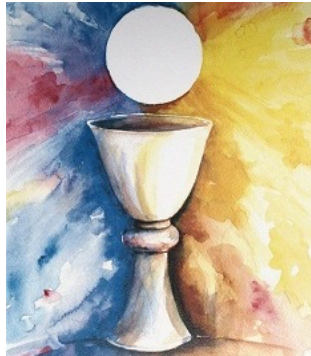


St Mary's, Inverness
The RC Diocese of Aberdeen: SC005122]
The Year of St Ignatius
20 MAY 2021 >31 JULY 2022

FORTY SEVENTH REFLECTION

IGNATIUS AND THE ANIMA CHRISTI



Ever since Ignatius placed the *Anima Christi* prayer as preface to The Spiritual Exercises many have attributed its authorship to him. In fact, the prayer had been in circulation for well over one hundred years before. However, by its prominent position in The Exercises the prayer became well known and widely circulated [recall that printed books were relatively new].

*Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me.
Within your wounds hide me.
Do not allow me to be separated from you.
From the malevolent enemy defend me.
In the hour of my death call me,
and bid me come to you,
that with your saints I may praise you
forever and ever. Amen.*

(Translation by George E. Ganss, SJ)

This prayer is especially useful as a daily prayer, part of the Morning Offering. It draws us into the Mystery of Christ, into a personal relationship with Jesus.

We might reflect that this prayer is spiritually intimate : it reaches out to Jesus seeking strength and the closest possible communion with Him.

During Holy Week and Easter this prayer has a powerful resonance. We might recall the word of St Paul : "For me, living is Christ" [Philippians 1.21]

We are all 'in Christ' by virtue of our Baptism, sometimes we need to realise how personal that can be. In the *Anima Christi* we are asking

that our most personal selves, our own souls, might be drawn closer to Jesus in His humanity and in His Divinity.

A modern translation by Fr David Fleming SJ might assist us in fully appropriating this prayer in a personal way, an appeal to the Lord Jesus.

*Jesus, may all that is you flow into me.
May your body and blood be my food and drink.
May your passion and death be my strength and life.
Jesus, with you by my side, enough has been given.
May the shelter I seek be the shadow your cross.
Let me not run from the love which you offer,
But hold me safe from the forces of evil.
On each my dyings shed your light and your love.
Keep calling to me until that day comes, when, with your saints,
I may praise you forever.*

Amen.

We recognise in the words of this prayer that we are drawn to seek the graces of living ever more closely to Jesus. During Holy Week and Easter we recognise the Suffering Servant, Jesus whose gifted life brings us healing and a closer communion with Him. It has been a Devotional Prayer that many have used after receiving Holy Communion, when we are aware of the deepest participation and the Divine generosity. It enhances and reinforces the profound transformation within us as we become what we are, 'The Body of Christ', sharing a common life together with each other and the Living Lord.

In Galatians, St Paul writes "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." [Gal.2.20]

Points to ponder:

- Seeking the holiness and grace of Jesus : ***Soul of Christ, sanctify me***
- The Blessed Sacrament : the Host received : ***Body of Christ, save me.***
- The Precious Blood : The Chalice of Our Salvation : ***Blood of Christ, inebriate me.***
- In the Eucharist we are brought fully into the loving holiness of Jesus that brings us wholeness of life, and inspires us to be fully alive in our witness to Him.
- In the Mystery of the Passion, in the wounding and dying we are brought close to the agonies of sin and the cost of human wickedness. We seek strength from the Lord Jesus to encounter the pains of our own lives and our fragile mortality.
- In the hour of our passing will we find generous love in our hearts, true contrition, firm faith and unwavering hope in God's healing and reconciling Love?



THE EXAMINATION OF OUR LIVES [THE EXAMEN]

Daily Examen :

Looking with quiet sincerity and simplicity of heart at the day



Preparation for Scriptural Reflection :

- Short acts of devotion : placing ourselves in the presence of God.
- Opening up conversation with God by expressing our sorrow for sin and our gratitude for our blessings
- Asking God to receive our lives, our hopes and prayers
- Reading the Passage of Scripture slowly saying the words silently

- We place ourselves into the scene of the Scripture : what we see, what we hear, what it feels like, what we smell, what we might taste.

Passage for Spiritual Reflection

Philippians 2.1-11

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

⁹ *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,*
¹⁰ *that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,*
¹¹ *and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.*

Points for Consideration :

- Being like-minded, sharing in the Common Life we have in the Body of Christ- how do we seek the 'mind of Christ'?
- Obedient to death- a humility that seeks nothing but the will of the Father- *In the hour of my death call me,
and bid me come to you,
that with your saints I may praise you
forever and ever*
- At the Name of Jesus : are we close to the Holy Name in our prayerful reflections ? *"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."*
- **A Period of Silence** in which we pray with St Ignatius, talking conversationally to God as Father : seeking understanding and insight, ever searching, ever finding, always willing, and Loving.

"The Suscipe"

**Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
and my entire will,
All I have and call my own.**

You have given all to me.

To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours; do with it what you will.

**Give me only your love and your grace,
that is enough for me.**

*"For those who love, nothing is too difficult, especially when it is done for
the love of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ignatius Loyola*

The Lord's Prayer



Jesus Mercy, Mary Pray

Praise God Always