

Holy Thursday

SEVEN CHURCHES PILGRIMAGE

ADULT REFLECTIONS



OFFICE FOR
EVANGELIZATION
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF RICHMOND



Stay Awake

Following the Last Supper, Jesus and his disciples journeyed from the Upper Room to the Garden of Gethsemane. In the garden, Jesus prays while his disciples sleep. In agony, Jesus prays for his Father's will to be done as he accepts his salvific role in our salvation.

On the night of Holy Thursday, Catholics throughout the world are invited to spend time with Jesus following the Mass of the Lord's Supper. We are invited to join him, fully present in the Eucharist for this time of quiet prayer. To stay awake, to pray with Him, and to be with Him.

Pray with Him

The Seven Church Pilgrimage provides us an opportunity to go on a spiritual journey. A journey of prayer and accompaniment with our Lord. Whether you enter this pilgrimage as an individual, with your family, or as part of a small group, this time is time for you to spend returning to Jesus with your whole heart.

At each parish, you are encouraged to enter in silence and pray for 10-15 minutes. Forty-six parishes from across the Diocese provided information about their time of prayer on Holy Thursday. The Parishes, grouped into five regions, are as follows: Roanoke & the New River Valley, the Greater Richmond Area, the Peninsula Parishes, Tidewater Parishes (East), and Tidewater Parishes (West).

You are invited to map out a course of parishes to visit this evening, utilizing the times provided. Within this booklet there are 7 reflections, one for each parish that you visit. Spend time in reflection and contemplation. We encourage to do what works for you! That might mean staying at your parish, doing multiple reflections at one location, or visiting a parish not listed here. All that matters here is the prayer that is offered and the time spent with Jesus.



REGIONS

New River Valley and Roanoke

Catholic Campus Ministry at Virginia Tech

203 Otey Street, Blacksburg

Adoration lasts until 9:15pm- Midnight and is located in the Great Room, go in the main entrance, down the ramp and to the left.

Saint Mary

1205 Old Mill Road, Blacksburg

Adoration lasts until 10:00 PM and is located in the Narthex.

Holy Spirit Catholic Church

*355 Independence Boulevard,
Christiansburg*

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Parish Hall.

Saint Jude

1740 Tyler Road, Radford

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Downstairs Parish Hall.

Basilica of Saint Andrew

631 N. Jefferson Street, Roanoke

Adoration lasts until 11:00 PM and is located in the Main Sanctuary, enter through the doors facing Jefferson Street.

Saint Gerard

809 Orange Avenue, Roanoke

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Church Commons.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

314 Turner Road, Salem

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Social Hall, through the door with the green awning.



Greater Richmond Area

Saint Ann

105 S. Snead Street, Ashland

Adoration lasts until 10:00 PM and is located in the Chapel.

Saint Gabriel

8901 Winterpock Road, Chesterfield

Adoration lasts until 11:00 PM and is located in the Church Commons.

Saint Michael the Archangel

4491 Springfield Road, Glen Allen

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Day Chapel.

Saint John

813 West Nine Mile Road, Highland Springs

Adoration lasts until 10:00 PM and is located in the Church Commons.

Cathedral of the Sacred Heart

823 Cathedral Place, Richmond

Adoration lasts until 9:00 PM and is located in the Sacred Heart Chapel within the Main Sanctuary.

Church of the Epiphany

11000 Smoketree Drive, Richmond

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Church Commons

Church of the Vietnamese Martyrs

12500 Patterson Avenue, Richmond

Adoration lasts until 3:00 AM and is located in the Sanctuary, at the side altar.

Holy Rosary

3300 R. Street, Richmond

Adoration lasts until 10:00 PM and is located in the Chapel.

Our Lady of Lourdes

8200 Woodman Road, Richmond

Adoration lasts until 10:00 PM and is located in the Church Commons.

Saint Benedict

300 N. Sheppard Street, Richmond

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Main Sanctuary, at the Mary Altar.

Saint Bridget

6006 Three Chopt Avenue, Richmond

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Church Commons, come in the front door.

Saint Edward the Confessor

2700 Dolfield Drive, Richmond

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Day Chapel.

Saint Joseph

828 Buford Road, Richmond

Adoration lasts until 11:00 PM and is located in the Social Hall.

Saint Mary

9505 Gayton Road, Richmond

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Daily Mass Chapel.

Saint Patrick

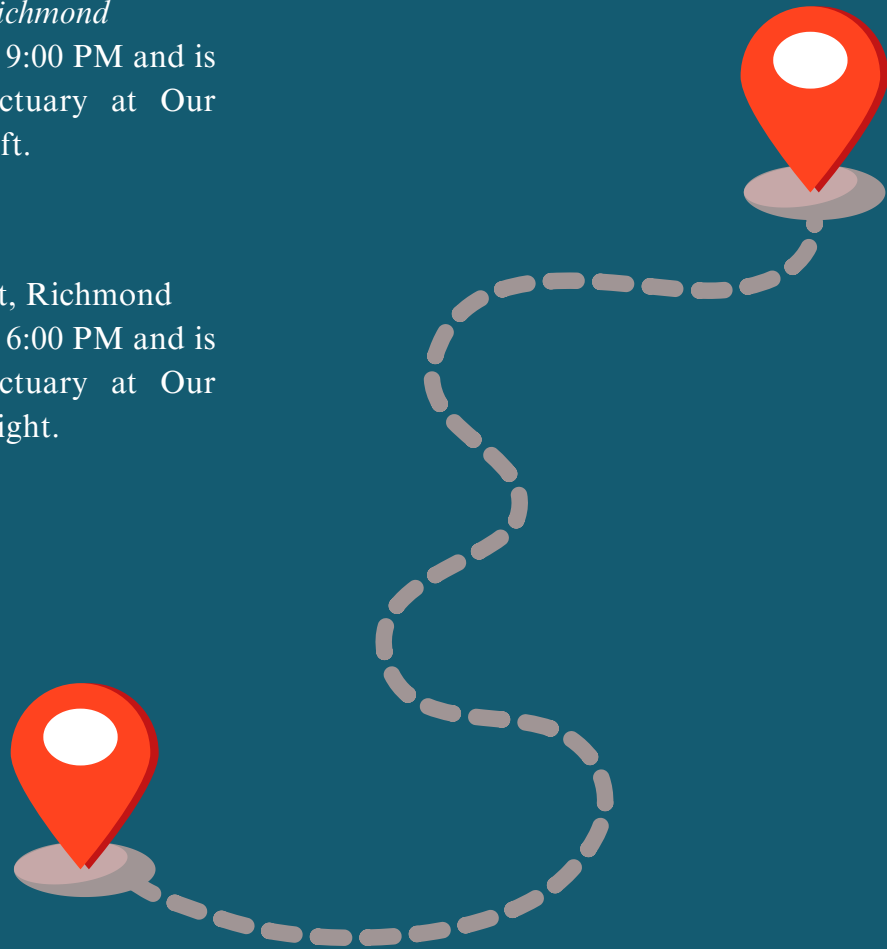
215 N. 25th Street, Richmond

Adoration lasts until 9:00 PM and is located in the Sanctuary at Our Lady's Altar to the left.

Saint Peter

800 East Grace Street, Richmond

Adoration lasts until 6:00 PM and is located in the Sanctuary at Our Lady's Altar on the right.



Peninsula Parishes

Saint Mary Star of the Sea

7 Frank Lane, Fort Monroe

Adoration lasts until 8:00 PM and is located in the Parish Hall.

Saint Joseph

512 Buckroe Avenue, Hampton

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Devotional Chapel.

Saint Rose of Lima and The Korean Martyrs

2114 Bay Avenue, Hampton

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Parish Hall.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel

100 Harpersville Road, Newport News

Adoration lasts until 10:00 PM and is located in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

Saint Jerome

116 Denbigh Boulevard, Newport News

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Fellowship Hall near the Church.

Saint Vincent de Paul

230 33rd Street, Newport News

Adoration lasts until 10:00 PM and is located in the Alfonso Chapel.

Saint Joan of Arc

315 Harris Grove Lane, Yorktown

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Lobby, signs will be inside the main door to direct you.

Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

3800 Big Bethel Road, Yorktown

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Sanctuary.

Tidewater Parishes (East)

Holy Spirit

1396 Lynnhaven Parkway, VA Beach

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Parish Activity Center.

Saint Gregory the Great

5343 Virginia Beach Boulevard, VA Beach

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Chapel.

Saint John the Apostle

1968 Sandbridge Road, VA Beach

Adoration lasts until 11:00 PM and is located in the Parish Activity Room, Off the Commons.

Saint Mark

1505 Kempsville Rd, VA Beach

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Daily Chapel, right outside of the Main Sanctuary.

Saint Nicholas

712 Little Neck Road, VA Beach

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Chapel, just to the right as you walk into the church.

Star of the Sea

1404 Pacific Avenue, VA Beach

Adoration lasts until 10:00 PM and is located in the Crawford Hall, enter the main church doors and take a right.



Tidewater Parishes (West)

Basilica of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception

232 Chapel Street, Norfolk

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Sanctuary.

Blessed Sacrament

6400 Newport Avenue, Norfolk

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Social Hall.

Christ the King

1803 Columbia Avenue, Norfolk

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Welcome Center, just off the Church Commons.

Holy Trinity

154 Government Avenue, Norfolk

Adoration lasts until 10:00 PM and is located in the Chapel (Not in the Main Church).

Saint Pius X

7800 Halprin Road, Norfolk

Adoration lasts until 10:45 PM and is located in the Church..

Saint Benedict

521 McCosh Drive, Chesapeake

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Main Sanctuary.

Saint Stephen Martyr

1544 S. Battlefield Boulevard, Chesapeake

Adoration lasts until 11:30 PM and is located in the Parish Hall.

Saint Paul

522 High Street, Portsmouth

Adoration lasts until 9:00 PM and is located in the Sanctuary.

Saint Mary of the Presentation

202 S. Broad Street, Suffolk

Adoration lasts until Midnight and is located in the Social Hall.

REMAIN

Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them, “My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me.”

(Matthew 26: 36-38)



Reflections

In the times of our greatest sufferings, the only people we want around us are those that are our closest, most intimate family and friends. When Jesus was “sorrowful even unto death,” he asked his disciples, his students who became his friends, to remain with him. We, too, are his disciples, his students and friends. As he asked his disciples then, he asks us to remain with him now.

St. Thomas Aquinas tells us that “action reveals essence.” What does this action of asking us to remain with him reveal of Jesus? Jesus desires to be close to us. God entered into time and took on human flesh to redeem us so we could be with him always. Tradition says that the sorrow and distress that Jesus felt in the agony of the garden was not only the weight of our sins but also the anguish we feel in the midst of that sin. Jesus experiences the weight that we feel of being separated from him by our sin. The One whose only desire at his most sorrowful moment is that we remain with him only feels the anguish of our choice of our separation. Sin separates us from God and does not allow us to remain with him, the God who so desperately wants to be close to us that he is willing to suffer and die.

Thankfully, the story doesn’t end there. He asks us to remain, and then he even provides the way. He knows our frail humanity and that we separate ourselves from him, fearing the Love that invites us to remain, and he gives us his very self through the Sacraments as a remedy. After the Resurrection but before the Ascension, in his last words of Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus told his disciples, “Behold, I am with you until the end of the age” (Matt. 28:20). He gives us his very self in the Eucharist- his body, blood, soul and divinity. He remains with us in Adoration, and you remain with him this holy night, watching and praying.

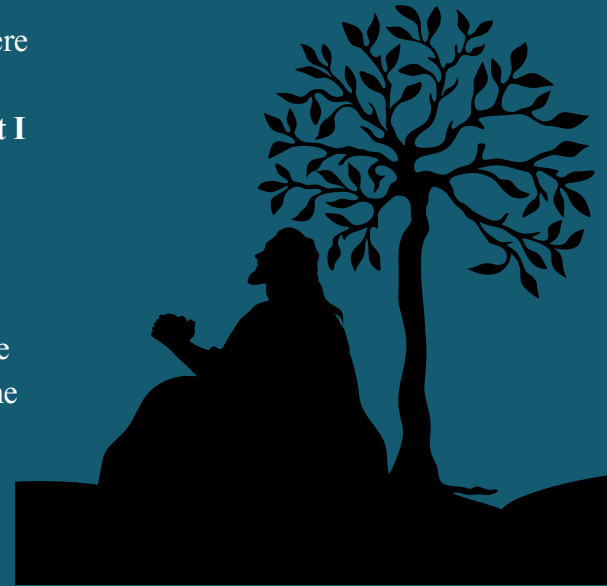
SURRENDER

He advanced a little and fell to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass by him; he said, “**Abba, Father, all things are possible to you. Take this cup away from me, but not what I will but what you will.**”

(Mark 14: 35-36)

[And to strengthen him an angel from heaven appeared to him. He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground.]

(Luke 22: 43-44)



Reflections

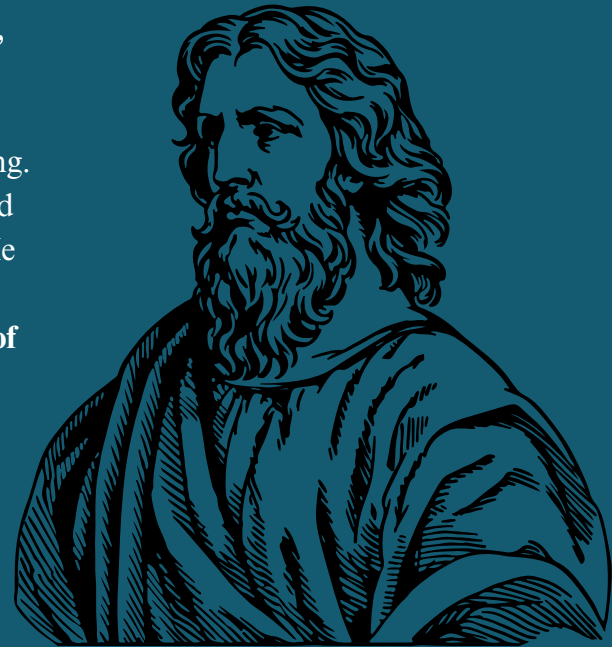
Jesus, in his intense moment of suffering, in the shadows of the anticipated suffering to come, surrenders his will to his Father. He shows us how to pray in surrender. He asks the Father to take his suffering away, but then surrenders to whatever the Father wills. God only wills our good, and surrender is ultimately a cry of trust in God’s goodness. Surrender is ultimately opening up to whatever comes, to give up control, to say “Thy will be done.” It’s not a frustrated resignation but a pure gift of self. Surrender is an act of deep communion.

He surrenders his cup: “This cup which is poured out for you is the New Covenant in my Blood” (Luke 22:20). Although rare, sweating blood can occur when one is under extreme stress. Jesus’ blood poured forth in agony, here, and later in his scourging and final sacrifice on the Cross. Recent scientific studies on various Eucharistic miracles and the burial cloth of the Shroud of Turin have all typed the blood AB+. AB+ is known as the universal receiver, meaning that a person who has AB+ blood can receive any other blood type and then makes that blood their own. Jesus would be able to receive all blood types and make them his own. “Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matt 26:27-28). His Blood is poured forth for us in the Eucharist as well. The God of the Universe surrenders himself in becoming a small white host to come into communion with you. When we receive the body, blood, soul and divinity of Christ in the Eucharist, we abide in him, and enter more deeply his body, the Church. The encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist, whether at Mass or here in Adoration, is the perfect moment for surrender. For we know Jesus will receive us.

VIGILANT

When he returned he found them asleep. He said to Peter, **“Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.”** Withdrawing again, he prayed, saying the same thing. Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open and did not know what to answer him. He returned a third time and said to them, **“Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough. The hour has come. Behold, the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners. Get up, let us go. See, my betrayer is at hand.”**

(Mark 14: 37-42)



Reflections

Jesus invites his disciples to pray with him during his agony, and finds them asleep. Later, he invites them again to vigilance. Jesus knew the darkness and struggle that was coming. He knew his disciples, facing the Cross of Jesus ahead of them, would be tempted to run away. He was teaching his disciples and us that “such a battle and such a victory become possible only through prayer” (CCC 2849).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines vigilance as “custody of the heart.” The best way to keep custody of the heart is to dwell in his Sacred Heart through prayer. Yet, each time he invites the disciples into prayer, he finds them asleep. How often are we in that same situation? When facing difficulty, we often fall asleep tightly clutching our fear and worry. The Lord invites us to prayer, and we avoid and ignore the invitation or say we are too busy. We isolate ourselves from the Lord out of shame or fear.

It is interesting to note here that even though Jesus prayed, the Cross did not go away. Even though the disciples did not pray, the cross they were facing did not go away. “Get up, let us go.” Jesus wants to walk with you in your cross. He desires to be with us in the midst of our brokenness and offers himself as our remedy. St Paul tells us in 1 Cor. 10:13, “No testing has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with temptation will also provide the way of escape, so that you may be able to endure it.” He wants to be with us so much that he provides the way to pray and not lose heart (Luke 18:1). Time in prayer with Jesus in the Eucharist will give us the grace to remain vigilant in our communion with his Heart.

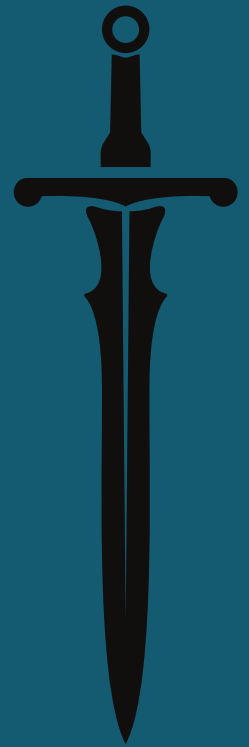
IDENTITY

While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a large crowd, with swords and clubs, who had come from the chief priests and the elders of the people.

(Matthew 26:47)

Jesus, knowing everything that was going to happen to him, went out and said to them, “Whom are you looking for?” They answered him, “Jesus the Nazorean.” he said to them, **“I AM.”** Judas his betrayer was also with them. When he said to them, **“I AM,”** they turned away and fell to the ground. So he again asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” They said, “Jesus the Nazorean.” Jesus answered, **“I told you that I AM. So if you are looking for me, let these men go.”** This was to fulfill what he had said, “I have not lost any of those you gave me.”

(John 18: 4-9)



Reflections

Names express our identity and mission. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus had identified himself as “I am the Bread of Life,” “I am the Vine,” “I am the light of the world,” among others. Yet here, at point of his arrest, he identifies himself as “I AM.” Those arresting him would have recognized this “I AM” statement as the expression of his identity as God, connecting Jesus to the words told to Moses “I am who I am” (Ex. 3:14). God’s name “I am” resists unraveling; it is mysterious and we can never fully comprehend him, but we come to know a little more about God through Jesus’ name which means “God Saves.” His very identity is that he comes to save us.

“The Resurrection of the Crucified One shows that he was truly ‘I AM, the Son of God and God himself’” (CCC 653). The Resurrection proves Jesus is who Jesus says he is, and that all that he says is true. So when Jesus says “this is my body” and “this is my blood” and commands his Apostles to repeat his actions and words “until the end of time,” he means it. The Eucharist is not a symbol or metaphor but the way he remains with us sacramentally, since he promised to love us “to the end” (John 13:1). When Moses is before God in the burning bush, he veils his face and takes off his sandals. Peter, seeing Jesus work the miracle of the catch of fish, exclaims “Depart from me Lord, for I am a sinful man” (Luke 5:8). Face to face before God, we, too, discover our own insignificance. Yet the Lord does not see us as insignificant. He makes himself close to us and remains with us in the Eucharist. This is our identity. Our identity is not in what the world says we must be, feel, look like, do or accomplish, but it is in who Christ says we are. He says that we are so loved by him that not only does he save, but he stays.

ABANDONED

His betrayer had arranged a sign with them, saying, "The man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him." Immediately he went over to Jesus and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" and he kissed him.

(Matthew 26: 48-49)

"Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

(Luke 22: 48)

Jesus answered him, **"Friend, do what you have come for."**

(Matthew 26: 50)



Reflections

The Eucharist and the Cross are stumbling blocks. Neither the Cross nor the Eucharist can be understood without faith. In a crisis of faith, we may run, as the disciples did at the cross. We may respond like the disciples, who upon hearing the Bread of Life discourse, say "This saying is hard, who can accept it?" (John 6:60). This reply echoes throughout the Christian life in response to Jesus' call. Forgiveness is hard, who can accept it? Loving faithfulness is hard, who can accept it? Perseverance is hard, who can accept it? Belief in the Real Presence is hard, who can accept it? Suffering is hard, who can accept it?

Yet Jesus does not change his mind and decide to make things easier. He does not erase difficulties. He does not say we misunderstood his words. Instead he responds, "Will you also go away?"

We see in this Holy Thursday night how easy it is to go away. Peter follows, but remains distant, and denies knowing Jesus when questioned. Judas betrays him for thirty pieces of silver, the amount that was paid to compensate for the death of a slave. There are times in our lives where we too betray Jesus, where we treat him as slave who had to die for us. Yet even in this hour of darkness, Jesus calls the one who betrays him "friend." Even in our moments of darkness, Jesus calls us friend, and reminds us that "no one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). St. Thomas Aquinas tells us that "Christ did not lay down his life for us to remain his enemies, but that he might make us his friends. That is to say, even if we were not friends as those loving him, nonetheless we were his friends as loved by him."

HEALED

His disciples realized what was about to happen, and they asked, “Lord, shall we strike with a sword?” And one of them struck the high priest’s servant and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said in reply, **“Stop, no more of this!” Then he touched the servant’s ear and healed him.**

(Luke 22: 49-51)



Reflections

At the moment of his salvific self-offering, Jesus reaches down and heals the servant with his touch. This moment echoes who Jesus is throughout the Gospels, Christ the Divine Physician who heals the blind, the woman with the hemorrhages, and countless others, fulfilling the words of the prophet Isaiah: “He took our infirmities and bore our diseases” (Mt 8:17).

He heals the servant’s ear. Our ears too need healing. We listen to the lies of the world, the lies we tell ourselves, or the lies we believe about God. Our words and actions can be this same sword the disciples wanted to use, which we justify on the basis of perceived injustice, anger or hurt. We need Jesus to touch our ears and tell our hearts “Stop! No more of this!” when we spiral into thoughts, words and actions that are not of his image and likeness.

We need Jesus to touch our ears and our hearts. The Good News is that he wants to heal us, as he told Moses in Marah: “For I am the Lord, your healer” (Ex 15:26). Christ continues to heal us and restore our dignity through his touch in the sacraments. In a homily for Corpus Christi, Pope Francis said, “The Eucharist fulfills the Covenant which sanctifies us, purifies us, and unites us in a marvelous communion with God. In that way we learn that the Eucharist is not a prize for the good, but strength of the weak; for sinners it is pardon; it is the viaticum that helps us move forward, to walk.”

We do not have record of the servant’s response to Jesus. This moment of encounter lasted less than a minute, but the servant could never be the same. There would always be the life before Christ healed him, and then life after he met Jesus’ healing touch. Jesus saw the one who needed to be healed. He sees us, and we too are never the same.

FULFILLED

Then Jesus said to him, **“Put your sword back into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot call upon my Father and he will not provide me at this moment with more than twelve legions of angels? But then how would the scriptures be fulfilled which say that it must come to pass in this way?”** At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, **“Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to seize me? Day after day I sat teaching in the temple area, yet you did not arrest me. But all this has come to pass that the writings of the prophets may be fulfilled.”** Then all the disciples left him and fled.

(Matthew 26: 52-56)



Reflections

The whole of the prophets and the Old Testament point to the great work of salvation God wants to accomplish. Jesus' redemptive passion is the whole reason for the Incarnation. Throughout his ministry, Jesus points out that 'for this purpose have I come' (Jn. 12:27).

Peter, after witnessing the events of the passion (albeit from afar) and the Resurrection (beating the other disciples to be first inside the empty tomb), declared "This Jesus was delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). He later preached, "You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake" (1 Pet. 1:18-20). Peter knew that Jesus had accomplished his mission and was true God and true Man. Peter's life had been changed by his relationship with Christ, and he went to share the Good News with the whole world.

His Paschal sacrifice redeems us and restores us to communion with himself. Yet Jesus did not just die for our sins, resurrect, and then leave us on our own. He promised to love us to the end (John 13:1). He fulfills that promise by staying with us in the Eucharist. Mysteriously, the sacrifice of the Cross and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are the same sacrifice, for Jesus gives us his same body and blood that was poured out on the cross. The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Church's life and we draw our life from the Eucharist. This is the purpose for which he came- not only that we receive him, but that he receives us as well. "I [Jesus] came that they might have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). Like Peter, our lives are changed by knowing Christ.

PLENARY INDULGENCE

A plenary indulgence, when granted, fully removes all temporal punishment of one's sin from the faithful. On Holy Thursday, a plenary indulgence is granted to the baptized faithful who piously recite the verses of the Tantum Ergo (below) after the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday during the solemn reposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament. In addition, you must receive the sacrament of Penance, holy Communion and pray for the intentions of the pope within several days before or after the indulgenced act.
- Norms and Grants in the official Manual of Indulgences, fourth edition (1999)

TANTUM ERGO

Tantum ergo Sacramentum, Veneremur cernui: Et antiquum documentum, Novo cedat ritui: Præstet fides supplementum, Sensuum defectui. Genitori, Genitoque, Laus et iubilatio, Salus, honor, virtus quoque, Sit et benedictio: Procedenti ab utroque, Compar sit laudatio.
Amen.

CREDIT

A special word of thanks to the Diocese of Arlington for sharing their reflections for this resource.

