

You And Your Service sheet

• GUILLERMO TEJON, O.P.

I. — YOUR PIETY (continued)

4. — Your Communion

I tell you most solemnly, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you. Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him. As I who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me. This is the bread come down from heaven; not like the bread our ancestors ate: they are dead, but anyone who eats this bread will live forever (Jn. 6, 53-58)

Can you live without food? Can you be strong and healthy without sufficient food? . . .

Sanctifying Grace is the life of your soul. If that life is to be preserved, if your soul is to grow strong and healthy, you need spiritual food. You need the Sacrament of the Eucharist, where God Himself becomes the food of your soul.

And He wants you to take food. If you do, you will have life everlasting. If you don't, your soul will grow weaker and weaker, and eventually it might die . . . by falling into sin; and perhaps by losing God's eternal happiness.

You should not be satisfied with receiving Communion once a year. That is the very minimum required of those who do not care much about the Eucharist. Keep the commitment of your Service Sheet. Receive Christ in the Eucharist every time you go to Mass; if possible, daily.

The benefits that you derive from Communion are many. Communion removes venial sins from your soul. Since Christ is the source of all grace,

Communion also increases the Sanctifying Grace that you already have. And it gives you strength to avoid sins in the future, and to continue working for your sanctification and the sanctification of others.

Communion is a sacrament of the living. It's to be received in a state of grace. If you have the misfortune of committing a mortal sin, make a good Confession before going to Communion. The fear of what others are going to think of you if you do not go to Communion is not an excuse. Remember what St. Paul says: "anyone who eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will be behaving unworthily towards the body and blood of the Lord" (*I Cor.*, 11, 27). In other words, anyone who abuses the Sacrament of the Eucharist abuses Christ and, instead of increasing his grace, he increases his sin.

But if you are in a state of grace, do not hesitate to approach the Communion Rail. Christ will welcome you.

If you are in a state of grace there is no need for you to go to Confession every time you go to Communion.

Do not listen to those who say: "How dare you receive Communion every day? You are not worthy!"... — Of course you are not worthy! Nobody is! But, precisely because you are not worthy, you should go to Communion! To make yourself more and more similar to Christ, and therefore worthier of receiving Him!...

Routine is one of the worst enemies of Holy Communion. Prepare yourself to receive Christ; and give Him thanks after the Sacred Banquet. The best way to do this is to follow the Mass, as explained in the previous number.

However, please do not overdo things. A few days ago a new cursilista asked me if he could receive Communion two or three times a day. Perhaps one day the Church will allow that; but right now the rule is once a day. Actually, once a day is enough. To do it more often would probably make us lose respect for the Sacrament. Only on special occasions are we allowed to receive Communion twice on the same day. For instance, when you receive the Eucharist on Saturday morning, and in the evening you hear an anticipated Sunday Mass.

But even if you are allowed to receive the Eucharist only once a day, you can make as many spiritual communions as you like throughout the day.

A spiritual communion is a short prayer (vocal or mental) in which you tell the Lord how much you would like to receive Him in the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. You can make it in the Church, at home or

anywhere else. This is a wonderful way to keep up the fervor of your past communion and to prepare yourself for the next one.

Communion is an encounter with Christ. This encounter is not necessarily accompanied by emotion or tears. The fact that you feel dry inside should not prevent you from receiving Christ. The important thing is that your will and your heart be firmly determined to love Him and to follow Him!...

There is more merit in a "dry" communion — where you have to force yourself to make an act of faith — than in a communion made "easy" by an emotional feeling.

As a sign of respect for Christ — and to increase your spiritual preparation — you should keep the Eucharistic Fast. This means that you should abstain from food and drink (except water) one hour before Communion. Not before the beginning of Mass; but before *your* Communion.

In general, the best time to go to Mass and Communion is early in the morning. Yet, your Mass and Communion should not just be a morning act. They should effectively influence your whole day.

A day started with the Morning Offering, followed by Meditation and then by Mass and Communion is indeed a day started in the right way! Whoever does this has a bright day ahead. He can go into the daily activities of his profession with full confidence that God's Providence will be with him!...
