

## SATURDAY IN THE OCTAVE OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Jesus Christ in the Eucharist  
is food that sustains the life of our souls

### 49.1 First Point

In the holy Gospel Jesus Christ calls the Holy Eucharist not only bread, but meat as well. My flesh, he says, is real food.<sup>339</sup> As such it gives the soul a vigor that makes it easy to overcome all the difficulties found in the practice of virtue.

In effect, nothing can disturb the soul because Jesus Christ himself communicates to it in some manner the energy that can withstand whatever opposes its good. He also gives the soul courage to reassure it against whatever it might fear in the attacks of its enemies.

We even grow stronger, says Tertullian, by this flesh, and this is why it is more necessary for us to feed upon it to procure for our soul an abundance of grace, than it is to nourish our body with ordinary meat in order to preserve life.

The more virtue and perfection your state demands of you, the more strength and generosity you need to achieve this and not allow yourself to be laid low by fear of the sufferings you will encounter on your way. Nourish yourself with this Eucharistic meat, to strengthen yourself interiorly and to overcome all the obstacles to your salvation.

### 49.2 Second Point

This divine meat of the Eucharist produces another effect in us, namely, that those who eat it live in Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ lives in them.<sup>340</sup> He assures us of this in the holy Gospel. This shows that between Jesus Christ himself and the one who eats his flesh such a close and intimate union is brought about that only with difficulty can one be separated from the other, because this sacred food is incorporated in the soul that receives it with fervor, so that this soul shares in the virtues of Jesus Christ, and what was said of the spouse in the Canticle takes place: My lover belongs to me, and I belong to my lover.<sup>341</sup>

Are you thus so closely united to Jesus Christ when you receive him that nothing is able to separate you from him? After receiving Communion can you say with Saint Paul, Who will separate me from Jesus Christ? Will it be tribulation, poverty, persecution, hunger, nakedness, or dangers?<sup>342</sup> And can you add with all the confidence of the apostle that no creature can ever separate you from your Savior?<sup>343</sup> See to it that your Holy Communion produces between you and Jesus Christ a union so strong that you will never separate yourself from him.

### 49.3 Third Point

Another admirable effect produced in a soul by the divine meat of the Eucharist is that it makes the soul live an altogether supernatural and divine life. This is made clear when Jesus Christ says: As my Father who sent me lives, and as I live by my Father, so too the one who eats me will live by me.<sup>344</sup>

A soul who eats, then, this flesh of Jesus Christ, and is nourished by this meat, no longer lives a natural life, no longer seeks to satisfy its senses, no longer acts by its own spirit, but by the Spirit of its God who has become its nourishment.

Are these the effects produced in you by union with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist?

339 Jn 6:55

340 Jn 6:56

341 Song 6:3

342 Rom 8:35

343 Rom 8:39

344 Jn 6:57