



Weekly teaching for maintaining the faith

FIDEM SERVAVI

« I have kept the Faith » - II Timothy 4 / 7

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Priory of saint Peter and saint Paul

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Summary

Corpus Christi. The beautiful and rich teaching on this Feast and this admirable Sacrament of the Eucharist. Our piety towards the most holy Virgin Mary announced in the book of Proverbs, she who has given us "this Living Bread which has come down from Heaven".

Sermon of « Sunday of the Solemnity of the Feast-Day of Corpus Christi »

My dear brothers,

Here we are then at the second Sunday after Pentecost, the solemnity of the feast of the most Holy Sacrament. Dom Guéranger introduces his commentary on this feast as follows:

"A great solemnity has arisen upon the world", he tells us: "La Fête-Dieu" (feast of God - Corpus Christi) so it was called by our forefathers; truly feast of God, but also feast of man" (that is to say, as Dom Guéranger makes clear) "being the feast Of Christ Mediator present in the consecrated Host to give God to man, and man to God."

Moreover, of course the Council of Trent teaches us: "that in a very pious and holy way the custom was introduced in the Church of designating each year a certain day and a special feast to give honour to this august and adorable Sacrament with a special veneration and singular solemnity." In addition, as we know, this veneration is expressed by the procession of the most holy Sacrament, with respect and with all the honours due, through the streets and public places. In the special situation in which we find ourselves, we will give all honours due with what we can manage today.

These few words, then, which I address to you this morning in the course of the Mass, will have the purpose of supporting our faith in this admirable Sacrament, which contains the very Author of grace, Our Lord Jesus Christ, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity.

This sacrament is really the *mysterium fidei*, the mystery of our faith, since we know that the Eucharist must be considered as both a sacrifice and a sacrament, that is to say, the real presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ who comes to our altars to renew the sacrifice of the cross. Remember all that has been already said to you before Easter on the Eucharistic sacrifice, reproduction of the sacrifice of the cross and real sacrifice. That is also, why, in these two aspects of catholic doctrine, this sacrament is the test of our faith. In fact, it is according to the way in which one believes these truths of the faith that the faithful catholic is recognised and will be recognised. When I say this, my dear brothers, you must also consider all the consequences of these outrages against this mystery of the faith, which result in the fact that the great majority of those who call themselves catholics are no longer such in reality, and which also have as a consequence that even amongst the traditional majority a pure oblation will not be offered because the priests who mention the conciliar authorities are mentioning heretics in the canon of the Mass, which constitutes an offence of a sacrilegious nature, and that, objectively and inevitably, no matter what, means a sin committed by the participants.

There we have, my dear brothers, what we must already remember about this admirable sacrament.

Before looking at the holy Eucharist as a sacrament, and the effects of receiving it, I would also like to remind you, or perhaps simply let you discover - depending on the knowledge each of you has of the Holy Scriptures - I would like to say something about the birthplace of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

You know that Bethlehem means "house of bread", but we should know that this town, which used to be called Ephrata, was given the name of Bethlehem by Jacob. In fact, it was Jacob, returning from Mesopotamia and stopping near Ephrata, who changed the name of this city of Judah to Bethlehem. However, he did not make this change without a reason. The Fathers of the Church (one should read all that Father Ventura has to tell us) are unanimous in saying that Jacob learnt by a revelation from God that the place in which he found himself would one day be the birthplace of the Saviour of the world, Who would give Himself the name *Living bread descended from Heaven*; therefore, in changing the name of Ephrata to Bethlehem, Jacob made a magnificent prophesy: he predicted that the Messiah who would be born there would be the food of our souls.

Therefore, my dear brothers, Our Lord was to realize this prophecy and all that was pre-figured in the Old Testament. Saint Thomas Aquinas sums it up for us in a way, in that magnificent sequence of the *Lauda Sion* in which we find expressed the whole doctrine on the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist:

"It was represented in advance in prefigurations", Saint Thomas tells us: "the immolation is seen in Isaac, it was signified in the Pascal Lamb, and in the manna given to our forefathers."

After these explanations, let us now look at the holy Eucharist as a sacrament. For this, I will take up with you the doctrine on communion and the effects of this receiving of the holy Eucharist.

We see this in one of the meditations of Father Du Pont, the one which deals with the reasons why Our Lord wished that His presence in the sacrament of the altar should remain invisible. The first reason is considered from the position of the Person of Our Lord. I summarize:

"In the mystery of the Incarnation, the Son of God humiliated Himself to the extent of assuming the form of a slave (...). In the same way, in the sacrament of the Eucharist, He who is true God and true man wished to humiliate Himself to the extent of taking on the sacramental species of bread and wine and of hiding, under such commonplace appearances, all the greatness in His Divinity and His humanity."

All this reminds us of the writings of Fr. Buathier who, in his conclusions on the Eucharistic sacrifice, reproduction of the sacrifice of the cross and real sacrifice, tells us, after quoting from the Council of Trent and the learned Jesuit theologians Cardinals De Lugo and Franzelin, how much Our Lord is really immolated by the fact that He makes Himself a sacrament, and by the fact that He accepts the mode, conditions and consequences of sacramental existence.

The second reason given us by Father Du Pont is to be considered now from our point of view.

"The Saviour wanted", he tells us "to furnish us with a new and continuous opportunity of heroic practice of our faith, renouncing what each of our senses tells us, imposing silence on all the reasoning of our minds, taking them captive and submitting them to the doctrine of the faith"

This is what Saint Thomas Aquinas tells us, again in the Sequence:

"That which you do not understand, that which you see not, is supported by a courageous faith, undeterred by the natural order".

In addition, this is also what the canticle *Oh! August Sacrament* repeats. Remember the words of this canticle: "The color, the form and the taste and the odor remain, but under this feeble exterior, there is His Blood, let us not ask how, just let us submit ourselves; if our senses can err, our faith must assure us". See how these words, echo of the Sequence composed by Saint Thomas Aquinas, express the second reason why Our Lord wanted His Presence in the sacrament of the Altar to remain invisible.

"Yet a third reason may be given for the conduct of Our Lord", Fr. Du Pont tells us. "He hides Himself from our gaze in order to inspire us with the trust, the courage and the boldness to touch, to receive and to eat. Who would dare to do this" he says "if He were to appear visibly to our eyes?" "

Fr. Du Pont here alludes to what St. Thomas Aquinas tells us in his treatise on the Eucharist, on the conversion of the bread into the Body of Our Lord, for in effect Our Lord wanted this conversion not to be one of form (for then He would appear before our eyes), but of substance. This is what St Thomas says:

"This conversion is thus not formal, but substantial. It is not found amongst the various kinds of natural movement, but it may be called 'transubstantiation', which is its proper name"

This is why Fr. Du Pont, in this meditation, which, as you see, is taken from Thomist theology, continues: "But the same love which obliged Him to stay with us determined Him to take on an alien form, so that we could unite ourselves more closely with Him, and introduce Him into our hearts."

We have just seen why Our Lord wanted His presence in the sacrament of the Altar to remain invisible; now it is useful for us to look at the reasons for the choice of the species bread and wine as the materials of this admirable Sacrament. All this is presented in our manuals of doctrine when the question of the effects of communion, of the reception of the sacrament of the Eucharist is discussed. I think you are already aware of them; it is the custom to enumerate them thus: to unite us closely with Our Lord Jesus Christ, to increase the life of grace, to weaken our bad tendencies (our passions), and to be for us the guarantee of eternal life.

Fr. Du Pont, then, has us consider the first of these effects, from the angle of the choice of the species of bread and wine.

"The first reason", he says, "is to unite us amongst ourselves, both spiritually, as God, and bodily as man in the closest possibly way. Is there anything, which is united more closely to man than food and drink? They are not simply applied externally, but enter into man, they penetrate his substance, they become one same thing with him (...)"

These words, my dear brothers, (in the same way as the striking concision of the responses in our catechism) express to us (and we should be aware of this) what the Fathers of the Church tell us about the union of the faithful with Our Lord Jesus Christ by means of communion. Fr. Ventura, of whom I have already spoken, explains it to us as follows:

"For, in the unanimous language of the Fathers", he says, "through communion, Jesus Christ unites Himself with the person receiving Him in the most intimate way, the most perfect manner there is, after the hypostatic union; He enters into him, He becomes one and the same thing with him, as He Himself, the divine Author of this ineffable prodigy, (...) said: 'He who eats my body lives in me, and I in Him'(John 4)."

In consequence of this, Our Lord Jesus Christ, not content with living with us, desired to enter into us, and by means of the sacramental union, to produce that spiritual union of true and perfect love. This is what Saint Thomas means in these lines of the Sequence:

"You who know all and can do all things, you who feed us here below in the state of our mortality, deign, after having made us your commensals on this earth, to make us co-inheritors and companions of the inhabitants of the holy city."

The second reason for the choice of materials for the sacrament of the Eucharist indicated to us by Fr. Du Pont is that Our Lord wished to signify that He operates in our souls all the effects produced by bread and wine on the body. Here again, St Thomas mentions this in another strophe:

"Good Shepherd, true bread, Jesus", he says, "has pity on us. Feed us, defend us: give us to contemplate the supreme good in the land of the living."

And these lines can well be taken up as a communion prayer, for, in fact, by His presence and by virtue of this sacrament, He sustains, conserves, and increases in us spiritual life, and He strengthens us and makes our hearts

rejoice, while as we said in enumerating the effects of communion, it moderates our concupiscence and repairs the damage these passions cause in us.

Fr. Du Pont does not here discuss another effect of receiving the holy Eucharist, but we know it; is as a guarantee of our eternal life. Dom Guéranger, in his commentary on today's Corpus Christi gospel reading, presents it to us as follows:

"This life which resides in the flesh of the Word", he says, "and which has become ours in our very selves, will no more be overcome by death than it is in Him; on the destined day it will shake off the bonds of the ancient enemy and will triumph over corruption in our immortal bodies. The Church too, in her exquisite aspect of Bride, and in her maternal sensitivity, draws on this same passage from St. John, in the gospel reading for the daily Mass for the deceased, to apply the tears of the living over those who are no longer in communion with the blessed Host, the very source of true life, the guaranteed centre of their common hope"

You are familiar with this passage. Our Lord tells us that he who receives Him in communion possesses the seed of eternal life and that He will raise him up on the last day "*et ego resuscitabo eum in novissimo die*"

The third reason given by Fr. Du Pont was in order to signify that, just as bread is made of many grains of wheat, ground and pressed together, and wine is made from many grapes trampled on in the press, he who receives communion must not only be united with Our Lord, but also be united with other communicants. This is a well-known explanation, but one which needs to be continually recalled, for the purpose of the sacrament of the Eucharist is to effect the union of several of the faithful in one same spirit, and it is for this reason that it is called *communion*, that is to say, the mutual union of many amongst themselves and with Our Lord Jesus Christ.

So, my dear brothers, who would not dream of resolving to mortify, in this sense of trampling underfoot, whatever remains in us of the 'old man' in order to be in a state to taste the sweetness of this divine food, and to unite ourselves more intimately with Our Lord? Moreover, this particularly in the situation in which we find ourselves, in this situation where religion and Church are reduced to a household scale, as was predicted by Cardinal Pie.

It should therefore not be forgotten that the essential purpose of the Mass is to unite us with Our Lord Jesus Christ, victim, and to make us victims along with Him. The external sacrifice, St. Thomas teaches us, following St. Augustine, is the sign of that interior sacrifice by which each person must offer himself to God. Moreover, the partaking by the faithful in the visible sacrifice is a testimony that he accepts and puts into practice this interior sacrifice.

"To take communion is to be nourished by the cross", the Fathers of the Church used to say. It is thus communion that gives to sacrifice its supreme achievement. And in this way, the entire Church is built up and develops. For the Church, issue of the pierced side of the divine crucified One, has no other means of growing other than by sacrifice; and the mystical body can only be formed by those who have died and resurrected with Jesus Christ.

This should make us make us understand, my dear brothers, how, on the other hand, in the mystery of iniquity, which Our Lord permits for the Church, for his mystical body, the outrages against the mystery of our faith that I mentioned at the beginning of this sermon, are destroying the mystical Body, are destroying the Church. It is this, then, which corresponds with what Leo XIII heard after celebrating Mass on the 13th October 1884 and what he understood of the actions of the very cunning enemies of Christ and his Church, that which he made clear without any ambiguity, announcing it in his exorcism, that these enemies would lay their impious hands on all that was most holy. "There where the seat of the blessed Peter and the throne of Truth were instituted", says Leo XII, "there they have placed the throne of their abomination of unrighteousness so that, the shepherd having been struck, the flock might be dispersed." What does this mean, my dear brothers, if we consider only the expression 'abomination of unrighteousness, if not these outrages against that which is most sacred to us, the mystery of our faith, the holy sacrifice of the Mass, the holy Eucharist, which cannot be celebrated unless to begin with there is a valid episcopate for the transmission of the catholic priesthood. It is thus in this way that is accomplished the destruction of the Church, which, in the mystery of iniquity, Our Lord permits for his mystical Body.

Today it is enough to think, speaking of the Eucharistic miracle of Faverney which took place 400 years ago, precisely at Pentecost 1608, and which, as we know, reaffirmed all the catholic faith in the face of protestant

negations and errors; it is enough, then, in order to become aware of the realization of this mystery of iniquity, to consider the principal cause for the fact that at this very moment, the conciliar pseudo-clergy and all those who participate in their ceremonies are only adoring bread, and in consequence cannot receive any of the effects of the Eucharist. This principal cause being the invalidity of the consecration of bishops, it is only a plain Mister Vingt Trois, down from Paris, who is presiding this morning at Faverney.

And so, without even speaking of the invalidity of the new Mass, the liturgy which would have been accepted by Luther (one of the precursors of the Antichrist, further back in time than these conciliar antichrists), and without mentioning these anniversary ceremonies which will have been an occasion for ecumenical rapprochements, we can see how, in this mystery of iniquity it is not the Church destroying itself, but it is a question of real destruction carried out by *those who did not enter by the gate*, as Our Lord says, but *who have climbed in by another way*, and who are therefore *ravenous wolves*; this finds expression in the Canon Law, and particularly in the Bull of Paul IV, as illegitimate authorities. These it is who have set up the throne of their abomination of unrighteousness and who are destroying the Church mainly by these liturgical reforms, which invalidate the sacraments.

This is what is eclipsing the Church, to use the expression of Our Lady at La Salette; it is this which causes the *charity of many to grow cold* as Our Lord announced, for it is evident that souls no longer receiving validly the sacrament of the Eucharist cannot have its effects, those effects which I have just reviewed with you a few moments ago.

We should therefore consider all this, and also examine our souls in order not to partake of communion if we are conscious of having committed one or more serious sins, otherwise, as you have heard in the epistle of the Apostle Saint Paul, we would be eating our own condemnation.

Saint Thomas, again, expresses this in his Sequence:

"The good receive it, and the bad also, but with a very different share; the first find life, the others, death. It is death for the bad, and life for the good; see what a difference in the effects of the same food."

Here then, my dear brothers, is what we should remember of this teaching on this feast, on this admirable sacrament, its reception and our union, the effects of receiving it, of what it is that edifies the mystical Body which is the Church which extends the reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the royalty of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the reign of the Sacred Heart.

In consequence of this, inasmuch as the entire Church is built up and develops thanks to the sacrifice of the Mass, the sacrament of the Eucharist, to the same extent, then, the enemy can destroy the Church by invalidating the channels of the sacraments, and to the same extent we may say that the conciliar sect destroys itself, and in fact it is self-destructing.

Here, my dear brothers, is one of the reasons why the eclipse of the Church by the conciliar sect must come to an end. Another reason for the end of this eclipse of the Church in which we find ourselves, as we know, is that since Our Lord is all-faithful in his promises, he will establish the reign of his sacred Heart over France and by means of France over the whole world. This reign of the Sacred Heart, so often announced, will be prepared by the intercession and intervention of the Blessed Virgin Mary, by her immaculate Heart. This is why Our Lady said at Fatima: "In the end, my immaculate Heart will triumph." This does not refer to the end of the world; that would be absurd! Nevertheless, it does mean the announcement of the reign of the Sacred Heart.

Before looking at this next Sunday on the Feast of the Sacred Heart precisely, we must continue to turn towards the blessed Virgin Mary, towards her sorrowful and immaculate Heart, and to thank her, for it is only because Our Lady has given us Our Lord Jesus Christ that we are able here on earth to celebrate Corpus Christi, the Feast of the most holy Sacrament. In this month of May, then, which is consecrated to her, I would like to say a few words on the Blessed Virgin Mary in connection with today's solemnity.

I will quote to you what Fr. Ventura says about Our Lady giving us the Divine Child, *the living bread come down from Heaven*. Of course, I cannot cover all that he says of the commentaries of the Fathers of the Church on this subject, but at least I can give you the essentials of what we ought to know about the prefiguration of Our Lady in the Book of Proverbs, this housewife who brings her BREAD from afar to distribute to her household helpers.

We know, in fact, that Chapter 31 of Proverbs speaks of a Woman who is a miracle of wisdom, of providence, charity and fortitude, and who, like a merchant ship, brings her bread from distant shores. "Now, says Fr.

Ventura, this praise" (of which I have only quoted a part) "is too magnificent, and the words are clearly mysterious, for it to refer to an ordinary woman."

In addition, he then points out that according to certain Church Fathers, Solomon is here predicting the virtues and the glory of the Church, and according to others, the reference is to the glory and virtues of the most Blessed Virgin Mary. And Fr. Ventura remarks that both are correct, and, referring to Cornelius A. Lapede, he says that this prophecy was realized first in Our Lady and then reproduced in the Church.

And so, my dear brothers, after the reasons which led Jacob to give the name Bethlehem, *the house of bread* to the city in which Our Lord was to be born, we see here a prophesy about his most holy Mother. Our Lady is herself this ship " precious ship, formed of an incorruptible wood" Fr. Ventura tells us, "a figure of her inviolable virginity (...) a ship laden with bread, for it carried inside it Him who is Himself called *the bread of life*, the Word of God made man and become the food and the true nourishment of mankind".

Here we have, my dear brothers, a few fragments of these writings, which, together with those of the Church Fathers, present us with what is said of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, who, having received from Heaven the divine Word conceived in her womb, carries and distributes it as divine Bread to the children of the Church.

Now here is part of the exhortation of a prayer composed by Fr. Ventura which expresses at once the marian piety which we show towards our Mother, since Our Lady, as we can see, is the dispensatrix of her divine Son for us and in us, children of the Church that we are; a marian piety which we also manifest towards our Queen (and this prayer, as you will see, re-echoes in part the *Salve Regina*), towards Mary the Queen, whom we celebrate next Saturday. Moreover, in the context of this solemnity of the most Holy Sacrament, this exhortation also expresses the effects of receiving the Holy Eucharist, which I have just recalled to you. Here, then, is the passage, which is addressed to the most Holy Virgin Mary as announced in the Book of Proverbs. We may willingly make our own this prayer in which we know that the bread referred to is, of course, the *living Bread comes down from Heaven*: Our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Make us then feel, oh tender Mother, the effects of your goodness, of your sweetness, by giving us this bread you have had the benefit of bringing from so far; give it to us as a remedy for our ills, as a support in our weakness, as a consolation in our sadness! Give it to us during our life, give it to us at our death, so that at the end of this miserable exile we may have that happiness which you show us, that you yourself may give us this same Jesus blessed fruit of you womb who is to make us eternally happy. *Et Jesum benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende, o clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria!*"

Amen, so be it.

Abbé Michel Marchiset

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