

## The Living Chalice and Living the Eucharist

Although the chalice is one of the most important instruments used in celebrating the Eucharist, it is still an instrument. In an emergency it can even be dispensed with. Yet the chalice is so close to the Blood of Christ that it assumes a marvelously symbolic strength all its own that can guide us to a deeper understanding of our lives relative to the 'Price of Our Redemption'. In all three major parts of the Eucharistic Celebration (Preparation of Gifts, Eucharistic Prayer, and Communion) the chalice serves the Blood of Christ in such an immediate and varied manner that it itself becomes a sign teaching us how to shape our lives in the service of redemption...

To be a "living chalice" means that we continue our service to the Blood of Christ. Whenever we are filled and directed by God's word, whenever we transform our lives by God's power and keep offering them as gifts to God, our gifts will also become gifts to others. The greatest gift that the world is yearning for, consciously or unconsciously, is peace, harmony amidst diversity, and unity. It is only in unity that we are free to discover the happiness for which we were created. What people long for, then, is redemption. But there is no redemption without the Blood of Christ.

If you desire, therefore, to be a chalice that contains and dispenses the Blood of the Redeemer, then continue to live the Eucharist. Neglect no opportunity of collecting wine in your heart, drop by drop, moment by moment. Do not be concerned whether the wine be sweet or dry. What matters is the transformation, the sacrifice, the presence of the redemptive Blood of Christ.

Stand at the foot of the Cross with Mary, ready to lose everything. Let not a single drop of the Precious Blood trickle from his side that does not find a place in your heart and is not offered up with trusting love to the Father!

It is not required that you change the world. What is left in the chalice remains bitter or sweet even after the wine becomes the Blood of Christ. The world does not have to have all its problems solved in order to be saved. What the world needs is *Redemption*.

Therefore, celebrate the Eucharist by living it. Be a living chalice, but do not talk about it. Mary at the foot of the Cross did not talk either. It suffices that you be present with a trusting faith wherever Christ is bleeding on the Cross for humankind. Be there with loving heart as Jesus' mother is.

Whenever you receive the Blood of Jesus, whenever you remain steadfast in adoring it, whenever you endure pain in silence but extend love to others, then will people beat a path to your door. For they will perceive Mary's presence in you, the presence of a mother.

People are searching for God. They are yearning for God's love. Keep on receiving this love in the Blood at the foot of the Cross. Keep the pain to yourself but grant the light won thereby to others until they in turn discover its source and also learn to appreciate and love the Cross.

Be a living chalice by being Mary. Be a continuous Communion, a "Font of Mercy". Then you will be bringing redemption to others and you will be establishing unity, because all the while you will be giving them God, who is Love itself."

*(Winfried Wermter, CPPS, Blut Christi-Kaufpreis unserer Erlösung, Leutesdorf: Johannes-Verlag, 1983, in Cincinnati Province Newsletter, 1985, pp. 20-23)*

I am like most mothers. I believe God has given us a very special bond with our children. The umbilical cord is cut at birth, but we are always attached, connected by that special relationship that is a gift from God.

As a mother, I can relate to Jesus as he stood on the hill overlooking Jerusalem and cried, "O Jerusalem, O Jerusalem." So often I have wanted to gather God's children together as a mother bird collects her young under her wings. So often I have wanted to bring a mother's care to God's broken children, to tend their hurts, to care for them, to love them. But as Jesus had to let go, so do I. Recently, one of my sons said, "Mom, I have to make my own mistakes."

The Precious Blood is life -- life in me, life in the children of God, life in those suffering in oppressed countries who live with the knowledge that today, or someday soon, they will be shedding their blood. Most of us are not called to shed our blood literally. But if we want to be true followers of Christ, we die daily in our own paths of suffering, mostly by our self-denial.

When I drink from the Cup, I say with my life, "I am opening myself to you, Christ, and by this act I am willing to suffer with you. I will walk this life with you, knowing that my life will be splashed with the shared suffering and pain of those who walk near me."

Yes, my life is poured out daily for my husband, my children, my family. Mistakes allow us to dip into the Blood of Christ and forgive and hope and believe.

Our youngest daughter is deaf. She is also diabetic. We moved to Sedalia so our daughter could attend school here. I became aware of so many children with disabilities. Many of them have only one parent. My husband and I have been through some tough times over the years but "for better or for worse" tells the story of our life together. We support each other. He is my mentor, the one I depend on, the one who listens to me when I am discouraged, as well as the one who laughs with me. Our children give us many happy times and many times of concern. When I am worried what my daughter will do in the years to come, my husband reminds me that we will deal with it when the time comes. I accept the challenge of preparing her for life. I pray that when I am discouraged I won't give up. I am not alone. I have my husband, my family. And there are many moms and dads that daily carry the cross of life who walk the road of shared suffering with Christ.

The Blood of Christ calls me to be patient as I believe in God's healing and promise of redemption.

I recall the film we saw for the provincial assembly called, "Survival Run." Our survival run means that sometimes we have hills too steep to climb. We realize that coming down the hill seems easier and yet there are those rocks in the way that could trip us. We try to accept the hardships even as we watch for those rocks in the way. This is the only way I know how to get to the finish line everyday.

Being a Companion means I am willing to be involved in the real world which has more than its share of pain and suffering. We are often called to cry with those who are running alone. As we seek a closer union with the Blood of Christ, we are willing to deal with those issues that make us angry and those experiences in life which inflict pain and impose disappointment.

In the Precious Blood of Christ, I am united with God. I know that God is with me on the run to Calvary. As I accept God's redeeming presence even in the pain and sorrow of my life, resurrection becomes a reality.

*Joan Ginther, "A Mother's Love Reflects the Pain and Promise of the Precious Blood," The New Wine Press, September 25, 1992, p. 159)*