

The Communicant Should Prepare Himself for Christ With Great Care

by Thomas a Kempis

To receive the full benefits of Communion, one must prepare themselves with great care, purging out the old leaven and making clean the dwelling of their heart.

Scripture: Psalm 27:4, Psalm 51:10, 1 Corinthians 5:7, Colossians 3:1, James 4:8

Topics: "Sacrament Preparation", "Christian Sanctification"

Description

Thomas a Kempis emphasizes the importance of preparing our hearts as a dwelling place for Christ, urging us to purge out impurities and distractions to make room for His presence. He highlights the need for humility, reverence, and love when receiving the Body of the Lord, acknowledging that it is only by God's grace that we are allowed to approach His table. Kempis reminds us that we come to be sanctified and united with Christ, to receive new grace and be stirred to amend our ways, emphasizing the continuous devotion and careful custody of ourselves before and after partaking in the Sacrament.

Transcript

THE VOICE OF CHRIST

I AM the Lover of purity, the Giver of all holiness. I seek a pure heart and there is the place of My rest.

Prepare for Me a large room furnished and I with My disciples will keep the Pasch with you.

If you wish that I come to you and remain with you, purge out the old leaven and make clean the dwelling of your heart. Shut out the whole world with all the din of its vices. Sit as the sparrow lonely on the housetop, and think on your transgressions in bitterness of soul.

Everyone who loves prepares the best and most beautiful home for his beloved, because the love of the one receiving his lover is recognized thereby.

But understand that you cannot by any merit of your own make this preparation well enough, though you spend a year in doing it and think of nothing else. It is only by My goodness and grace that you are allowed to approach My table, as though a beggar were invited to dinner by a rich man and he had nothing to offer in return for the gift but to humble himself and give thanks.

Do what you can and do that carefully. Receive the Body of the Lord, your beloved God Who deigns to come to you, not out of habit or necessity, but with fear, with reverence, and with love.

I am He that called you. I ordered it done. I will supply what you lack. Come and receive Me.

When I grant the grace of devotion, give thanks to God, not because you are worthy but because I have had mercy upon you. If you have it not and feel rather dry instead, continue in prayer, sigh and knock, and do not give up until you receive some crumb of saving grace.

You have need of Me. I do not need you. You do not come to sanctify Me but I come to sanctify you and make you better. You come to be sanctified and united with Me, to receive new grace and to be aroused anew to amend. Do not neglect this grace, but prepare your heart with all care, and bring into it your Beloved.

Not only should you prepare devoutly before Communion, but you should also carefully keep yourself in devotion after receiving the Sacrament. The careful custody of yourself afterward is no less necessary than the devout preparation before, for a careful afterwatch is the best preparation for obtaining greater grace. If a person lets his mind wander to external comforts, he becomes quite indisposed.

Beware of much talking. Remain in seclusion and enjoy your God, for you have Him Whom all the world cannot take from you.

I am He to Whom you should give yourself entirely, that from now on you may live, not in yourself, but in Me, with all cares cast away.

Source:

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