

Archdiocese of Newark

July 2015

**N**ot to us, Lord, not to us but to your name give glory because of your mercy and faithfulness. In the joy and comfort of your love we live in peace with faith and hope in your grace. You guide and lead us to the path of holiness through the light of Christ and the truth of the Holy Spirit. As members of the body of Christ, we humbly submit our lives to your holy will

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## THE MONTH OF ...

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the blood of a lamb save a man? No, but as a figure of the Redeemer's Blood it certainly does. For when the Destroyer sees the thresholds of a human heart marked with Christ's sacred Blood, he must pass by. And another soul is saved.

In a vision the prophet Isaias saw a man treading out grapes (in the Orient, trampling upon grapes in the wine-press was the usual means of extracting the juice). The prophet asked the man: "Why are your garments so red?" "The wine-press I have trodden alone," he answers, "because from the nations there is no one with me." The trodder of the wine-press is Christ, His garments crimsoned by the Blood of redemption.

### The New Testament

The Church reminds us of the first drops of blood that flowed for our redemption on the day when Jesus was circumcised.

It is night on Mount Olivet, and the moon is shining. We see the holy face crimsoned with blood during the agony in the garden.

Unhappy, despairing Judas casts the blood-money down in the temple. "I have betrayed innocent blood!"

In the scourging chamber we see the Lord in deepest humiliation; under raw strokes the divine Blood spurts out over the floor. Christ is led before Pilate. Pilate shows the blood-covered Body to the crowds: Ecce homo! We go through Jerusalem's streets following the bloody footsteps to Golgotha. Down the beams of the Cross blood trickles. A soldier opens the sacred side. Water and Blood.

Symbols of the Precious Blood Adam is sleeping an ecstatic sleep. God opens his side, removes a rib and forms Eve, the mother of all the living. But our view transcends this action and in spirit we behold the second, the divine Adam, Christ. He

is sleeping the sleep of death. From His opened side blood and water flow, symbols of baptism and the Eucharist, symbols of the second Eve, the Church, the Mother of all the living. Through blood and water Christ willed to redeem God's many children and to lead them to an eternal home.

At Jerusalem a service in Yahweh's honor is taking place on the Day of Atonement. The high priest is making his annual entrance into the holy of holies to sprinkle the blood of bucks and bulls upon the covenant in expiation for the sins of the people. The Church shows us the higher meaning of this rite. Our divine High Priest Christ on the first Good Friday entered that Holy of Holies which is not made with hands nor sprinkled with the blood of bucks and bulls; there He effects, once and for all, with His own Blood man's eternal redemption.

A finale. Holy Church transports us to the end. The heavenly liturgy is in progress. Upon the altar is the Lamb, slain yet alive, crimsoned by His own Blood. Round about stand the countless army of the redeemed in garments washed white in the Blood of the Lamb. Hosts of the blessed are singing the new canticle of redemption: "You have redeemed us out of every tribe and tongue and nation by Your Blood."

Now from vision to present reality. How fortunate we are to have divine Blood so near to us, to offer it to the heavenly Father for the sins of the whole world!

*Excerpted from The Church's Year of Grace, Pius Parsch*

### Spiritual Journey

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It is God wanting to dwell in our emptiness. But as long as we are afraid of God and God's actions in our lives, it is unlikely that we will offer our emptiness to God. Let's pray that we can let go of our fear of God and embrace God as the source of all love.

## DEVOTION TO THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

**D**evotion to the Precious Blood is not a spiritual option, it is a spiritual obligation, and that not only for priests, but for every follower of Christ. I really believe that one of the symptoms of modern society (and I would even include, sadly, modern Catholic society) one of the symptoms of a growing, gnawing secularism is the lessening and the weakening of devotion to the Precious Blood. Devotion, as we know, is a composite of three elements: It is first- veneration, it is secondly- invocation, and it is thirdly- imitation. In other words, devotion to the Precious Blood of Christ, the Lamb of God who was slain, is first of all to be veneration on our part, which is a composite of knowledge, love and adoration. We are to study to come to a deeper understanding of what those two casual words, Precious Blood, really mean.

I found this passage in the oldest document, outside of sacred scripture, from the first century of the Christian era – to be exact, from Pope St. Clement I, dated about 96 A.D. Says Pope Clement: "Let us fix our gaze on the Blood of Christ and realize how truly precious It is, seeing that it was poured out for our salvation and brought the grace of conversion to the whole world."

To understand the meaning of the Precious Blood we must get some comprehension of the gravity of sin, of the awfulness of offending God, because it required the Blood of the Son of God to forgive that sin. We are living in an age in which to sin has become fashionable.

This veneration of the Precious Blood, which is the first element in our devotion to the Precious Blood means that we have a deep sensitivity to the awfulness of sin. Sin must be terrible. It must be awful. It must be the most dreadful thing in the universe. Why? Because it cost the living God in human form the shedding of His Blood.

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## Healing Prayers

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**L**oving Jesus, thank you for reminding me that you relate wonderfully with people who have faith. My faith in you establishes our strong relationship that allows your power flow in me. I pray for the sort of faith that the synagogue leader and the sick woman showed. Please Jesus, allow me to touch your healing hands and take me always by your hand bringing me back to life each time I die of my own self-centeredness. Bless and use me to heal others with your unconditional love. Amen.

**C**ompassionate Jesus, You have exhorted us to take courage in the midst of trials and sufferings. Unlike You, we become weary and tarry along the narrow way to follow You in Your heavenly abode. Your Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament gives us the strength to mend our ways and carry our crosses in life. You stay with us in this Sacrament of Love for You never want us to become orphans. You are "God with us" in the Blessed Sacrament. Let us come to Him and rest our cares and burdens in this valley of tears, for His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Come, let us adore Him for He is gracious and merciful. Mary, Mother of the Redeemer, pray for us. Amen.

## DEVOTION TO ...

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Lord Jesus, You became Man in order by your Passion and Death and the draining of your Blood on the Cross, might prove to us how much You, our God, love us. Protect us, dear Jesus, from ever running away from the sight of blood. Strengthen our weak human wills so that we will not only not run away from the cross, but welcome every opportunity to shed our blood in spirit in union with your Precious Blood, so that, dying to ourselves in time we might live with You in Eternity. Amen.

*Excerpted from The Precious Blood of Christ, Fr. John A. Hardon, S.J.*

## Eucharistic Prayers

**O** Adorable Jesus, we are grateful for giving Yourself to us in the Blessed Sacrament, enriching us with treasures of Your love. There is no greater gift than becoming our viaticum that sustains us and offering Yourself as a continual sacrifice to Your Father, for our salvation.

Lord Jesus, we adore You in the Blessed Sacrament. You are our saving Lord, our Divine Healer, our refuge in time of sorrow and strength in our weaknesses.

Our merciful Lord and Savior, O how we love You. You are the way that we want to follow in obedience to Your commandments, Your counsel and Your example. You are the truth; our true light that enlightens everyone who comes into the world. You are our life that through sanctifying grace is the life of our souls. You are the words of everlasting life through the Eucharist; the Living Bread that has come down from heaven. You are the fountain of life. It is You Lord that we love, seek and adore. You are the way, the truth and the life and we trust in You Lord.

Holy Spirit, may the fullness of Your Spirit enable us to ask for great things from You. We thank You Holy Spirit for granting us strong faith to pray and wait expectantly for a miracle. Help us Holy Spirit to hear Your voice leading us to keep our faith strong and free from doubt. Increase our faith to believe for what seems impossible but with You everything is possible. Holy Spirit help us to recognize the miracle You work in our lives, how You protected us, lead us away from danger, provided us with all our needs and saved us from so much more than we realized. Teach us Holy Spirit Divine to move in strong faith to see the answers to our prayers. You have said that fervent prayers accomplish a great deal as long as we have faith and put our trust in You.

Spirit of the Living God, come upon us with Your strength. Illumine us with Your light and empower us with Your love. Amen.

## Intercessory Prayers

**I**n Mark 6:4-6, Jesus said to his disciples, "A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house." So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there, apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them. He was amazed by their lack of faith."

Lord Jesus, how great you are! You are highly to be praised and your greatness cannot be measured. From everlasting to everlasting, we declare your mighty deeds and wonderful works. You are faithful and loving, may our lips ever-praise you and be-speak of the splendor and glory of your Holy Name. For you support all who fail and raises up all who are bowed down. Hard of face and obstinate of heart may we be, but your grace alone is sufficient for us, for your power is made perfect in our weaknesses. Pour forth your Mighty Spirit on us, dear Lord. Grant us the gift of discerning hearts attentive and listening to your Word that we may heed and not reject nor resist it. Our eyes are fixed on you, Lord Jesus, pleading for mercy. Pardon our doubts, arrogance and pride, soak us all in your merciful Heart full of love appreciative and thankful for the abundance of your blessings. Bestow upon us the grace of a responsible commitment to your call and a dedicated service to your people. Listen to our cries of help and have pity on us. Answer our prayers of petitions and supplications. Rescue us from all temptations and bondage of sin. We lift up our gaze to you begging for your compassion, O God! A contrite heart full of remorse and a steadfast, firm faith on you, we profoundly implore! In Jesus' Great Name with Mary, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, we pray. Amen.

