

THE YEAR OF THE EUCHARIST

Mother Adela, SCTJM

Foundress

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Dear Brothers and Sisters:

With the Apostolic Letter "Mane Nobiscum Domine", given this past October 7th, His Holiness Pope John Paul II began the Year of the Eucharist which will be celebrated in the entire Church from October 2004 to October 2005.

Stay with us! With this urgent invitation which the disciples, on their road to Emmaus, had asked of the Stranger who had joined them on their journey, the Holy Father begins this Apostolic Letter. By doing so, he wants to guide us so that, this year, we dedicate ourselves to contemplate the great mystery of Christ truly present in the gift of the Holy Eucharist. Those disciples were on their way, heavily burdened with grief and discouragement from all the latest events that had happened in Jerusalem a few days back. It seemed as if darkness was surrounding them, and their hope was weakening. In the middle of this darkness, the Stranger, who is in their midst, explains to them with an ardent zeal the Scriptures, burning their hearts and driving away all their interior darkness, to such a degree that Saint Luke tells us "then their eyes were opened" (Luke 24:31).



Doesn't it seem that this passage from the Gospel of Saint Luke reflects the reality in which many of us today, disciples of Christ, find ourselves? Don't we go on during our daily lives, talking about the spiritual, moral, and social darkness in which our modern civilization is immersed? Doesn't it sadden us to see the sufferings of so many brothers and sisters caught by surprise by the destructive forces of nature? Don't we watch the daily news which shows us the increase of the violence of terrorism, of injustices, of immorality, of poverty, and of the devaluation of life and the human person? We could continue on and on, mentioning the many "dark shadows" which threaten our humanity today: such as the instability of the family, the fundamental values of every society, world peace, the lives of children, of the sick, and of the elderly. Could it be possible to not feel fear of God in the presence of a militant scorn against God, His name, His commandments, His Church, His love, and the disastrous consequences of a world which pretends to live without God?

Nevertheless, in the midst of the dark shadows which emerge on the horizon of humanity, the Holy Father has wanted to lift very high the Presence of the Eucharistic Christ, Light and Life of the world. The Word, who was made flesh and came to the world to save it, to redeem it, and to enlighten it in the midst of its darkness, is truly, substantially present in the Eucharist.

In the midst of today's chaos in the world, the One who is Lord of History, who is the core and center, not only of the history of the Church, but also of the history of humanity, presents Himself before our eyes. He raises up in front of our eyes, which are loaded with darkness, the sublime and luminous gift of Christ in the Eucharist to give us His light, a light which shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it (cf. John. 1:5).

What an immense gift, brothers and sisters! A Year of the Eucharist, a year of grace and light, a year of mercy particularly marked with "the indulgence granted by the Holy Father to some acts of devotion and love to the Blessed Sacrament" (Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary on the Gift of an Indulgence during the 'Year of the Eucharist', December 25, 2004)—a year to contemplate, in the midst of today's world's unsteadiness, the One who is the same today, and always.

During this particular year, I invite all of you, that inside the school of the Heart of Mary, we may be able to learn how to contemplate the ardent face of our Savior, to make amends for all the offenses made to the love of His Heart, to reflect deeply on His Word, to listen attentively to His voice. Thus we may be able to prepare ourselves in such a way that we allow the power of the Eucharist to transform us and enlighten us to such a degree that we will be capable of going into the darkness of the world and be able to take them the burning fire of the love of the Eucharistic Heart of Christ.

May we learn, in the Heart of Mary, to be truly "Eucharistic" men and women. May we be able to safeguard in the tabernacle of our hearts the living presence of Christ which we receive in the Eucharist in order to be clear channels of His presence in the world. May we, during this year, be willing to be enlightened by the presence of the Eucharist, in order to be able to enlighten, with strength and dynamism, all of mankind. "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden" (Matthew. 5:14).

May the Eucharistic Heart Reign!

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[Return to Main Page of Teachings of Mother Adela, Foundress SCTJM...](#)



Return to main page
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