

Let Us Love the Most Blessed Sacrament

by St. Peter Julian Eymard

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself."

It was from the height of His Cross that our Lord first drew all the souls to Himself by redeeming them. But when our Lord uttered these words, He certainly also had in mind His Eucharistic throne, to the foot of which He means to draw all souls, so as to bind them there with the chains of His love.

Our Lord wants to instill in us a passionate love for Himself. Any virtue or idea which does not end by becoming a passion will never produce anything great. A child's affection is not love. A child loves by instinct and because it feels that it is loved; it loves itself in those who do it good. A domestic servant may be devoted; his love will be real only if he is devoted out of affection for his master, without any thought of personal advantage.

Love cannot triumph unless it becomes the one passion of our life. Without such a passion we may produce isolated acts of love; but our life is not really won or consecrated to an ideal. Unless we have a passionate love for our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament, we shall accomplish nothing.

Certainly, our Lord loves us passionately in the Eucharist; He loves us blindly without a thought for Himself, devoting Himself entirely for our good. We should love Him as He loves us.

In order to become a passion, our love must submit to the laws of human passions. I am speaking of honorable passions, which are naturally good; for of themselves passions are indifferent. We make them evil by directing them to an evil end. It is up to us to make good use of them.

When a man is ruled by a passion, he concentrates on it. A man wants to attain a certain honorable and lofty position. He will work only for that; whether it takes him ten or twenty years does not matter. "I'll get there," he says. He motivates his life; he directs everything to the realization of this one idea or desire; and he discards everything that may turn him away from his goal.

Another man wants to amass a fortune. He determines the size of it. "I will own this much wealth," he says. He exerts himself without counting the pains He uses everything as a means to his end and is indifferent to whatever is not in line with it. Still another says: "I want to marry into this or that honorable family." To him as to Jacob's seven years of service seem as nothing. If it is necessary, he is ready to serve an extra seven years. "I will have Rachel!" And all the labors of Jacob, Scripture tells us, "seemed to him as nothing because of the greatness of his love."

This is how people succeed in the world. These passions may become bad and alas! Are very often but one continual crime. But after all, they can be and still are, in themselves, honorable. Without a passion we come to nothing; we live an aimless life and lead a useless existence.

Well, in the order of salvation, we are also in need of a passion that rules our life and makes it bring forth, for the glory of God, all the fruits our Lord expects of it.

Have a passionate love for such and such a virtue, or truth, or mystery. Devote your life, and dedicate your thoughts and labors to it. Otherwise, you will come to nothing; you will remain a day-laborer doing piece-work; but you will never be a hero.

Love the Eucharist passionately. Love our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament with all the ardor with which people love one another in the world, but for supernatural for supernatural motives.

To ensure success in this, begin by placing your mind under the influence of this passion. Foster within you the spirit of faith. Convince your-self invincibly of the truth of the Eucharist and of the reality of the love which our Lord shows you therein. Value highly the love and the presence of our Lord; contemplate them in an ecstasy of delight. You will thus add to your love a fuel that will feed its flames and insure its constancy.

A genius conceives a masterpiece; he pictures it in his mind; he is delighted with it; he will realize it by every possible means and at the cost of any sacrifice; he will know neither fatigue nor discouragement; he is dominated by his masterpiece; he sees it continually; he cannot turn his mind away from it.

Well, fix your mind on our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament and ponder on His love. Let this thought take hold of you; let it enrapture you. "What! Is it really possible that our Lord loves me to the point of always giving Himself to me without ever growing tired?"

Your mind then adheres to our Lord; all your thoughts seek and study Him; you want to fathom the reasons of His love; you are struck with amazement and are enraptured; and your heart cries out spontaneously: "How can I make answer for-so much love!" And your love increases; for we love well only what we know well.

The heart leaps toward the Most Blessed Sacrament. It leaps; for it has not the patience to walk. "Jesus Christ loves me! He loves me in His Sacrament!" The heart would burst its walls of flesh, if it could, in order to unite itself more ultimately to our Lord.

Look at the saints. Their love transports them, make them suffer, sets them on fire; it is a fire that consumes them, uses up their strength, and ends by giving them death. A blessed death, indeed!

But if we do not all of us go that far, we can at least love our Lord passionately, and allow ourselves to be dominated by His love.

Is there not anyone in the world that you love? Mothers, do you not love your children passionately? Wives, do you not love your husbands passionately? Children, is there room in your heart for anyone other than your parents? Well, transfer this love to our Lord.

There are not two loves; there is only one. Our Lord does not ask you to have two hearts, one for him and one for those you love here below. Mothers, love our Eucharistic Lord with a mother's love. Love Him as your son. Wives, love Him as your husband. Children, love Him as your Father. There is only one faculty of love in us, although it is drawn towards diverse objects for diverse reasons.

There are certain people who love madly their parents or friends but do not know how to love God. But what we do for a creature is what we must do for God; with the difference, however, that we must love the Good God beyond all measure, and love Him always more and more.

A soul that loves in that manner has only one power, one life: our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament. He is there! ... The soul lives under the influence of that thought. He is there! ... And there results an exchange of love, a fellowship of life.

Ah! Why do we not actualize our love? We go back more than eighteen centuries to seek for examples of virtue in the mortal life of our Lord. But our Lord could say to us: "You have loved Me on Calvary because there I washed away your sins. You have loved Me in the Crib because there I was meek and lovable. Why then do you not love Me in the Blessed Sacrament where I am always with you? You have only to come. I am there, alongside of you."

Ah! Our sins are not so much what we should fear being reproached with at the Last Judgment: they are pardoned forever. But our Lord will reproach us our little love for Him. "You loved Me less than creatures. You did not seek the happiness of your life in Me. You loved Me enough not to offend Me mortally, but not enough to live of Me!"

But we may say: "Are we then obliged to love to that extent?" I am fully aware that there is no written precept to love that much; there is no need for one. Nothing commands it; but everything proclaims it; that law of love is written in our hearts.

Yes, what frightens me is the fact that Christians will gladly and seriously think of all other mysteries and be devoted to some saint; but they will do nothing for our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

But why this state of things? Because we cannot consider the Most Blessed Sacrament attentively without concluding: "I must love Him, and come to visit Him. I must not leave Him alone; He loves me too much."

In the case of other mysteries, every-thing is far away; it is past history and does not so easily get a hold on the heart; we do little besides admiring them. But with the Eucharist, we must give ourselves; we must abide and live in our Lord! The Eucharist is the noblest aspiration of our heart. Let us therefore love it passionately!

Some say: "But all this is exaggeration!" Love is nothing but exaggeration; to exaggerate is to go beyond the strict requirements of the law. Love must exaggerate. Is not the love our Lord shows us by remaining with us without honor and without servants an exaggerated love? He does not love who intends limiting himself to his strict duties. We love only when we feel the passion of love within us. If you love the Eucharist passionately, you will habitually have our sacramental Lord in mind; you will find happiness at His feet; and you will be constantly seeking His good pleasure.

Come! Let us be all taken up with our Lord! Let us love Him a little for His own sake. Let us forget ourselves and give ourselves to this good Savior! Let us sacrifice ourselves a bit! Look at the candles and the sanctuary lamp, which burn without leaving any trace, without reserving anything for themselves. Why should we not be for our Lord's sake a holocaust of which nothing would be left? No! Let us live our own life no longer; let Jesus' Host alone live in us. He loves us so much!

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