dwindled to a husk;
truly my life is void and brief
and tedious in the barren dusk;
my life is like a frozen thing,
no bud or greenness can I see:
yet rise it shall, the sap of spring;
O Jesus, rise in me.

My life is like a broken bowl,
a broken bowl that cannot hold
one drop of water for my soul
or cordial in the searching cold;
cast in the fire the perished thing,
melt and remould it, till it be
a royal cup for Him my King:
O Jesus, drink of me.

Christina Rossetti, 1830 - 1894

A Bitter Resurrection



The Raising of Lazarus,

Edward Burne-Jones 1833 - 1898



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CALLED TO BE CATHOLIC
bathed in the merciful love of the Father



Saviour Christ,
we ask you in our humility
to hear the cry of the captives,
your suppliants, O saving God -
how we are distressed by our own desires.
Accursed spirits, hostile hell-foes
have hard beset the exiles,
bound them with baleful ropes. Remedy belongs
all to you alone, eternal Lord.
Help those in trouble, so that your coming here
may comfort the miserable, even though we have made
a feud against you through our lust for iniquities.
Have mercy on your servants and consider our miseries,
how we totter with a tired spirit,
move wretchedly about. Come now, King of heroes.
Do not delay too long. We have need of mercies,
that you free us and faithfully give us
the healthful gift, that ever after we
may always thrive in the thing
that prospers among the people - your will.

The Advent Lyrics, Old English, possibly c. 800