

BEHOLD, I AM WITH YOU

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My Lord and my God, I firmly believe that you are here, that you see me, that you hear me. I adore you with profound reverence. I ask your pardon for my sins and the grace to make this time of prayer fruitful. My Immaculate Mother, St. Joseph, my father and lord, my guardian angel, intercede for me.

Anytime is good for prayer. Anytime is an opportunity to talk to you, my Lord. And as usual, I pray with the gospel, because in the gospel I have your life, which is always a treasure to rediscover. And during the year, I have the liturgical calendar. And it's also very helpful to go through the year in the Church and, like in a family tree, to discover the traditions of my family, the Church traditions that have been passed to me by my brothers and sisters in faith, throughout centuries, and- and to know that I'm holding in my hands such a legacy gives me reassurance and joy and- and connection with people from all over the place, all over the world, from any time in history. It's such a powerful experience to think that we are praying with the same Jesus that early Christians prayed, and later on, all the traditions in every country have followed.

So anyway, in this time of the year, after Easter, we have the chance almost every Sunday to have different mysteries, to consider mysteries of our faith: the Blessed Trinity, or Pentecost, or as today, Corpus Christi, like a little pearl, a joy, a reality that permeates my faith. And as usual, I was saying, I go to the gospel, to understand better, to put myself in the shoes of the Apostles, to the early Christians the same thing. And we read in the last words that St. Matthew has recorded, authored by you, my Lord, that the eleven disciples went up to Galilee, up to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them to go. So, they were excited after the Resurrection. They knew that you were alive and- and at the same time, they were more mature in their faith. Three years with you, seeing miracles, teachings, seeing you as a person, and then the very dark and intense moments of the crucifixion and the Resurrection, the joy of your Resurrection.

“And then when they saw him,” the Gospel says in Matthew, it says that when they saw you, “some worshipped, but some of them doubted.” They were still saying to themselves, is this for real? Is he really alive? Wonderful, right, because it shows the reality of- of your Resurrection. It was not easy to accept such big news, obviously. Sometimes it happens to me as well. Can I be so happy as to know that God loves me- is this for real? So then Jesus approached them and said, “All power, in Heaven and on Earth has been given to me.” And I want to stop for a second. He doesn't say, some power... a lot of power. He says, “All power in Heaven and on Earth has been given to me. Go

therefore, and make disciples of all nations.” I have overcome death. I have a tremendous goodness to tell you that I want you to help me to bring to all nations, this joy of my Resurrection. “Go— go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, talking to them about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

And it- just pause for a second again, all the miracles, but also the teachings, go to their countries, go to neighbors, to friends, to coworkers, and explain to them the beauty of the Trinity. Explain to them the beauty of the parable of the Prodigal Son. Explain to them how my Father in Heaven is preparing like a wedding feast. Explain to them what you have seen— how he washed your feet, or my conversations- or when we pray together at the sea, explained to them everything, the bathing of the fish, all the great moments that we had together. Eleven Apostles on top of a mountain with some women, the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene, most likely, maybe fifteen people, twenty, if you want. And then at the end, Our Lord, the last words, the very last words of Jesus Christ in this world, “And behold, I am with you all the ways, until the end of the age.” I am with you, I am with you, until the end of time. Behold, I'm sending you, we will change the world. You have in your hands the future of mankind. And the good news is that I am with you always. Thank you, my Lord, for being with me, for being with us.

I think it's very fitting that today on Corpus Christi, we meditate, we ponder on these last words: “Behold, I am with you always.” There is nothing you should fear. I will accompany you in this adventure, in this revolution of love that is Christianity. We don't know exactly what happened that morning after that, but you can picture the Apostles going back home and maybe grabbing a map or- or I don't know, a compass or whatever and saying, Where do you want to go? And it is wonderful to think that throughout history, we are linked to one of those eleven, or maybe to one of the women. So you, wherever you are right now, maybe you're driving, maybe you're in the living room or walking or running, or maybe you're in a chapel, you and I have a straight link with one of those eleven or fifteen people that were there that morning on that mountain.

And I will love when I go to Heaven, I will do it for sure— who brought me the faith that I have in Jesus Christ? Of course, my parents, and then my grandparents and then you go down the line throughout the centuries, and at the end, it was James, or maybe John, or maybe Mary Magdalene that the following morning went to talk to a neighbor, and in the marketplace or to a relative at a party and they grab their faith and they say wow, this is interesting. Let me- tell me more. And they got baptized, and it transmitted what they have received to the next generation. And someday, somehow, the Holy Spirit guided someone to talk to you, to bring you that faith that has a connection with the first Apostles and with Jesus Christ.

And the question is how? How did they do it, my Lord? They were eleven. They were not very influential, they were not rich. They weren't powerful. They did it because they believed in these last words, "Behold, I am with you." Behold, I'm staying here hidden in the Eucharist, in a way that is not easy to understand or to believe or to see the consequences of my actions but those actions or those graces are for real. I am with you in the Eucharist. And you have- you have been here for two- for more than 2,000 years, accompanying every mom, every dad, every friend, every neighbor, through your beautiful hidden presence in the Eucharist. And the other thing that I want to consider today, my Lord, is that I want to continue this tradition. I want to pass on this legacy, this treasure to the next generation. And for that to happen, I want to be very devout to the Eucharist, obviously.

St. Josemaria, the founder of Opus Dei, commenting on this idea of Jesus leaving this world and at the same time staying, St. Josemaria says something really remarkable, beautiful. I'm reading now a quote by St. Josemaria in his book, *Christ is Passing By*, he says, "Like the apostles, we remain partly perplexed and partly saddened at his departure. It is not easy, in fact, to get accustomed to the physical absence of Jesus. He has gone to Heaven and at the same time he gives himself to us as a nourishment. Still, we miss his human speech, his way of acting, of looking, of smiling, of doing good. We would like to go back and regard him closely again. As he sits down at the edge of the well, tired from his journey, as he weeps for Lazarus, when he died, as he prays for a long time at night, as he feels pity for the crowd."

And it is so true, it is not easy to- to get accustomed, it is important, I would say, to your physical absence. Jesus, in a way, I'm envious of the Apostles. They saw you, and it will be just so wonderful to make eye contact with you, to see- can you imagine Jesus Christ asking you something, like- you're walking or- or you receive a phone call, and then Jesus calling you, Hey, how are you doing today? And then the voice of God? It was so awesome. Or just to sit down at a table and just looking at me, how's your day? And then looking at you and say, Oh, my gosh, like the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity is- is right now looking at me. So, we missed that part, obviously. And you're human speech, you're- Jesus laughing. Can you imagine Jesus laughing or making a joke to you or to someone else and then Jesus laughing. Or Jesus crying at a funeral, or when you know Jesus Christ? crying when he sees, I don't know, pornography in the world, and Jesus crying- or when he sees someone dying, or Our Lord moved with pity.

So, any aspect of the humanity of Jesus Christ is a treasure. And at the same time, knowing that you are not here now with your human body is a gift in a way because I can grow in my faith. It's a gift that helps me to develop my friendship with you at a deeper level. You planned the Eucharist, Someday, in your prayer, in your relationship with the Father and the Holy Spirit, the three of you, my Lord, decided something spectacular beyond telling to stay here. And then, among the possibilities you had, you chose the best one. God always chooses the best because he can do that.

So, in their wisdom, in their eternal kind of seeing everything, the three of them decided, you know what, the best way to help them, to help humans after the Incarnation, after the crucifixion and Resurrection, is going to be being hidden in bread, transforming bread into my body, allowing myself to enter inside them will be the best way to help them and you did it. And my Lord, in the Eucharist, I have you. In the Eucharist, I can hear you. I am with you always until the end of the the world. So, thank you so much! I want to be very grateful for- for this treasure that I have.

I was reading recently some writings by Pope Benedict. He's- Pope Benedict is so sharp, he's simple, easy to understand. And he said a copy of the sentence because it's very- again, very simple, but so reassuring. He says, "Jesus himself is what we call Heaven." I want to say it again: "Jesus himself is what we call Heaven." That's it. That's what we need. Heaven isn't a place- it's not just- it's- Jesus himself, it's more than a place. It is you and, good news, it is that- you are present in the Eucharist. And I can adore you, talk to you, and you can come to me. And there is nothing I can fear, should fear, is just- is- it's beyond telling. It is disarming to kneel down in front of you. It gives me so much peace. And that's how Catholics have transformed the world in history, being close to you in the Eucharist.

The other day, I had the chance to go to hospital, to ICU, to visit someone struggling for years with cancer. A mom was there- she's still there, you can pray for her. And then the dad asked me to go for anointing her just in case something will happen. So, I entered the room with the dad, with the husband, and the kids were in there. But when we saw her lying on the bed, intubated, a little groggy because of the drugs, right, and- and then when the husband introduced me- she knew me already- but anyway, Fr. Leo is here, and then she opened the eyes peacefully and then grabbed my hand and then with her hand grabbed her husband's hand. And then we talked for a while and then I gave the anointing. The three of- the three of us are- were crying because it was a powerful moment, but it was beautiful.

From the very beginning, entering into that room, there was something beautiful, peaceful, serene. And I wondered, how do you do this? It's the Eucharist. Jesus Christ is transforming lives. And then, anything that happened in our lives filtered through the Eucharist is meaningful. It's still painful, many times. Or it could be dark or difficult to accept, but has some beauty because Our Lord doesn't abandon anybody. Actually, it was funny because leaving the hospital that same day, we were walking with the husband, getting to the entrance of the parking lot, he was accompanying me, and in front of us, it was a narrow kind of hall. And there was this couple, I don't know how old, maybe 90s, and they were walking very slowly, and- and they were blocking a little bit. So, they were creating a little bit of a line behind them. And, I didn't want to say anything like go to the side or whatever, because it was wonderful, they were holding hands. I don't know how many years have they been married, but a lot, I guess. And they were holding hands, walking very slow-motion, and

we were behind them. At the beginning, we were talking, but then we started looking at them like, this is so remarkable. It's so easy to hold hands when you're dating someone, first weeks or whatever, first night. But after fifty years, to still hold hands, to love each other– that's something different. And I don't know if they were Catholics, but I'm sure they were at least Christian because when-when we see dignity, when we see respect, beauty, there's a connection with God, there's a connection with the Eucharist. That's what it is, and it's a fountain, eternally giving us clear water, eternally inspiring us, eternally renewing us.

So, my Lord, I want to discover- to re-discover the treasure of the Eucharist. I want to be sent like the Apostles to all the corners of the world, to the last corner, to the most abandoned person, to the most far away person from you and to tell him or tell her, God loves you. You are not alone. You have dignity. Recover your- your hope. There is something wonderful inside you, available for you. And if I know that it's not because I'm better. It's because you, in your wisdom, that I don't understand, you gave me- you gave it to me, the possibility of knowing you right now and when I'm younger- when I was young, but many people are waiting for that. And I want to- I don't know how, but I want to share with them this Good News.

Right now we can pray for all the people in the world that don't know you. I'm not better than them. I was just given the grace of knowing the Eucharist, Holy Spirit and Holy Mary, and the truths of our faith. I was given that, I'm not better, but I have a treasure. And I wish that, right now, Jesus, through your Holy Spirit, through the Father, through yourself, you would reach out to every single heart in this world and I want you to help- I want to help you to knock on those doors and say, come here, there's light, there's strength.

Pope Benedict continues: “Human life is a journey. Life is like a voyage on the sea of history, often dark and stormy. A voyage in which we watch for the stars that indicate the route is not easy.” You get in darkness, sometimes, wind waves. So, we need to start, we need guidance. The true stars of our life are the people who have lived good lives. They inspire me. Good people- people in hospitals, in the streets, friends, moms, dads, neighbors. They're lights of hope, they shine. And they tell me without words, many times just with their presence, with their joy, with the serenity, they tell me, life is meaningful. Life can be wonderful if you are generous, if you forgive. They are telling me that. “Certainly,” continues the Pope, “Jesus Christ is the true light, the sun that has risen above all the shadows of history.” There's one light that make- makes other lights possible. It's Jesus Christ- you are the light of the world. “But,” says the Pope, “to reach him, we also need lights close by, people who shine with his light. And so guide us along our way.” That is so interesting in our Christian faith, in our Catholic faith, to know that there's this combination between God and his providence, using secondary causes, to bring the benefits of salvation. That is so God, so Christian, so Jesus, to say, okay, I don't want to do it by myself. I have the power, all power in Heaven and on Earth has

been given to me, but I don't want to use it by myself, so go and help me. Let's do it together, that's a promise. And that's the gift of Jesus Christ, that he wants not only to save us but to help us saving people.

And today, thinking about the Eucharist, thinking about why- what we have in our hands, the real Jesus, Heaven, Jesus himself, it's what we call Heaven. I want to be light for the world. Again, not because it's my life, it's because I'm reflecting you. I'm just the last rag of this world. I'm like- like the moon, with all my respect, an ugly stone, no water, no nothing, no vegetation, but it's so beautiful at night when it reflects the sun. It is so awesome to see, you know, full moon, or half moon in the middle of the night, is so wonderful. It's just a stone there, but it's reflecting the sun. The same with me, I want to reflect you in my life, in order to help people to have hope, to rediscover how meaningful their lives can be. And the Eucharist will give me this daily nourishment, daily encounter with you.

I don't know if it's true, and, "I don't care", with all my respects, but there is a story that someone told me about a woman, I think she's from Colombia, that had a car accident or something like that. And then she was dying, and apparently she was falling to help, according to herself. And then halfway through this falling, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to her and grabbed her by her hand, and lifted her up, so to speak, and then told her you were dying in this car accident but there was another driver passing by when he saw you, the whole mess with the car, and he prayed a Hail Mary, for you. So, that Hail Mary gave you a kind of a second chance to go back and take advantage of this experience, to talk about what you have gone through, and- and tell the world how beautiful it is that we saved each other or that we help each other in sort of- in praying for- for other human beings. And then the person came back and she stuck in all of this.

Again, "I don't care" if this is true or not because it doesn't change my faith. Or, my- I don't need that, the Gospel is enough for me. But- but still, I'm sure that things like this happen all the time, that Our Lord is moved by you praying for others. Of course, he does all the job for us, so to speak, but at the same time, he wants us to really be protagonists. And the best way to pray, the shortcut for anything is- is the Eucharist because we have Jesus. It's not that we are talking to him or we are- it's him coming to me. I can be so close to God, I have Heaven in my hands. I want to bring all the souls, I want to enlarge my heart.

When I go to Mass, even many times I get distracted, or even thinking about my job, but I have you and I say, all the souls in the world that don't know you. All the sinners in history, myself, all the sinners in purgatory, people that have- are having a hard time in their marriages. with their jobs, whatever- I want to pray for them. And then in our hearts we will receive people that we don't know and your heart will be a shelter for many people, maybe millions of people, if you want to,

Our Lord is not limited by anything. If you ask to have a billion people in your heart, sheltered in there, from the storms of history, from the confusion of our age, whatever, Our Lord will allow those guys to be part of your life and you will be so happy to be Jesus for them or to be with Jesus during the tremendous- a wonderful dream of Redemption.

Some years ago, there was this game... I never played. I tried, but it didn't work in my phone. So- but I want to share something. There was this game, I think the name was Pokemon Go or something like that, and it was about- I thought it was an interesting idea because it was kind of like going through sort of scenarios like Google Maps, so to speak, that you will move through your city or whatever, for real, but on the screen, some like different characters will appear and they will give you points. If we would point at them or- or reach out to them in the- in the screen. And I think it was too dangerous because people were mixing up reality with fiction. And I don't know if, in the end, if it was a good game for people, but I thought it was a great idea in a way.

And I think we can play Pokemon Go in a Christian way, so to speak, when we're walking on the streets, when we're driving. We're surrounded by souls, by- each one of them is a tabernacle, is a house of God. If Our Lord came into this world, if you, my Lord, came into the world, it's not because you wanted to be in tabernacles made out of a gold- they're wonderful, it's how we express our faith. So it's fitting that we put a lot of money and- and cleanness and details in- in building wonderful churches. This is great, it shows our affection to you, it's good. But you didn't come to be in buildings or in boxes, you came to be in hearts. That's your place where you want to be, right. So when you're in the tabernacle, you want to get out of there in order to get inside us which is your destination as the Eucharistic bread, it's what you meant when you created the Eucharist.

So, when I go around in the streets, in my neighbors, or my neighbors, or in my family or just home, every single person I see is a tabernacle created by God. You want to be manifested to that person, to enter into dialogue, into friendship. So, I want to help you in doing that. I want to light up all those tabernacles with my prayer and- and then to help them to rediscover or discard for the first time the beauty of your presence.

Speaking about tabernacles, the first one in history is the Blessed Virgin Mary, the first communion in history was made by our wonderful Mother. So, if today we are celebrating Father's Day, and also Corpus Christi, let's ask Our Lady to be aware that we have God the Father revealing himself to us, for us men to be good fathers, both physical and spiritually speaking, and fore that to happen, to receive Jesus with the same purity, with the same humility, with the same devotion that the Blessed Virgin Mary had in her heart when she received Jesus for the first time.

I thank you, my God, for the good resolutions, affections, and inspirations that you have communicated to me in this meditation. I ask your help to put them into effect. My Immaculate Mother, St. Joseph, my father and lord, my guardian angel, intercede for me.



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