

DAY 21: 'Be the One' (with Mary)

In case the list of 12 duties that we covered yesterday has got some of us feeling overwhelmed, today we'll focus on a simpler way of remembering the essence of Mother Teresa's consecration to Mary: "*Be the one.*" Or, more specifically, "Be the one, with Mary." What does this mean? The main clue comes from the Offertory verse (Ps 68:21) for the Mass of the Feast of the Sacred Heart:

My heart had expected reproach and misery. And I looked for one that would grieve together with me, and there was none: and I sought one that would console me, and I found none.

Mother Teresa responds, "Be the one." Be the one to console Jesus by satiating his burning thirst for love. She writes:

Tell Jesus, "I will be the one." I will comfort, encourage and love Him. ... Be with Jesus. He prayed and prayed, and then He went to look for consolation, but there was none. ... I always write that sentence, "I looked for one to comfort Me, but I found no one." Then I write, "Be the one." So now you be that one. Try to be the one to share with Him, to comfort Him, to console Him. So let us ask Our Lady to help us understand.

That last sentence is key. We need Our Lady to help us understand the thirst of Jesus. She's the one who consoles him best. She's the spouse of the Consoler, the Holy Spirit. Through Mary, the Holy Spirit can help us understand what it means to be a consoler of the Heart of Jesus: [Let] us try in a special way to come as close as the human heart can come to the Heart of Jesus and try to understand as much as possible Jesus' terrible pain caused to him by our sins and His Thirst for our love. ... Thank God our Lady was there to understand fully the thirst of Jesus for love. She must have straight away said, "I satiate Your thirst with my love and the suffering of my heart."

Yes, we can thank God for Our Lady. She teaches us to "be the one" with her, consoling Jesus on Calvary. She helps us to "straight away" say, "Jesus, I satiate Your thirst." But what exactly does this mean? What does it mean to satiate the thirst of Jesus? Two things: to console Jesus the Head of his Mystical Body and to console him in the members of his Body.

How do we console Jesus, the Head of the Body? By being apostles of joy, which means "to console the Sacred Heart of Jesus through joy," and we do this especially with Mary's joy. For Mother Teresa continues, "Please ask our Lady to give me her heart." Mary is the one who, despite her own trial of darkness, praises and thanks God in all things, smiles at him, and consoles him with her love. It's simple and beautiful. Mother summarizes it by her trademark

three virtues: total surrender to God, loving trust, and perfect cheerfulness. Basically, it's to be as a child, with Mary, smiling at Jesus and loving him from the foot of the Cross.

Now, how do we console Jesus in the members of his Body? By recognizing their thirst. Everyone thirsts: rich and poor, young and old, believer and unbeliever. Everyone has a restless heart for God, for man is a restless thirst. To console Jesus in others is to respond to their suffering, especially to that deepest, most universal suffering: the thirst for love. We should respond to this thirst in others not with indifference but with a gentle smile that says, "I delight that you exist, and I, too, understand the pain of the thirst." Mother explains:

The greatest evil is the lack of love and charity, the terrible indifference towards one's neighbor... . [P]eople today are hungry for love, for understanding love which is much greater and which is the only answer to loneliness and great poverty."

By accepting her own thirst (with Mary's help) and not running away from it, Mother Teresa could understand the thirst of others — both Jesus on the Cross and Jesus in her neighbor — and she became a true apostle of mercy and joy: a true missionary of charity.

Today's Prayer:

Come, Holy Spirit, living in Mary.

Help me to "be the one" to console Jesus with Mary.