

The Way of Perfection

Part 5: Our Father

The Eucharist : Our Daily Bread (**Following Communion**)

Chapter 33-35 (summary)

Saint Teresa of Avila

Chapter 34 Continues on the same subject. The matter is very helpful with regard to the time immediately following reception of the most Blessed Sacrament.

In this petition, the word “**daily**” seems to mean **forever**. Reflecting on why after the word “**daily**” the Lord said “**give us this day, Lord,**” that is **be ours every day**.

I have come to believe that on **earth** we **possess** Him and also in **heaven** we will possess Him if we **profit** well by His company. He doesn’t **remain** with us for any other reason than to **help, encourage, and sustain** us in doing this **will** that we have prayed might be done in us.

2. In saying, “**this day,**” it seems to me, He means **one day** that lasts as long as the world and no longer.

As for the unfortunate ones who will be condemned, it will not be the Lord’s fault if they allow themselves to be conquered as He never stops **encouraging** them until the battle is over.

So the Son tells His Father that because there is only **one day**, the Father should let Him pass it in **servitude**.

He asks again for no more than to be with us this **one day**, because it is a fact that He has given us this most sacred bread **forever**.

His Majesty gave us the **manna** and **nourishment of His humanity** that we might find Him and not die of hunger. The soul will find **delight** and consolation in the most **Blessed Sacrament**.

I don’t want to think He had in mind the bread used for bodily nourishment. The Lord was in the most **sublime contemplation**, so would He have placed so much emphasis on the petition that He as well as ourselves eat?

It wouldn’t make sense to me.

He is teaching us to **set our wills on heavenly things** and to ask that we might begin to enjoy Him here below. So, would He get involved with something so base as asking to eat? He

knows that once we start worrying about **bodily** needs, those of the **soul** will be forgotten! ...

There is no **need** or **trial** or **persecution** that is not **easy** to suffer if we begin to enjoy the **delight** and **consolation** of this **sacred bread**.

3. **Ask the Father**, daughters, together with the Lord, to give you your Spouse “**this day**” so that you will not be seen in this world without Him. To temper such great happiness it is sufficient that He remain **disguised** in these “**accidents of bread and wine.**” This is torment enough for anyone having no other love than Him nor any other consolation. Beg Him not to fail you and to give you the **disposition** to receive Him worthily.

4. Don’t worry about the other bread ... there are other times for working and earning your bread. Have no fear that you will be in want of bread if you have sincerely **surrendered** yourselves to the **will of God**.

If I fail in this **surrender**, as I have many times, I would not beg that He give me this bread or anything else to eat. Let me die of hunger; why would I want life if I am daily gaining eternal death?

Carefully avoid wasting your thoughts on what you will eat. Let the body work, it is good to work to sustain yourself; let your **soul** be at **rest**. Leave this care to your Spouse; He will care for you always.

5. Your **attitude** should be like that of a **servant** when he begins to serve. His care is about **pleasing** his master in everything. In return the master is obliged to provide his servant with food... so it wouldn’t be right for the servant to go about asking for food ... But let us, Sisters, **ask** that Eternal Father that we might **merit** to receive our **heavenly bread** in such a way that the Lord may **reveal Himself** to the **eyes of our soul** and so make Himself **known** since our bodily eyes cannot delight in beholding Him, because He is **hidden**. Such knowledge is another kind of delightful sustenance that maintains life ...

6. Do you think that this **heavenly food** fails to provide **sustenance**, even for these bodies, that it is not a **great medicine** even for bodily ills?

Well, I know that it is. I know a person with great pain, who through this bread had them taken away ... and was made completely well

... The **wonders** this most **sacred bread** brings about, in those who worthily receive it, are well known.

When she heard people say they would have liked to have lived at the time Christ our Good walked the earth, she would laugh to herself. She wondered what more they wanted since in the most **Blessed Sacrament** they had Him just as **truly present** as He was then.

7. For many years when she received Communion, and though she was not perfect, she strove to strengthen her faith so that in receiving her Lord it was as if with her **bodily eyes**, she saw Him **enter her house**.

Since she believed that this Lord truly entered her poor home, she freed herself from all exterior things when it was possible and **entered to be with Him**.

She strove to **recollect the senses** so that they all took notice of so great a **Good**, I mean that they would not impede the **soul** from recognizing Him.

She considered herself at His feet and wept with the Magdalene, as if she were seeing Him with her bodily eyes. And even though she did not feel **devotion**, **faith** told her that He was indeed there.

8. ... Receiving Communion is not like picturing with the **imagination**, as when we **reflect** on an episode of our Lord's Passion ... In **Communion** the event is **happening now**, and it is **entirely true**. There is no reason to look for Him elsewhere. Since we **know** Jesus is with us ... we should **approach** Him.

Now, if when He went about in the world the mere touch of His robes cured the sick, why doubt, if we have faith, that **miracles** will be worked while He is within us and that He will give what we ask of Him, since He is in our house? His Majesty is not accustomed to **paying poorly** for **His lodging** if the **hospitality** is good.

9. If it pains you not to see Him with your bodily eyes, consider that seeing Him so is **not fitting** for us.

To see Him in His **glorified state** is different from seeing Him as He was when He walked through this world. No person would be capable of enduring such a glorious sight ... In seeing this **Eternal Truth** one would see that all the things we pay attention to here below are **lies** and **jokes** ...

Beneath that bread He is easy to deal with. If a king were disguised it wouldn't matter to us at all if we conversed with him without awe and respect. ... otherwise who would dare approach so unworthily, with so much lukewarmness, and with so many imperfections!

10. How we fail to know what we are asking for ... He **reveals** Himself to those who He sees will **benefit** by His presence. . Even though they fail to see Him with their bodily eyes, He has **many methods** of **showing Himself to the soul**, through great interior feelings and other ways.

Be with him willingly; don't lose so good an occasion for conversing with Him as is the **hour** after having received Communion. If **obedience** should command something, Sisters, strive to **leave your soul** with the Lord. If you immediately turn your thoughts to other things, and take no account of the fact that He is within you, how will He be able to **reveal Himself** to you? This is a good time for our Master to **teach us**, for us to **listen to Him** **kiss His feet** because He wanted to teach us, and **beg Him not to leave**.

11. If you have to pray to Him by looking at His **picture**, it would seem to me **foolish**. You would be leaving the Person Himself in order to look at a picture of Him.

Wouldn't it be silly if a person we love very much and of whom we have a portrait came to see us and we stopped speaking with him to carry on a conversation with the portrait? It is **good** however to have a **picture of Christ** when He is **absent**. It is a **comfort** to see an image of One whom we have so much reason to love. Wherever I turn my eyes I would want to see His image; the One who loves us so much ...

12. **After receiving the Lord**, since you have the Person Himself present, strive to **close** the eyes of the body and **open** those of the soul and **look** into your own heart.

You should **acquire the habit** of doing this **each time** you receive Communion and strive to **enjoy this blessing frequently**.

Though He comes **disguised**, it does not prevent Him from being **recognized** in many ways, in conformity with the desire we have to see Him. You can **desire** to see Him so much that He will **reveal** Himself to you **entirely**.

13. If, on the other hand, we pay no attention to Him and go seeking **worldly things**, what is there for Him to do? Must He force us to see Him since He wants to **reveal Himself** to us? No, because they didn't **treat** Him so well when He let Himself be seen openly by all and clearly told them who He was; very few were those who **believed** Him.

He is being **merciful** by letting us know that He is present in the most **Blessed Sacrament**. He doesn't want to **show** Himself openly, **communicate** His grandeurs, and **give** His treasures except to those who He knows desire Him greatly; these are His **true friends**.

Those who are **not** His true friends and do **not** draw near to receive Him as such will **never** trouble Him with requests that He reveal Himself. This person will leave and quickly forget what took place, hurrying on to other business affairs, occupations and worldly activities so that the Lord of the house may not occupy it. Amen