

Faith in 52

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

Week 43: August 26th through September 1st, 2013

For Individuals

(pages 236-238 of the book *I Believe in Love*, beginning and stopping at the ☞ symbols)

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:
 - Do you have doubts about the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist? Do you approach Holy Communion with an attitude of indifference or even with unrepented mortal sins? Do you miss Mass on the Sabbath and Holy Days of Obligation? “Jesus said to them, ‘Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you’” (Jn. 6:53). Christ urgently wants you to receive His Presence in the Eucharist. He desires so for your salvation. What is keeping you from the Lord? How would you behave towards the Blessed Sacrament if you really believed Jesus’ words? Is Christ inviting you to more frequent reception of Holy Communion, to assist at some daily Masses and to spend time with Him in Eucharistic adoration? Say “yes” to the Lord Jesus.
 - “... you nourished your people with food of angels and furnished them bread from heaven, ready to hand, untoiled-for, endowed with all delights and conforming to every taste” (Wis. 16:20; cf. p. 237-238). This passage from Sacred Scripture is the basis for the versicle used at Eucharistic Benediction: “**V.** You have given them bread from heaven. **R.** Containing in itself all delight.” Ponder these words. The Lord has given you, YOU, the “bread from heaven” so that that “your joy may be complete” (Jn. 15:11). Delight in this gift; take delight in the Eucharist. Thank the Lord for such a privileged blessing and for His love.
 - Finish by saying the *Our Father* in a spirit of complete abandonment. ■

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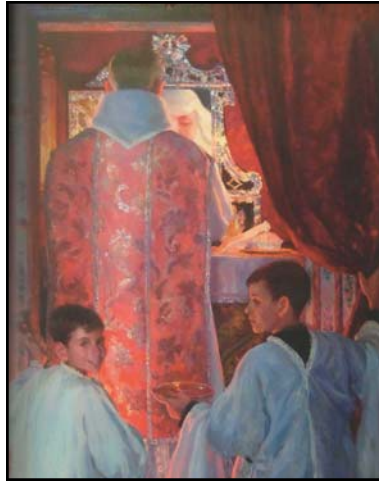
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The Celebration of the Eucharist

No one may share the Eucharist with us unless he believes that what we teach is true, unless he is washed in the regenerating waters of baptism for the remission of his sins, and unless he lives in accordance with the principles given us by Christ.

We do not consume the eucharistic bread and wine as if it were ordinary food and drink, for we have been taught that as Jesus Christ our Savior became a man of flesh and blood by the power of the Word of God, so also the food that our flesh and blood assimilates for its nourishment becomes the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus by the power of his own words contained in the prayer of thanksgiving.

The apostles, in their recollections, which are called gospels, handed down to us what Jesus commanded them to do. They tell us that he took bread, gave thanks and said: *Do this in memory of me. This is my body.* In the same way he took the cup, he gave thanks and said: *This is my blood.* The Lord gave this command to them alone. Ever since then we have constantly reminded one another of these things. The rich among us help the poor and



A Priest Gives Communion to a Cloistered Religious Through the Comulgatorio by Alfonso Grosso

we are always united. For all that we receive we praise the Creator of the universe through his Son Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

On Sunday we have a common assembly of all our members, whether they live in the city or the outlying districts. The recollections of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as there is time. When the reader has finished, the president of the assembly speaks to us; he urges everyone to imitate the examples of virtue we have heard in the readings. Then we all stand up together and pray.

On the conclusion of our prayer, bread and wine and

water are brought forward. The president offers prayers and gives thanks to the best of his ability, and the people give assent by saying, "Amen". The eucharist is distributed, everyone present communicates, and the deacons take it to those who are absent.

The wealthy, if they wish, may make a contribution, and they themselves decide the amount. The collection is placed in the custody of the president, who uses it to help the orphans and widows and all who for any reason are in distress, whether because they are sick, in prison, or away from home. In a word, he takes care of all who are in need.

We hold our common assembly on Sunday because it is the first day of the week, the day on which God put darkness and chaos to flight and created the world, and because on that same day our savior Jesus Christ rose from the dead. For he was crucified on Friday and on Sunday he appeared to his apostles and disciples and taught them the things that we have passed on for your consideration.

- from St. Justin the Martyr,
First Apologia [c. A.D. 100-165]
(Cap. 66-67: PG 6, 427-431). ■

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For Group Sharing

(pages 236-238 of the book *I Believe in Love*, beginning and stopping at the ☩ symbols)

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.
- “I am the living Bread which came down from Heaven” (p. 237). Why do you think Jesus wanted to give us Himself under the sign of food? Where

Miracle in Bolsena-Orvieto

by Joan Carroll Cruz

In 1263 a German priest, Peter of Prague, stopped at Bolsena while on a pilgrimage to Rome. He is described as being a pious priest, but one who found it difficult to believe that Christ was actually present in the consecrated Host. While celebrating Holy Mass above the tomb of St. Christina (located in the church named for this martyr), he had barely spoken the words of Consecration when blood started to seep from the consecrated Host and trickle over his hands onto the altar and the corporal.

The priest was immediately confused. At first he attempted to hide the blood, but then he interrupted the Mass and asked to be taken to the neighboring city of Orvieto, the city where Pope Urban IV was then residing.

The Pope listened to the priest’s account and absolved him. He then sent emissaries for an immediate investigation. When all the facts were ascertained, he ordered the Bishop of the diocese to bring to Orvieto the Host and the linen cloth bearing the stains of blood. With archbishops, cardinals and other Church dignitaries in attendance, the Pope met the procession and, amid great pomp, had the relics placed in the cathedral. The linen corporal bearing the spots of blood is still reverently enshrined and exhib-

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else in Scripture does God nourish His people?

- When Jesus announced to His followers that He is the “living Bread,” “the Jews... strove among themselves, saying, “How can this Man give us His Flesh to eat?”” (p. 237). Do people still offer that same criticism; still doubt the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist? Why? How can we help convince them of the truth of Jesus’ words?
- What was your First Holy Communion like? What did you wear? Who was there? What did you think, feel, and experience? Share these memories with those around you, and, if possible, retrieve and show photos, videos, and memorabilia from the event like your special attire, the First Communion certificate, any religious gifts, etc. Do you still have the same fervor and wonder when you receive Communion now as you did then?
- “He who eats this Bread shall live forever” (p. 237). Does Jesus mean people who consume the Eucharist will never die a physical death? What pledge is Christ giving to those who receive Holy Communion? How should this promise inspire us to evangelize more urgently, to invite others to full communion with the Catholic Church?

STEP 4: CLOSING PRAYER

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

Soul 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. ■

Miracle in Bolsena-Orvieto (Continued from page 3)

ited in the Cathedral of Orvieto.

It is said that Pope Urban IV was prompted by this miracle to commission St. Thomas Aquinas to compose the Proper for a Mass and an Office honoring the Holy Eucharist as the Body of Christ. One year after the miracle, in August of 1264, Pope Urban IV introduced the saint’s composition, and by means of a papal bull instituted the feast of Corpus Christi.

After visiting the Cathedral of Orvieto, many pilgrims and tourists journey to St. Christina’s Church in Bolsena to see for themselves the place where the miracle occurred... where the stains on the paved floor are said to have been made by the blood from the miraculous Host.

- from *Eucharistic Miracles* (Charlotte, NC: TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., 1987). ■



Duomo di Orvieto used with permission of the photographer, Christopher Benson

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