



Faith in 52

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

Week 44: September 2nd through September 8th, 2013

For Individuals

(pages 238-241 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:
 - “When a person loves, he desires the presence of the beloved” (p. 239). Be honest with yourself: Is God your beloved? Do you desire to be in His company? How do your daily choices and actions support or challenge the veracity of your answer?
 - Jesus “loved them unto the end” (p. 238). Stay with these words. What does it mean that Christ loves you until the very end?
 - The *Code of Canon Law* says that the tabernacle “in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved is to be situated in some part of the church or oratory which is distinguished, conspicuous, beautifully decorated, and suitable for prayer,” and “is to be immovable, made of solid and opaque material, and locked in such a way that the danger of profanation is avoided as much as possible” (Can. 938, §2-3). The *Code* continues to say that “the person responsible for the church or oratory is to take care that the key of the tabernacle in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved is safeguarded most diligently” (Can. 938, §5). You are a living tabernacle, and God, more than anything, desires to be in you; you are a heaven to Him. How do you embody the qualities of the tabernacle: Do you strive to be “conspicuous” in your faith, “beautifully decorated” with virtues, and a dwelling place of “prayer”? Will you amend your life to flee any “danger of profanation.” Will you unlock your heart to Jesus and give Him the only key?
- Finish by saying the *Our Father* in a spirit of complete abandonment. ■

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Preparation for First Communion

After careful deliberation on all these points, this Sacred Congregation of the Discipline of the Sacraments, in a general meeting held on July 15, 1910... has deemed it needful to prescribe the following rules which are to be observed everywhere for the First Communion of children.

1. The age of discretion, both for Confession and for Holy Communion, is the time when a child begins to reason, that is about the seventh year, more or less. From that time on begins the obligation of fulfilling the precept of both Confession and Communion.

2. A full and perfect knowledge of Christian doctrine is not necessary either for First Confession or for First Communion. Afterwards, however, the child will be obliged to learn gradually the entire Catechism according to his ability.

3. The knowledge of religion which is required in a child in order to be properly prepared to receive First Communion is such that he will understand according to his capacity those Mysteries of faith which are necessary as a means of salvation (*necessitate medii*) and that he can distinguish be-

tween the Bread of the Eucharist and ordinary, material bread, and thus he may receive Holy Communion with a devotion becoming his years.

4. The obligation of the precept of Confession and Communion which binds the child particularly affects those who have him in charge, namely, parents, confessor, teachers and the pastor. It belongs to the father, or the person taking his place, and to the confessor, according to the Roman Catechism, to admit a child to his First Communion.

5. The pastor should announce and hold a General Communion of the children once a year or more often, and he should on these occasions admit not only the First Communicants but also others who have already approached the Holy Table with the above-mentioned consent of their parents or confessor. Some days of instruction and preparation should be previously given to both classes of children.

6. Those who have charge of the children should zealously see to it that after their First Communion these children frequently approach the Holy



St. Pius X Giving Holy Communion to the Children

Table, even daily if possible, as Jesus Christ and Mother Church desire, and let this be done with a devotion becoming their age. They must also bear in mind that very grave duty which obliged them to have the children attend the public Catechism classes; if this is not done, then they must supply religious instruction in some other way.

7. The custom of not admitting children to Confession or of not giving them absolution when they have already attained the use of reason must be entirely abandoned. The Ordinary shall see to it that this condition ceases absolutely, and he may, if necessary, use legal measures accordingly.

- from St. Pius X, *Quam Singulari: Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Discipline of the Sacraments on First Communion* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Aug. 8, 1910). ■

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For Group Sharing

(pages 238-241 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.
- In what public places is silent, subdued behavior expected? Why should Catholics refrain from loud conversations in church outside of the Mass? What does quiet reverence in church reveal about our understanding of the church and the Real Presence in the Eucharist?
 - According to the author, what is the beautiful “conflict

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The Place for the Reservation of the Most Holy Eucharist

314. In accordance with the structure of each church and legitimate local customs, the Most Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in a tabernacle in a part of the church that is truly noble, prominent, conspicuous, worthily decorated, and suitable for prayer.[124]

The tabernacle should usually be the only one, be irremovable, be made of solid and inviolable material that is not transparent, and be locked in such a way that the danger of profanation is prevented to the greatest extent possible.[125] Moreover, it is appropriate that before it is put into liturgical use, the tabernacle be blessed according to the rite described in the Roman Ritual.[126]

315. It is more appropriate as a sign that on an altar on which Mass is celebrated there not be a tabernacle in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved.[127]

Consequently, it is preferable that the tabernacle be located, according to the judgment of the Diocesan Bishop:

- a) either in the sanctuary, apart from the altar of celebration, in an appropriate form and place, not excluding its being positioned

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in His (Jesus') Heart" (p. 239)? What is His solution to the question: "Should I stay or should I go?"

- In the Eucharist, Jesus "willed more than a union, more than a fusion; He willed the unity of love: to be one with us" (p. 240). What do you think is the difference between "union" and a "unity of love"?
- They say that "you are what you eat." How is this literally true in the reception of Holy Communion (p. 240)?
- "Divination" is an attempt to attain secret knowledge from pagan gods. "Divinization", on the other hand, is the transforming effect of divine grace by which human beings share in the very divinity of God. What is the central way in which Jesus transforms us into Himself (p. 240)?
- "Be you therefore perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (p. 240). How does the author believe we can arrive at such perfection (p. 240)?
- "Seek to be Eucharistic souls! Hunger and thirst to eat this living miracle; nourish yourselves with it! Never omit receiving Communion through lack of love, through scruples or fear. From the moment when you are in the state of grace, go to the holy table; go to receive Jesus!" (p. 241). Have you ever suffered from scruples that kept you from receiving the Eucharist, that made you believe it was a reward for good behavior rather than a remedy for sin?

STEP 4: CLOSING PRAYER

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

May the Heart of Jesus, in the Most Blessed Sacrament, be praised, adored, and loved with grateful affection, at every moment in all the tabernacles of the world, even until the end of time. Amen. ■

The Place for the... (Continued from page 3)

on an old altar no longer used for celebration (cf. no. 303);

- a) or even in some chapel suitable for the private adoration and prayer of the faithful[128] and organically connected to the church and readily noticeable by the Christian faithful.

316. In accordance with traditional custom, near the tabernacle a special lamp, fueled by oil or wax, should shine permanently to indicate the presence of Christ and honor it.[129]

317. In no way should any of the other things be forgotten which are prescribed by law concerning the reservation of the Most Holy Eucharist.[130]

- from *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal for the Roman Missal, Third Edition* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2011). ■



Tabernacle in the Basilica of St. Mary Major, Rome, Italy

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