

The Eucharist, Source of Life¹

St. Peter Julian Eymard to the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament
Paris, Monday, June 14, 1858

I have spoken enough to you, my Sisters, about sacrifice, trials, sufferings, of death to self, before speaking to you about Eucharist. Your poor nature must have been frightened at the sight of so many sacrifices, facing such a complete death, you felt as if you had no strength and were unable to overcome so much. It was as if you were crushed, but we cannot let ourselves stop at that. In this death, we must find life in Jesus Eucharistic. The malice of the devil led us humans to put our creator to death, but Jesus Christ has overcome it and drawn immortal life from it. In the Eucharist, he annihilates all in order to give himself. So you see, life always comes from death.

Jesus Christ communicates his life by his grace, by his spirit, and by his truth which (is) Himself.

He does this **by his grace**, not only as all Christians receive it, but in a special way by our Eucharistic attraction. This attraction is at first through sentiment. We feel happiness and devotion in the Eucharist, but this sweet attraction and consolation will pass. For an attraction to be true, everything must lead to it. Our thoughts, our actions, have no other goal but to see the Eucharist in everything, even in what has no relation to it: reading, sermons, the practice of virtue, meditations, finally all of life. This is how Jesus Christ communicates his **spirit**.

A mother's milk transmits to her child her own inclinations, her physical life – healthy or sickly. Jesus, becoming our food, transforms us into himself as the perfect always absorbs the less perfect. We will think as Jesus Christ, behave as he does. As the air we breathe is the source of our material life, likewise living by the Eucharist every day, we will breathe only this divine atmosphere. Like St. Paul who knew only Jesus crucified (cf. 1 Cor 2:2), we will know only Jesus Eucharistic. There we will find the truth of Jesus Christ. In the other states of his life, Jesus does not show us the full truth of Himself: at Bethlehem he shows his poverty and humility, at Nazareth his hidden life, on Calvary his suffering and love. But **in the Eucharist Jesus summarizes his entire truth, his entire life**.

That is where we can find all the states of Jesus and conform our Eucharistic life to them. He himself will help us; all of his different states will become habitual to us. Finally in this way, he will simplify our life by giving it only one goal, one life: Jesus Eucharistic.

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Points for reflection:

What idea of the Eucharist is Father Eymard presenting to us?
How does he suggest that we make the Eucharist the center of our life

¹ All the instructions in this booklet are taken from the *Instructions to the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament*, Saint Peter Julian Eymard, Complete Edition, Rome, 2003. In these Booklets, certain titles have been modified to correspond better to the contents of the retained extracts, or to better reflect the vision which guided the choice of texts. However, in a footnote on the bottom of the page, the numbers and titles which correspond to the complete edition will always be included. This first instruction is # 33. *L'Eucharistie, principe de vie*.