

DEVOTION TO THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; because thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, in thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.”

—Apocalypse 5:9



The Sacred Heart is the Divine Chalice
overflowing with the Precious Blood
for the relief of the souls in Purgatory.

DEVOTION
TO THE
PRECIOUS BLOOD

INCLUDING PRAYERS
TO THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

“Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things as gold or silver . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled.”

—1 Peter 1:18-19

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“Father, if thou wilt, remove this chalice from me: but yet not my will, but thine be done. And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony, he prayed the longer. And his sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground.” —*Luke 22:42-44*

“But after they were come to Jesus, when they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers with a spear opened his side, and immediately there came out blood and water.” —*John 19:33-34*

“Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins.” —*Matthew 26:27-28*

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O Jesu Lord,
Unclean I am, but cleanse me
in Thy Blood,
Of which a single drop
for sinners spilt,
Can purge the entire world
from all its guilt.

—From the *Adoro Te Devote*

~ Chapter 1 ~

Devotion to the Precious Blood

VENERATION of the Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is a devotion as old as our Holy Faith. This Precious Blood, by which mankind was to be redeemed, was alluded to immediately after the Fall of our first parents in the Garden of Paradise.

God Himself ordained the burnt offerings and sacrifices of propitiation of the pre-Christian era, whereby, for four thousand years, the blood of animals was to be shed and offered as a sign of the honor due to Him.

The object of these sacrifices was likewise to keep alive and to transmit to posterity the faith in the promised Messiah who was to redeem the world by the shedding of His Blood, to implant love for the Anointed One in the hearts of His chosen

people, and to enliven their hope.

The Precious Blood of our Redeemer was prefigured by the innocent blood of Abel, by the sacrifices of Isaac and Melchisedech, by the Paschal Lamb (the blood of which was sprinkled on the doorposts of the ancient Israelites on the night before they left Egypt), by the blood of innocent animals in the Old Covenant, and by many other customs practiced by the Israelite people. The prophecies—and the prophets to whom God showed in spirit when, where and in what manner it was to be shed—had reference to this Blood which Our Lord would shed in His Passion to redeem us. This is the Blood of the New and Eternal Testament, from which all the Sacraments derive their efficacy, from which all graces proceed, and from which, like heavenly dew, all graces are **ever descending upon the children of God.**

The Precious Blood is being daily consecrated and offered by priests in the Mass, and it is at all times venerated by the faithful in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. In Holy Communion, **all receive the Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ** as a pledge of life eternal. True Catholics must

venerate the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ unto the End of the World.

Venerators of the Precious Blood

Who have been the great venerators of the Precious Blood? St. Peter said to the Christians, "You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as gold or silver . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled." (*1 Peter* 1:18-19). In his epistles, St. Paul wrote most beautifully on the Precious Blood. To the Colossians he writes: "And through him to reconcile all things unto himself, making peace through the blood of his cross . . ." (*Colossians* 1:20). St. John the Evangelist magnificently extols the Precious Blood; and in the *Apocalypse*, when he beholds the great multitude standing before the throne of God, he tells us: "These are they who are come out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (*Apocalypse* 7:14). St. Augustine was accustomed to turn his eyes toward the bleeding wounds of Jesus and say: "Lord, Thou bearest me, written in Thy hands, in ineffaceable characters, which are Thy most holy wounds; and to

inspire me with confidence, Thou gently sayest: 'I have written thee in My hands with the marks of My most holy wounds . . .' Therefore will I ever say to Thee: 'Read, Lord Jesus, read that handwriting and save me through Thy Precious Blood.'"

Toward two devotions St. Augustine was powerfully drawn; for two objects he had the deepest reverence: **Our bleeding, crucified Saviour**, and Mary nourishing her Divine Child. He was accustomed to say: "Each time when I behold my Crucified God, I am filled with confidence and love, but I must confess that I experience the same sentiments, in the same degree, when I contemplate the thrice-blessed breasts which gave nourishment to the Son of God. Placed between these two heavenly objects, I indeed know not to which I should turn first, for I am powerfully drawn by the Blood of the Son of God and by the milk of His Virgin Mother."

St. Gertrude's writings are replete with most beautiful sentiments concerning the

Note: Two other saintly Catholics who especially venerated the Precious Blood were St. Gaspar del Bufalo (1786-1837) (he is also called Caspar del Bufalo) and Mother Catherine Aurelia of the Precious Blood (1833-1905). St. Gaspar founded the Missioners of the Most Precious Blood in Italy; Mother

Precious Blood. To St. Mechtilde Our Lord once revealed Himself on the altar, His hands extended and **Blood streaming from His wounds.** "I show these bleeding wounds," said Jesus, "to My Father, to appease His wrath. He pardons when He sees the Blood. Let sinners but look upon Me, and they will be moved to repentance, confidence and love."

St. Catherine of Siena and St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi practiced a very special devotion to the Precious Blood. Whenever St. Catherine of Siena, who was one of the most eminent and heroic characters in the history of the Church during the fourteenth century, thought of the Precious Blood of Jesus, the tongue of the timid virgin became eloquent, and fearlessly she stepped before kings and popes and by her zeal exercised a lasting influence on the developments of her time. Her numerous letters to bishops, cardinals and popes always began with the words: "I address you in the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ."

Catherine Aurelia founded the Sisters Adorers of the Precious Blood (in Canada). There is a monastery of her institute, along with the Confraternity of the Precious Blood, in Brooklyn, New York and another in Manchester, New Hampshire. A cause for Mother Catherine's canonization is in progress.—*Publisher, 2008.*

How to Offer the Precious Blood To the Eternal Father

One of the best means of participating in the graces and blessings of the Precious Blood is to offer it to the Eternal Father. "An offering," says Father Faber, is "more than a prayer." In prayer, we are the recipients, but when we make an offering, God deigns to accept something from us. St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi exclaimed on one occasion when in ecstasy: "Every time a creature offers up this Blood by which he was redeemed, he offers a gift of infinite worth, which can be equaled by no other!" God revealed to this sainted Carmelite nun the practice of making this offering when He complained to her that so little effort is made in this world to **disarm His Divine justice against sinners**. Acting upon this admonition, she daily offered the Precious Blood fifty times for the living and the dead. She did this with so much fervor that God showed her on different occasions the numerous souls whose conversion she had brought about in this manner and all the Poor Souls she had delivered from Purgatory. "This devotion," says Longius, "is

pleasing to God, because He is thereby honored by the best and the most sublime gifts.”

Another time when St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi was in ecstasy, she saw all the holy patrons of the city of Florence, accompanied by innumerable other Saints, before the throne of God, interceding for sinners, but their petitions remained unanswered. Then, the Guardian Angels of these poor sinners approached, but their prayers were not heard either. Next came the multitudes of the Blessed, and they made intercession for these guilty souls. While imploring God’s mercy, they were intent at the same time to offer to the Eternal Father the **Precious Blood**, and on account of the merits of this Precious Blood, *their* petition was granted.

Should not these examples incite us to offer to God the Father the Precious Blood of Jesus frequently during the day?

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Jesus, in satisfaction for my sins, and for the needs of Holy Church.

By this short, efficacious prayer, an indulgence of five hundred days can be gained every time.* Many could make this offering whenever they hear the clock strike. And it is especially very efficacious when made during Mass.

In order to **obtain special graces through the Precious Blood** of Jesus Christ, let us ask the Blessed Virgin to offer it in our stead. This advice is given to us by many devout servants of God, in particular by St. John Vianney, the Curé of Ars, who says that this is the best method of prayer. Furthermore, he adds, "My children, mark this well: whenever I obtained some grace, it was obtained in this manner, which I never found to fail." In the life of St. Dominic we read that on one occasion when he was preaching about venerating Mary, he saw the Blessed Virgin sprinkling his devout hearers with the Blood of her Divine Son. Once while the Saint was celebrating Mass, three hundred persons, among them the king and queen, saw the Mother of God, at the Elevation of the Chalice, pouring the Precious Blood

* Partial indulgences are no longer linked to specific periods of time.—*Publisher*, 2008.

over all who were present there and over the whole Church.

Let us in particular during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass beseech Mary to offer to the Eternal Father the Blood of her Son in the Chalice—for Holy Mother the Church, for the conversion of sinners, for the souls in Purgatory, and for all our various needs. We may enumerate them to her with full confidence, and the greater their number, the better is she pleased. What we offer to God in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is of infinitely greater value than what we ask for. God remains our debtor, as it were, so great is the value of the Precious Blood.

An Easy Means to Prevent Numerous Mortal Sins

Here on earth we shall never sufficiently realize what sin is. The person who sins rebels against God. It was sin which caused the death of the God-Man, Jesus Christ. Yes, sin is deicide, for according to the words of St. Bernard, "Sin murders God in so far as it is possible for man to do so." Once, when Our Lord showed St. Catherine of Genoa the heinousness of venial sin, the servant of God was so ter-

rified that she would have died instantly had she beheld one of these stains on her own soul. "This vision," she says, "concerned only a slight fault and lasted but a moment; had it continued a little longer, it would have sufficed to cause my death, or even to change the substance of a rock into dust."

The least sin is so great an evil that the Saints say: "If we could open the gates of Hell and liberate all the souls enclosed therein, and could release all the suffering souls from Purgatory—all this by one little lie [that is, by a venial sin], we would not be permitted to do so." By preventing one *mortal* sin, we render an inestimable service to the honor of God—and how easily this can be done! Father Faber writes: "If every evening, before we retire, we would ask the Blessed Virgin Mary to offer to God the Precious Blood of her Divine Son Jesus for the intention that thereby one mortal sin which might be committed somewhere that night might be prevented, and if every morning this offering were renewed from day to day, **we could prevent many mortal sins.**" What joy and happiness this practice would bring to us! We could thereby

atone for our own sins and merit immeasurable treasures for Heaven.

Here follows a striking example: St. Paphnutius (died circa 350) had for many years lived in a desert and labored at his sanctification by austere works of penance. Once a peculiar thought came to his mind, and he dared to express it to God in prayer. He petitioned the Lord, in all humility and simplicity, to reveal to him a person who had the same degree of merit as he himself. God deigned to grant his request, and He gave Paphnutius to understand that at this moment a certain flutist living in Egypt ranked equal to him in merit.

The Saint at once started on a journey to find the flutist. Having arrived at the appropriate village, and making inquiries there, he was informed that the man he was seeking was engaged at a neighboring tavern, playing for the amusement of those who patronized the place. "How strange!" thought Paphnutius. Nevertheless, he sent word to the musician, begging him for a short interview. When the musician came, the Saint took him aside and spoke to him regarding the condition of his soul. "What

good deeds have you ever done?" asked Paphnutius.

"Good deeds?" replied the flutist; "I do not remember ever having done any; all I remember is that one day, while I was pursuing my former trade of stealing, I saved the honor of a virgin consecrated to God, and another time I gave my money to a poor woman who, in her great distress, was about to commit a crime." From this, our Saint realized that God had given the flutist graces similar to those he himself had received, because for the honor of his Creator, this man in his crude life had prevented two mortal sins.

You who read this, whosoever you may be, resolve to say the following little prayer every morning and evening:

O Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary, offer to the Eternal Father the Precious Blood of thy Divine Son for the intention that one mortal sin may be prevented this day (*or* this night).

You may add a *Hail Mary* in honor of the Mother of God for this intention. Perform this devotion with great fervor and

perseverance, and teach it to other devout souls. You will thereby acquire immeasurable merit.

If we truly love God, we cannot feel indifferent when God is offended. St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, when only eight years old, happened to hear two persons quarreling and using the most insulting language, and undoubtedly they thereby became guilty of mortal sin. The Saint was so pained at the thought of how grievously God had been offended that she spent the entire night weeping. Sixteen years had passed and she had forgotten this occurrence, when God revealed to her that in reward for the tears she had shed for the sins of others, she was destined to a special degree of glory, which was shown her in the form of a brilliant garment.

Will our reward be less if, for love of God, we try to prevent His being grievously offended? Oh, let us do our utmost, let us use every possible means, especially prayer and the offering of the Precious Blood of Jesus, to prevent mortal sins!