

## Eucharistic Union <sup>1</sup>

St. Peter Julian Eymard to the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament  
Angers, Tuesday, August 28, 1866

*Non relinquam vos orphanos, sed veniam ad vos – I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you* (Jn 14:18).

My very dear Daughters, the goodness of God and the love of our Lord, his grace and the wonders he has made in creation, as well as those he created since the beginning of the world, continue to increase. Our Lord acts like a father who finds ways in his advancing years to give ever more to his children. He always proceeds gradually, urging us forward by hope and love. This is why St. John says that *he loved his own in a special way unto the end* (cf. Jn. 13:1), and for that very reason he gathers all his gifts into a single one. Since our Lord's generosity has to be ever diverse, giving according to the needs of the times and the final days which are coming, he has to find a way not to exhaust but to expand his goodness.

**The Holy Eucharist became the grace of graces**, the gift of gifts. I will even say: our Lord loves us more today than he did a hundred years ago. Don't you see how his great love and goodness passed through many generations constantly multiplying its efforts to reach all the way down to us? Let us bless our Lord for giving us life at a time when exposition of the Blessed Sacrament has greatly increased, and for all the graces that result from it. Never has our Lord been more greatly honored; and never has he been more greatly offended. No, he is not loved; let us deplore the ingratitude of the world.

**The Holy Eucharist is a consolation for our love**; even more, it develops and perfects it. Listen well to this primary goal: if our Lord had not found this secret, if he had not instituted the Eucharist, we would be very unfortunate. We might complain that our Lord has now diminished and lessened his gifts and closed his heart, that his love ended in the Cenacle and doesn't come down to us. If our Lord had not instituted the Holy Eucharist, we could doubt that he loves us personally. We would have his gifts, Calvary, etc. certainly, but there would be no love, only mercy. For love, there must be presence.

We would be able to say: I know very well that you are good, that you are merciful towards me, and that you love me from heaven, but **with the Eucharist I know very well that our Lord loves me**. I mean not just to say that he loves us, but that he loves *me*, for Communion makes it very personal. I assist at Mass and can say, this is mine, since I had it offered, the priest said this Mass in my name by extending his love, our Lord loses nothing; in his goodness and mercy, he has now found the secret of giving himself to each person. Therefore, I am very sure that he loves me; he is there for me in a unique way. If he had not loved us to this extent, he would not be there, he is present uniquely for the person he loves with an enduring love.

This is so true that if the Christian didn't have the Eucharist he could say: God no longer loves me. Yes, the cross is there, but Jesus Christ is no longer on it. – Thank God! Do you want to crucify him till the end of the world? Look at the people who no longer come to Mass; they are worse than pagans. They deleted him from their memory, chased him from their hearts, no longer love him. Don't you see that there is no love? My very dear Friends, when have you shown your love for our Lord? When you received Communion. When we fail to love him, whenever we neglect Communion or do not approach the altar, our inner light diminishes. I know that there are other means, that the cross can nourish our love; but experience proves that when our Lord is not present in one's heart, there is no love.

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Our Lord was expressed basic truth when he said: *Non relinquam vos orphanos, sed veniam ad vos – I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you* (Jn 14 :18). What happens to a child when it loses father and mother? It becomes an orphan who loves no one and is loved by no one. We would be orphaned from God! Notice that even with the Holy Eucharist our Lord has all the trouble in the world to preserve our poor hearts, because we are afraid of giving ourselves to him; but the thought that he gave himself to me personally consoles my love.

**How would you recognize our Lord's love if he were not in the Eucharist?** You would love him only half-heartedly. That's why he is present in the holy sacrament of the altar. What would happen to love? As God, our Lord is everywhere; therefore, you would love him as God and not as man. You would relate to him as he was 18 centuries ago, and look for him only in heaven. If our Lord were not present as God and as man, our love would not be complete. Our body would not feel united with his body, our soul would not be united with his soul. We would belong to him only by desire, and our union with him would be imperfect. Then, would divinity offer our homage to his humanity? Do you think this would be proper? How could you do otherwise? How would God relate to men? You would lower our Lord's dignity.

**What did our Lord do to complete his love?** He instituted the Eucharist where he unites himself to all that we are, and where we love him because he is all ours. If our Lord were not in the sacrament of the altar, I ask you, how would you adore him? As God, he lives in heaven and you are not there. What would be lacking in your worship? His presence. Who even thinks about our Lord when the sacrifice of the Mass and the real presence are taken away? If you go to pagan and schismatic countries where people do not want to adore him, it is like going back to the time of the flood. He has nowhere to lay his head.

Since Jesus is present, his service is complete, we adore him as God with the perfect homage of our entire being and we adore him as man. Perfect worship establishes love. Is that all? Our hearts love, our bodies too, our senses love as do our eyes. That is why every part of our being must find our Lord in order to become unified and be in natural harmony with him. That is what happens in the Eucharist.

My Friends, one more point. **Our Lord was greatly offended**, especially as man. His divinity could not be crucified, for it was beyond our grasp. He was crucified as man. How many ungrateful and guilty Christians there are! How many sacrileges still affect our Lord! He has a right to receive reparation. But if the Eucharist is removed, if he is no longer present here, how will you make reparation? How will you make reparation to his human soul when it is not present? – I will make amends to his divinity. – You don't find there the totality of who he is. You can make reparation to his divine nature, but how will you do so to a human nature that was offended? His body, blood, and soul, all this is Jesus Christ. With the Eucharist, I can offer him homage, satisfy my faith, and even my zeal for his glory. How good God is!

**Why don't we think of him often enough?** My Friends, the major problem is that we do not live sufficiently with our Lord, we don't live in him and for him. I will receive Communion in order to have the strength to carry out my duties of state, to obtain a temporal favor. You are doing very well; this is your right and your duty. But must you stop there? You would be turning our Lord into heaven's door-keeper, a doctor who binds your wounds. You are beggars before God, before our Lord. But shouldn't you be children of love? Shouldn't we adore him for himself, do something for him? I'm speaking in general, since I don't have the honor of knowing your souls. Very few make their home in our Lord: *Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him* (Jn. 6:56), says our Lord. If he remains in us, he will not be idle. He will remove our weaknesses, so that we can be one with him.

Devout people hardly understand that they must receive our Lord to remain in him, to make him their center. They think of him for half an hour at Mass! During the day, may I ask, although you are

Christians, do you think about him? Perhaps you are very careful to offer your actions, but I cannot say that this comes to you as easily as breathing, love doesn't go that far. Shouldn't we think of him? My Friends, **the sign of love is in our thoughts.** Do you think of him even twice a day? That's a good start, but shouldn't we improve? God's words to Abraham are: *Walk in my presence and be blameless* (Gn. 17:1). Whoever remains in our Lord possesses in him the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Oh! We don't really love him. No doubt, there are a few small sacrifices to be done, a few Calvaries, a few crowns of thorns, yes, but the accompanying prayer is always: Lord, have mercy on us, like the apostles during the storm (cf. Mt 8:25). My Friends, our Lord is there, why don't we call on him? We do not love him. A poor person thinks immediately of his benefactor who is so good and generous. No one need advise him to see his friend. **This is spontaneous love.** How is it that we never think of our Lord? We think of mortal sins, and our conscience is afraid of him. Why is this happening? We do not have a clear enough idea of his goodness and love. Our response would be to give ourselves entirely to him. It is true that our Lord never complains, but we for our part must not be satisfied with the way we act. As long as a person doesn't think naturally and spontaneously of our Lord, as long as she needs to be drawn or reminded of him, how sad! We are still half-pagan.

In this city of Angers, who has received more signs of love, more graces than you? No one! O God, is it possible! Do we need pagans to come and reveal this? My Friends, pray a little more to our Lord, offer him the tribute of all you are, the homage of your sufferings, of what you love, of your desires, of everything that pleases you, of your body, of everything. When a poor person uses the money he received to bring a bouquet of flowers, how wonderful that is. I can see that you are generous, you love giving to our Lord. Here he is no longer the king of the poor. Give whatever pleases you, give to his heart.

Listen, my very dear Friends, we are surely not very rational toward our Lord. [...] Must we go to our Lord only when everyone has rejected us? I come to you. And our Lord receives us. He is so good and gracious; he would take us from the edge of hell, yet we go to him only with our wounds and miseries. What should you offer him? Your pleasures, your joys, whatever your heart loves. Bring him also a few flowers of virtues; after all, the altar is not always a Calvary.

Our Lord is on his throne. Only a few love him for himself; let us please him by doing so. Why can't you offer him the sacrifice of your joys? Why not bring to him this beautiful flower? Even if you are not suffering, true love must keep growing. We love our parents and family to that extent; can't we love our Lord to the same degree? We think of our Lord only as a beggar thinks of his benefactor, when he's hungry. Let us be generous and creative, finding something to offer him.

**Where do you think you can find the purest gift?** Where the gift is truly Eucharistic. Yet the gift is always limited. One may imagine doing homage by offering something that one likes; in suffering one cannot even say that all is well. All is privation when there is no love, only self-trust. Even a religious may imagine, Lord, I could be happier with a position of importance in the world. What kind of love is that?

Then, not everyone is called. However, in your own living situation can you not find some flowers to give? Be grateful to our Lord for being here. Were we not here, he would not be in the Eucharist. **Offer him then the homage of anything that you can give him,** make a gift to his body, to his divinity. Why is he surrounded by worship, flowers and candles? It pleases him. You must be aware that an ordinary citizen is not allowed to offer homage to a sovereign. It is of course forbidden to offer a gift to the emperor, without first acquiring his permission, because the emperor would have to offer something in return. One may not even make a gift to the Holy Father for the same reason; he would be bound to make return gifts to the whole world. Our Lord, however, accepts any gift, because in return he offers infinite

favours. When poor persons offer a simple bouquet in homage, their poverty receives greater honor than the recipient of the gift.

Yes, my Friends, the Eucharist is a great joy! Without it, we would die tomorrow. If we were without sin or possessed an ardent love we could say: My God, you can leave me, but he has commanded us to long for heaven where there is perfect love. This is what I wish for you.

**Point for reflection:**

This conference was given in the chapel of Angers to both lay people and religious alike. St. Peter Julian was challenging his flock to a spontaneous love for our Lord. Our Lord begins by increasing our love and desire for him. In the Eucharist his love becomes personal. In return, he is looking for union, love, and spontaneous thought. How can we respond to his love?