



THE PRESENCE



"I AM GOD'S WHEAT AND SHALL BE GROUND BY THEIR TEETH SO THAT I MAY BECOME CHRIST'S PURE BREAD."

Bread of Martyrs: Becoming What You Receive

In a 2007 general audience on St. Ignatius of Antioch, Pope Benedict XVI observed that "no Church Father has expressed the longing for union with Christ and for life in him with the intensity of Ignatius." In his letters, the Pope said, "one feels the freshness of the faith of the generation which had still known the Apostles. In these letters, the ardent love of a saint can also be felt."

St. Ignatius of Antioch: Exemplar of Eucharistic Love and the Fruit of Adoration

St. Ignatius is truly a model for all who engage in Eucharistic Adoration. Our prayer, if it be genuine, must bear fruit worthy of the kingdom and we must, like Ignatius, beg the Lord to make it so. The following is an excerpt from Ignatius' letter to the Romans as his death was imminent and captures this great desire - to become a martyr of charity, to be transformed through his suffering into the very "Wheat of the Elect":

I am God's wheat and shall be ground by the teeth of wild animals

I am writing to all the churches to let it be known that I will gladly die for God if only you do not stand in my way. I plead with you: show me no untimely kindness. Let me be food for the wild beasts, for they are my way to God. I am God's wheat and shall be ground by their teeth so that I may become Christ's pure bread. Pray to Christ for me that the animals will be the means of making me a sacrificial victim for God.

No earthly pleasures, no kingdoms of this world can benefit me in any way. I prefer death in Christ Jesus to power over the farthest limits of the earth. He who died in place of us is the one object of my quest. He who rose for our sakes is my one desire.

Bread of Martyrs: Becoming What You Receive



The time for my birth is close at hand. Forgive me, my brothers. Do not stand in the way of my birth to real life; do not wish me stillborn. My desire is to belong to God. Do not, then, hand me back to the world. Do not try to tempt me with material things. Let me attain pure light. Only on my arrival there can I be fully a human being. Give me the privilege of imitating the passion of my God. If you have him in your heart, you will understand what I wish. You will sympathise with me because you will know what urges me on.

The prince of this world is determined to lay hold of me and to undermine my will which is intent on God. Let none of you here help him; instead show yourselves on my side, which is also God's side. Do not talk about Jesus Christ as long as you love this world. Do not harbour envious thoughts. And supposing I should see you, if then I should beg you to intervene on my behalf, do not believe what I say. Believe instead what I am now writing to you. For though I am alive as I write to you, still my real desire is to die. My love of this life has been crucified, and there is no yearning in me for any earthly thing. Rather within me is the living water which says deep inside me: "Come to the Father." I no longer take

pleasure in perishable food or in the delights of this world. I want only God's bread, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, formed of the seed of David, and for drink I crave his blood, which is love that cannot perish.

I am no longer willing to live a merely human life, and you can bring about my wish if you will. Please, then, do me this favour, so that you in turn may meet with equal kindness. Put briefly, this is my request: believe what I am saying to you. Jesus Christ himself will make it clear to you that I am saying the truth. Only truth can come from that mouth by which the Father has truly spoken. Pray for me that I may obtain my desire. I have not written to you as a mere man would, but as one who knows the mind of God. If I am condemned to suffer, I will take it that you wish me well. If my case is postponed, I can only think that you wish me harm.



PERPETUAL EUCHARISTIC ADORATION
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