



# Faith in 52

A yearlong parish retreat based on the work *I Believe in Love*  
by Father Jean C. J. d'Elbee

*Week 40: August 5th through August 11th, 2013*

## For Individuals

(pages 219-223 of the book *I Believe in Love*)

### **STEP 1: OPENING PRAYER**

1. Speaking to the Holy Spirit, say: *“O Holy Spirit, soul of my soul, I adore You. Enlighten, guide, strengthen, and console me. Tell me what I ought to do and command me to do it. I promise to be submissive in everything that You ask of me, and to accept all that You permit to happen to me. Only show me what is Your will”* (Cardinal Mercier).

### **STEP 2: PRAYERFUL READING**

1. Prayerfully read ONLY the weekly assigned pages of *I Believe in Love*.
2. While reading, pay careful attention to the phrases, ideas, or images that might bring about comfort or even those that are challenging. Rest on these a while and speak with the Lord about them, receive His graces, and ponder what has been laid out before you.

### **STEP 3: MEDITATION**

1. Keeping your imagination quiet, figuratively or literally shutting your eyes to all the things of sense, and closing your ears to all the sounds of earth, so as to be able to withdraw into the sanctuary of your baptized soul, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit, do the following:
  - Cardinal Charost, in speaking about the Eucharist, said, *“It is to recognize the infinite goodness of God, who is Love, His right to be loved and honored by a supreme cult; it is to proclaim that God is man’s sovereign good; it is to yield to gratitude—a sentiment still more profound than that of man’s dependence—that in the sacrifice man makes a gift of himself, surrenders himself completely to God”* (p. 222). Meditate upon these words before, during, or after Mass or during Eucharistic Adoration. Make a gift of yourself to the Trinity at every Mass: Spiritually place yourself into the Host that is elevated and into the chalice that is raised. Give yourself completely to God and let His Blood wash your soul clean of sin and fill you with His love.
  - Finish by saying the *Our Father* in a spirit of complete abandonment. ■

### **Blessed Sacrament**

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.

- from J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, Humphrey Carpenter Ed. (London, Eng.: George Allen & Unwin), #43 From a letter to Michael Tolkien 6-8 March 1941. ■

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## Liturgy: A Sacred Action Surpassing All Others

To accomplish so great a work, Christ is always present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of His minister, "the same now offering, through the ministry of priests, who formerly offered himself on the cross", but especially under the Eucharistic species. By His power He is present in the sacraments, so that when a man baptizes it is really Christ Himself who baptizes. He is present in His word, since it is He Himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church. He is present, lastly, when the Church prays and sings, for He promised: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). Christ indeed always associates the Church with Himself in this great work wherein God is perfectly glorified and men are sanctified. The Church is His beloved Bride who calls to her Lord, and through Him offers worship to the Eternal Father.

Rightly, then, the liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy the sanctification

of the man is signified by signs perceptible to the senses, and is effected in a way which corresponds with each of these signs; in the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members. From this it follows that every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest and of His Body which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree.

In the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, a minister of the holies and of the true tabernacle; we sing a hymn to the Lord's glory with all the warriors of the heavenly army; venerating the memory of the saints, we hope for some part and fellowship with them; we eagerly await the Saviour, Our Lord Jesus Christ, until He, our life, shall appear and we too will appear with Him in glory.

The sacred liturgy does not exhaust the entire activity of the Church... Nevertheless the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows. For the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of His Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's supper...

From the liturgy, therefore, and especially from the Eucharist, as from a font, grace is poured forth upon us; and the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God, to which all other activities of the Church are directed as toward their end, is achieved in the most efficacious possible way.

- from *Sacrosanctum Concilium: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Dec. 4, 1963), §7-10. ■



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## For Group Sharing

(pages 219-223 of the book *I Believe in Love*)

### **STEP 1: OPENING PRAYER**

1. Gathering with your spouse, family, or a group of friends at a time of your choosing, though preferably on the following Sunday, make the Sign of the Cross and then say together to the Holy Spirit: *"Come Holy Spirit, come by means of the powerful intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, your well-beloved Spouse."*

### **STEP 2: PUBLIC READING**

1. Depute or invite a competent reader among the group to read aloud the weekly assigned pages of *I Believe in Love*. All should be encouraged to listen attentively; any distractions, i.e., cell phones, televisions, etc., should be turned off or removed during this time.

### **STEP 3: PRAYERFUL DISCUSSION**

1. After the public reading, someone should facilitate the public discussion. This facilitator should read aloud the questions below. Considering the constraints of time or the particular audience, not every question need be asked nor discussed. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you when in doubt.
  2. Everyone may speak but should not speak over others, should not dominate the conversation, and should not ridicule others. All should try to be like Christ who is "gentle and humble of heart." Moreover, all should be asked to keep confidential the contents of the discussion. No one should reveal more than what they feel comfortable sharing or be forced to speak.
- "The Mass commemorates the Sacrifice of the Cross" (p. 219), but why is it "not simply a remembrance" (p. 220)?
  - What is the only difference between the offering of Christ on Calvary and that which is offered "by the ministry of His priests" (p. 220)?

### **Liturgy is the Salvation of the World**

The Church is the greatest sign of the mystery of God. For she contains the famous dimensions of love described by Saint Paul, dimensions he hopes we can attain with all of the saints. She alone is the sign of the massive breaking open that our entire being has to undergo in order to be capable of God and God's tasks.

We will be incapable of incarnating God's love in the world, we will be incapable of bringing the Gospel, which is but the manifestation of love, to the world, if we do not first accept the incarnation of this love in the Church, in the mystical Body of Jesus Christ...

Everything in the Church shows the movement of Christ's blood, the gestures that offer it, the places where we can place our lips to drink it and to cause it to pour forth.

This is what liturgy is... Are we aware that liturgy is the salvation of the world? If, through the long course of history, it was necessary to adapt the liturgy, to explain it, to translate it, and if it is once again necessary to do so in our time, it never has been and is not today a question of making the

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- *Legem credendi lex statuit supplicandi*—the rule of faith is indicated by the law of our worship: This ancient axiom explains the intrinsic relationship between our worship and our beliefs. What are some liturgical actions and words that outwardly demonstrate Catholics' belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist?
- After the prayer of consecration, is it correct to refer to Communion simply as “bread” and “wine”? When speaking of the Eucharist, why do the words we use matter?
- How does the Latin Rite custom of distributing the Host apart from the Precious Blood in a chalice help to “symbolize the violent separation of His Body and Blood” (p. 221)? How does this reveal the sacrificial nature of the Mass?
- The Constitution on Sacred Liturgy promulgated at Vatican II states that “every liturgical celebration... is a sacred action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, §7). Why is this true?
- “Is sacrifice the essential act of all religion” (p. 222)? What do St. Thomas and the author think (p. 222-223)?
- According to the author, why doesn't God “chastise us as He chastised under the ancient law” (p. 223)? Who and what stays this just judgment (p. 223)?

## **STEP 4: CLOSING PRAYER**

1. When finished with the discussion, the entire group should conclude with the prayer *Anima Christi*:

**S**oul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me.  
Blood of Christ, inebriate me. Water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me.  
O good Jesus, hear me. Within Thy wounds, hide me.  
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.  
From the malignant enemy, defend me. And at the hour of my death, call me; and bid me come to Thee, that with Thy saints I may praise Thee forever and ever. Amen. ■

Liturgy is... (Continued from page 3)

liturgy more human. It already is human, and tragically so: it is the Passion of the Son of God made man, made continually present among us.

This is, above all, what a parish is, in the midst of a world that comprehends nothing about such things. What else are bishops with their offices other than the faith preserved and the responsibility for the salvation that is meant to spread to the ends of the earth? Rome, through everything else, is the love of God that has been promised to the Church for eternity. This body wants to propagate itself. The Church will forever aspire to the world. She doesn't need the world in order to accomplish her mission, but without the world, she would have no mission. The world is the stubble and the Church is the flame.

- from Servant of God Madeleine Delbrel, *We, the Ordinary People of the Streets*, David Louis Schindler, Jr., and Charles F. Mann, Trs. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000). ■



## **Next Eucharistic “Hour of Power” in English**

- Saturday, September 7th, 7-8 p.m., St. Peter McMahon Hall

## **Next Parish Dessert Potluck\***

- Saturday, September 7th, 8-9 p.m., Upper Room Library