



# LOURDES LEAFLET

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## The Precious Blood of Jesus

BY STEVE SKOJEC

"It is written: You shall be holy, for I am holy. And if you invoke as Father him who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every one's work: converse in fear during the time of your sojourning here. Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things as gold or silver, from your vain conversation of the tradition of your fathers: But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled..." (1 Peter 1:16-19)

There is a moment of particular poignance in The Passion of the Christ when Claudia, the wife of Pontius Pilate, who was deeply troubled by dreams of Christ's innocence, silently brings fresh linens to the Blessed Virgin Mary, who has just seen her Son scourged to the brink of death by the impious and drunken legionaries charged with carrying out His "chastisement." A knowing look passes between the noblewoman in her elegant Roman finery and the future Queen of Heaven, whose garments are woven of coarse, earth-toned cloth. The intensity of their gaze at last breaks, and Mary turns at once to the task not of cleansing the blood-soaked stones of the plaza, but of retrieving from them as much as possible of the infinitely precious contents of Our Lord's sacred veins, the very Blood of God spilled so carelessly onto the earth beneath the cruel Judean sun.

It is an image that will stay forever with me, and one upon which I had never previously meditated in my contemplation of the Passion. Every drop, every molecule of that saving ichor was of such incomparable worth that gold and silver were counted as refuse in comparison.

It is the long tradition of the Church, which celebrates the Feast of the Most Precious Blood of Jesus, that Christ was entirely exsanguinated during His torture, crucifixion, and death, drinking the chalice of suffering "to the dregs" by shedding every last drop of His inestimably treasured blood. One drop of his blood, it has been said, would have been enough to redeem the world, but Our Adorable Savior spared nothing in His suffering of the cruelest imaginable torments to show us that "God so loved the world..." (John 1)

In a conference given on the Precious Blood of Jesus, Father John Hardon once recalled:

In the Middle Ages when the faith was stronger than in modern times, even the errors, shall I say, were more respectable? There were those who speculated (talk about a believing age!) those who speculated that maybe, just maybe, when Christ shed His Blood either in the Agony in the Garden or on Calvary, that once the Blood left the Body It was just ordinary blood. In the age of faith, believers speculated about, what was that blood separated from the Body? And the Church infallibly defined: Every drop of Christ's Blood in the Agony in the Garden, every drop He shed on Calvary, every drop was united hypostatically with the Second Person of the Trinity. Every drop of that Blood was adorable.

In The Liturgical Year, Dom Prosper Gueranger explains the centrality of the Precious Blood in the Mass:

The Blood of the Man-God, being the pledge of peace between Heaven and earth, the object of profoundest worship, the centre of the whole liturgy, and our assured protection against all the evils of this present life, deposits, even now, in the souls and bodies of those whom it has ran-

somed, the germ of eternal happiness; The Church, therefore, in her Collect, begs of the Father, Who has given us His Only-begotten Son, that this Divine germ may not remain sterile within us, but may come to full development in Heaven.

In Ven. Mother Mary Potter's book, *Devotion for the Dying: Mary's Call to Her Loving Children*, she relates that Jesus is desirous that the blood He shed in His agony, scourging, crowning with thorns, via dolorosa, and crucifixion should not be allowed to go unadored:



Our Lord told Sister Mary of St. Peter: "Ask My Father for as many souls as I shed drops of Blood during My Passion." By asking for the Precious Blood to be poured out on souls we prevent Its being, as it were, spilled out on the ground in vain. In His mysterious Providence God has put the salvation of others in our hands: we must ask for it, and ask fervently and often.

One of the best means of participating in the graces and blessings of the Precious Blood is to offer It to the Eternal Father. "An offering," says Father Faber, is "more than a prayer." In prayer, we are the recipients, but when we make an offering, God vouchsafes to accept something from us. St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, when in ecstasy, once exclaimed: "Every time a creature offers up the Blood by which he was redeemed, he offers a gift of infinite worth, which can be equaled by no other." God revealed the practice of making this offering to this Saintly Carmelite nun when He complained to her that so little effort is made in this world to disarm His Divine justice against sinners. Acting upon this admonition, she daily offered the Precious Blood fifty times for the living and the dead. She did this with so much fervor that God showed her on different occasions the numerous souls who had thereby been converted or delivered from Purgatory.

An offering of the Precious Blood may be made simply, as in the following prayer:

ETERNAL FATHER, I offer Thee the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, in satisfaction for my sins, in supplication for the holy souls in Purgatory and for the needs of Holy Church [especially for the soul of (Name)].

We may also offer it through the efficacious intercession of Mary. Ven. Mother Potter offers this formula:

IMMACULATE Heart of Mary, do thou offer to the Eternal Father the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, for the conversion of sinners, especially [Name].

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## THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS—Continued from front

Of particular import in the devotion to this central mystery of our salvation is the Litany of the Precious Blood of Jesus, which is especially effective in spiritual warfare against the forces of Hell. It is for this reason that the Litany is an essential portion of the prayers against the power of Satan and his fallen angels offered daily by the members of the Auxilium Christianorum.

The “Blood of Christ,” as the Litany says, is truly “most worthy of all glory and honor...” As the Litany concludes, we are left with a fitting reflection on why this particular devotion is deserving of the greatest respect and should be revived and embraced by all Christians:

Almighty and eternal God, Thou hast appointed Thine only-begotten Son the Redeemer of the world and willed to be appeased by his blood. Grant, we beg of Thee, that we may worthily adore this price of our salvation and through its power be safeguarded from the evils of the present life so that we may rejoice in its fruits forever in heaven. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Go to: <https://www.ewtn.com/Devotionals/Litanies/blood.htm> for the full Litany of the Most Precious Blood of Jesus. You can also listen to it as here as well.

## O PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS

O Precious Blood of Jesus, infinite price of sinful man's redemption, both drink and laver of our souls, Thou who dost plead continually the cause of man before the throne of infinite mercy; from the depths of my heart, I adore Thee, and so far as I am able, I would requite Thee for the insults and outrages which Thou dost continually receive from human beings, and especially from those who rashly dare to blaspheme Thee. Who would not bless this Blood of infinite value? Who doth not feel within himself the fire of the love of Jesus who shed it all for us? What would be my fate, had I not been redeemed by this Divine Blood? Who hath drawn it from the veins of my Savior, even to the last drop? Ah, this surely was the work of love. O infinite love, which has given us this saving balm! O balm beyond all price, welling up from the fountain of infinite love, grant that every heart and every tongue may be enabled to praise Thee, magnify Thee and give Thee thanks both now and for evermore.

Amen.

## A Powerful and Humorous Look at Vanity in a Commercial

Msgr. Charles Pope

Most people associate the word “vanity” with an excessive concern or pride in one’s appearance or sometimes in one’s qualities. But at its root, vanity refers to emptiness. To say that someone is vain is to say that he or she is empty or largely lacking in meaning, depth, or substance.

It makes sense that people get worked up about externals when there isn’t much happening on the inside. And thus it makes sense that we connect emptiness (vanity) with excessive show.

There are many expressions that enshrine this connection:

*All form and no substance*

*That Texan is all hat and no cattle*

*All bark and no bite*

*All booster, no payload*

*All foam, no beer*

*All sizzle and no steak*

*All talk*

*Show me the money*

The Wisdom Tradition in the Bible, especially the Book of Ecclesiastes, speaks of vanity at great length. In it, the word is usually used to refer to the ultimate futility of what this world offers because the world itself is ultimately empty and vacuous.

• *Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after*

*wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun (Eccl 2:11).*

• *He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity (Eccl 5:10).*

The world, which so mesmerizes our senses, shows itself ultimately to be empty of power or any lasting substance.

• *We have here, no lasting city (Heb 13:14).*

• *As for man, his days are like grass: or as the flower of the field. Behold, he flourishes. But the wind blows and he is gone; and his place never sees him again (Ps 103:15-16).*

I thought of these notions of vanity when I saw this admittedly very funny commercial. It shows a man concerned only with his appearance. Actually, he’s even more vain than that: it’s how he *smells* that concerns him (this is an Old Spice commercial, after all). He is so vapid, so vain, that he thinks that even if he doesn’t look good, well at least he *smells* like someone who looks good!

As he moves through the scenes of the commercial he becomes increasingly devoid of substance (literally!).

Symbolically, we can see him as the vain person who goes through life carelessly, paying no attention to the way in which the world, the desires of the flesh, and the devil strike at and eat away at him. But he doesn’t worry about that because at least he *smells* like someone who looks good! His only real substance is to be lighter than air, a whiff. It is form over substance, impression over reality. It is empty show; it is vanity on steroids.

## Prayer to Overcome Vanity

Vanity was not the way of the Lord! Through purity of soul and intent, He accomplished His Divine work. While He shared with those who listened, He submitted His knowledge to be digested, indicating it was the way to salvation, leaving each with the freedom to choose. The way of Jesus was free of egotism; I admire Your perfection my Lord! Jesus, teach me to control my pride: May it never reach the extent of vanity. I seek to model You as a humble child!