

THANKSGIVING
AFTER
COMMUNION.
FROM "ALL FOR JESUS."



LONDON:
RICHARDSON AND SON, 147, STRAND;
9, CAPEL STREET, DUBLIN; AND DERBY.
MDCCCLVI.

[Price One Penny.]

Faber (F. W.) H

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PREFACE.

The following method of thanksgiving of Father Lancisius is taken from one of our most beautiful works of spirituality, "All for Jesus," by Father Faber. It appeared to the writer of these lines however, that as "All for Jesus," from its size, could never be brought within the reach of the Catholic poor in England, they might, by a cheap reprint of this thanksgiving, be supplied with this mode of returning more worthy thanks to God for His greatest gift, and thus make amends to their Divine Redeemer, for the numberless insults He receives in His sacrament of love.

The kind permission of Father Faber and Messrs. Richardson having been obtained, to reprint it in as cheap a form as possible, it is now offered to the Catholic public, and is recommended to them as a valuable addi-

tion to the "Anima Divota" of Father Pagani, General of the Order of Charity, while, to those who have not that book within their reach, the method of thanksgiving now issued will, in a great degree, supply the deficiency.

CATHOLICUS.

Having been requested by the writer of the above to bring this reprint within the reach of the faithful, and to induce some devout souls to use this form of thanksgiving, I earnestly request all those into whose hands God may allow this little book to come, to remember him in their communions, and to pray that he may receive many blessings in this life, as well as in that happy life where we shall understand more perfectly than we now do, the boundless goodness which has allowed us to taste, in this valley of tears, the Bread of Angels.

✠ THOMAS GRANT.

Feb. 16th, 1856.

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COMMUNION.

I suppose there are few difficulties more universally felt than that of making a good thanksgiving after communion. Spiritual writers, tell us we ought not to use books, at least not for some little time afterwards. They assure us that if grace has any special and critical moments in life, they are passing while Jesus remains in our hearts by His sacramental presence. St. Alphonso and others have left it on record, that one communion rightly made is enough to fit a man for canonization, and that the thanksgiving is the time when the soul appropriates to itself the abundance of grace, and drinks deepest of the fountains of light and life.

Under these circumstances, and considering at once the difficulty and the impor-

tance of making a good thanksgiving after communion, I propose to furnish my readers with materials for this purpose, by presenting them with an analysis of the method of thanksgiving recommended by Father Lancisius, and repeated by him in two different treatises. I must not be understood to recommend it to any one as he gives it. It is far too long and minute, and I believe would in most cases smother devotion by the multiplicity of acts which it involves. The heart must have freer play, and the whole exercise be much more simplified. I give it, therefore, to furnish materials, to serve as a sort of mine, out of which persons with different tastes, or the same persons at different times, may supply themselves with food, either for reflection or aspiration; as many of the thoughts are both deep and beautiful.

1. The acts which Father Lancisius suggested should follow immediately after communion, are those of humiliation. We are to humble ourselves profoundly before God for the coming of so great a Lord, recalling, 1. the sins of our past lives, 2. our present imperfections and tepidity, 3. the vileness

of our nature compared with the Divinity of Christ, and 4. our Blessed Lord's perfections both as God and man.

2. Then follow acts of adoration. We are to adore, 1. The Most Holy Trinity in the Blessed Eucharist. 2. The Sacred Humanity of Jesus existing within ourselves at that time. 3. The same, as existing in so many places in the Church, wherever the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, rejoicing over His worship and honour where the faithful are ever crowding to Him, and mourning over His dishonour wheresoever He lies without due devotion being paid to Him, or where He is perhaps actually blasphemed. 4. We are to adore with a special adoration the soul of Christ as filled with all the ornaments of sanctity, with all merits and with so ancient, constant, and fruitful a love of ourselves. 5. The Body of Christ, as having suffered so many and such bitter and unworthy things on our account, and as at length slain for us, and we must imprint spiritual kisses on those parts of His Body, which for our sakes were the most tormented with wounds and agony.

3. We must give thanks also from the

bottom of our hearts, 1. for His coming to us in this communion, 2. for His coming in the Incarnation, 3. for all the merits and examples of virtue during His life, which He left for our good, 4. for the institution of this most Holy Sacrament, and all the other Sacraments, 5. for His death and our redemption, 6. if we are priests, for His having raised us to the priesthood, 7. for the blessing of creation, 8. for our preservation, 9. for the gift of faith, 10. for our justification, 11. if we be religious, for our vocation, 12. for our perseverance in a state of grace or in a holy calling, 13. for His patience in bearing with our sins and imperfections, and those of others, 14. for the holiness He has granted to so many saints, 15. for the trials and tribulations which we have at any time had to undergo, 16. for His assiduous care in leading us along the way of perfection, 17. for all the peculiar individual blessings which we have received from Him, and of which everybody has some to thank Him for, 18. for all the blessings He has conferred on us through others, 19. for all the blessings, general and particular, which God ever has granted, or ever will grant to any creature, especially

those which He gave to the Sacred Humanity of Jesus, to His Blessed Mother, and the rest of the Saints and elect, 20. for the institution of the Order, Congregation, or Confraternity to which we belong, 21. for its propagation, 22. for the persecutions it has to endure, which strengthen and purify it, 23. for all the Saints and learned men it has produced, 24. for all who have had such sweet and wonderful vocations to it, 25. for all the fruit it has brought forth throughout the world, 26. for all the good friends and benefactors who love it so much, 27. for all its adversaries and persecutors who give it so many opportunities of meriting.

4. Next comes oblation. Offer to the Most Holy Trinity the Blessed Sacrament, which you have received, for all the joy, honour, and complacency which the Divine Majesty receives therefrom, because of all the blessings it confers on you and others; offer it for your sins and necessities, and those of others, and of your friends and enemies, living or dead. Offer to our dear Lord whom you have received, in union with His merits and holy limbs, 1, your soul and body, with all your faculties,

limbs, senses, actions, and rest, desiring only the sanctification of everything about you, that you may be a sort of perpetual holocaust, burning to the delight and honour of the Divine Majesty, consuming yourself and reducing yourself to nothing, purely for God; 2, your will to die, and endure anything, rather than offend Him again by any deliberate sin, whether mortal or venial; 3, your purpose always to choose the most perfect things, and among them those rather which are most repugnant to your senses, judgment, will, and honour, because you hope thus to gain God most glory, as well as become more like Jesus Crucified; 4, your resolution to persevere in the observance of the commandments and counsels of God, and of your rules, and in a perfect life, however full it may be of tribulations; 5, your willingness to suffer for Christ heavy things, which those around you will esteem light, and so you will gain no credit for them; 6, your determination to seek no other end but God alone in all your actions; 7, your burning desire to convert all men to His pure love, and your pining for this sweet conversion.

5. The next place is to be occupied by petition. Ask fervently of Christ, 1, the remission of your sins, both as to the guilt and punishment of them; 2, perseverance in His grace and holy living; 3, if the Holy Spirit so inspires you, and you have your director's leave, ask for sufferings, sharp, frequent, various, personal, little esteemed or sympathized with by others, hidden, without cause on your part, and without sin either of your own, or of those who afflict you; 4, ask for a continual augmentation of humility, poverty, chastity, obedience, faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, patience, devotion, prayer, discerning of spirits, mortification of the passions, the greatest purity of heart and intention, and all the rest of the virtues. Ask to have a heart free from all actions either formally or materially bad, unmeritorious or tepid, from all vicious habits, inordinate movements of the passions, and from all debt of temporal punishment, either now or at the hour of death. Ask earnestly for grace in all your actions to seek what nature, perfection, and mortification require, and further, to be able to elicit all your actions

as intensely as the infused and acquired habits of virtue exist in your interior, so that all your actions may correspond adequately to your knowledge, and may most perfectly fulfil in all respects the intentions of the Divine Government. Ask to live a long life in great sanctity, and with immense fruit of souls. Beg for the grace to treat your body roughly, without thereby injuring greater goods, such as health; ask to preach, talk, and hear confessions usefully, and to have some pain sent you at fit times whenever you have any debt of temporal punishment to pay. Nay, go so far as to implore our dear Lord to enable you, as near as may be, to direct all your faculties, senses, limbs, and actions, as His Divinity directed the same things in His Sacred Humanity.

Petition God the Father, 1, for the vigilance and exemplary life of the pastors of Holy Church, for the conversion of infidels, heretics, schismatics, sinners and lukewarm souls, and for the perpetual and persevering multiplication of saints, and their advancement in the ways of the Spirit; 2, for the religion and love of justice of kings and temporal rulers, for their

mutual concord, and success in lawful undertakings; 3, for help and consolation to the afflicted in poverty or sickness, for patience for the persecuted, and deliverance, if it be consistent with the greater glory of God; 4, for abundant gifts of grace and glory for your adversaries; 5, for your Order or Congregation ask the Eternal Father for the mortification of all passions, for devotion, edifying life, zeal for souls, perpetual fruits of virtue, progress in sacred sciences, protection in tribulations, a sufficiency of temporal revenue, and an abundance of workmen for the vineyard of the Lord; 6, pray to His compassionate Majesty for all the dead members of your Congregation, those especially who have lately died, and have been commended to the suffrages of the community; also for all your adversaries who are dead, for your relations, friends, and others, especially those for whom few or no prayers are offered, that they may be liberated as soon as possible from purgatory, and become your peculiar patrons in heaven; 7, pray for all the affairs which superiors have recently commended to your prayers, or if it be persons for whom you

are told to pray, ask God to assist them in the particular respect for which they have desired or needed your prayers.

6. Our next duty is to make sundry acts of different virtues respecting the Blessed Sacrament; and 1, of adoration. Adore with divine worship that sweet Sacrament received into yourself and reserved in so many churches all through the world. This act of loving adoration may be made more intense by thinking of all those churches in which the Blessed Sacrament is but little honoured, or where He is as it were a prisoner in the hand of Greek schismatics, or of the countries in which grave sins are committed against His worship; 2, of faith, considering Christ, whom you have received, to be both true God and true man, and to whose Divinity and Humanity belong all those things which Holy Church believes of them, or which heretics have denied; 3, of hope, expecting from Christ, as God and First Cause, many natural gifts, as well as supernatural graces and glory, and expecting the same also through His merits, as Man; 4, of charity, first embracing Him fervently in your interior

will as God and Man; secondly, rejoicing that His Divinity is so perfect in itself and in respect of us, that we cannot perfectly know it; thirdly, exulting that His Divinity is so worshipped and beloved in heaven by the angels and saints and by just men on earth, and that His Body and Soul are so unspeakably blessed in heaven, and adorned with such incomparable gifts; fourthly, grieving deeply that so many sins have been, are being, and will be committed against His dear love by ourselves or by others, and grieving most of all that so many for whom He has done and suffered so much are lost through their own wilful perversity; and then last of all, desiring with tenderest love that all sins and imperfections might cease in the world as soon as possible, that the just might be multiplied, and the saints advanced in perfection and perseverance; that infidels and all out of the true Church might be brought to the holy faith, and that God, and Christ as Man, might be honoured and loved by men in that way, and to that degree in which God desires that Himself and the Sacred Humanity of Christ should be loved and honoured.

7. We must contemplate in our dear Lord as God, the attributes of His Divinity and His other perfections, and elicit different acts with respect to them. First, we must think of His independence, or, as theologians call it, His self-existence (*aseitas*), and ask Him to give us the grace to depend on no one but on Him alone, and on superiors only for His sake. Secondly, we must reflect on His eternity, and ask Him for long life to serve Him and suffer greatly for Him. Then we must look at His omnipresence, and desire that He may be known and loved in all places, and make a most burning act of love and adoration to recompense Him for all the sins which are being committed this moment in the boundless temple of His most pure and dread immensity. Next, we must think of the infinite energy of our Blessed Lord in producing both natural and supernatural effects, and ask Him to give us natural and supernatural gifts of every kind, to the end we may be as a bait or a net to allure all men, and captivate them to His love. Fifthly, we must consider His infinite wisdom, and ask Him to make us wise in all that re-

gards the instruction of ourselves or others, and to pour out upon us the gifts of counsel, prudence, and discernment of spirits, and upon our whole Congregation growth in virtue and proficiency in theological studies, without which last we shall do but little for the saving of souls. Sixthly, we must meditate upon His goodness, and pray that in our actions God may see nothing that is not good; but this will only be the case when all our actions are done freely, without imperfections, and for a supernatural end, which is God Himself. In the next place we must think of His Eternal Generation and Person, by which He is constituted Son, and beg of Him by His Divine Filiation to grant to us, as far as is possible, liberally and copiously, according to the measure of His ordinary power, all the natural and supernatural perfections of grace and glory which are communicable to His adopted sons, in the same sort as they were communicated to Him then, when He united in Himself the Person of the Eternal Word and Human Nature. Last of all, we must ponder His actual concurrence

plore Him to give us the grace, that as He in each act refers His concurrence in and with us simply to Himself and His own glory as its end, so we in all our actions, without one exception, may work for, and because of Him, and that so perfectly that there may be nothing in us, direct or indirect, in which God's glory is not sought and found.

In the same way we may distinguish other perfections in God, and elicit acts connected with them: as, for example, of joy, rejoicing that God has these perfections in Himself, and of thanksgiving, because He has manifested them to us, and has communicated to us effects proportioned to them. In like manner we may distinguish the perfections of our Lord's Sacred Humanity, as well those which have to do with the integrity of human nature, such as the body with its limbs, and the soul with its powers, both rational and irrational, as those also which are superadded to nature, such as habits and acts, whether permanent, like the Beatific Vision, or transient, as talking, praying, working miracles, and the like. In considering the powers and habits of His bless-

ed Soul, we should ask Him to make our powers as like as possible to His, to adorn them with habits as His were adorned, and to excite them to acts as He excited His own. When we look at His Body hanging on the Cross, we must consider each limb, and pray that as the Word in that Body directed and moved that limb in the most perfect way, so He, the same Word, who has now entered into us by holy Communion, may rule and direct not only our interior powers, but all our limbs and outward actions, so that we may be, as it were, an impression and image of the Sacred Humanity, exhibiting all our inward and outward actions in a manner the most resembling that wherein our Lord acted both inwardly and outwardly; for this is the transformation, which the saints and holy doctors enumerate among the special fruits of Communion.

8. We are to conclude our thanksgiving by presenting our Blessed Lord, whom we

at that heavenly Father's bidding ye did adore when He entered into the world, and obtain for me the grace to serve Him with the same spirit and truth wherewith ye served Him during your probation, and serve Him now in your heavenly and Blessed life. To the patriarchs and prophets we may say, Behold, ye ambassadors of heaven, and partners of the marvellous secrets of God, that Redeemer promised from the beginning of the world, whom ye desired and so long a time expected, and make me with all the powers and affections of my heart to pant after Him, and to sigh for my beloved, day and night. To the holy apostles we may say, Behold, illustrious preachers of the gospel, your beloved Master whom ye did love so ardently with your whole hearts, and make me to love Him fervently above all things, and with my deepest affections. To the holy martyrs, Behold, brave witnesses of the faith, Christ crucified, for the love of whom ye did so willingly shed your blood; Oh gain, for me the grace always to be suffering pain for Him, and to live ever on the cross, and that a hard cross, whether nature with her strength fastens me upon it, or the

hands of evil men, and straight from the cross to pass unto my Lord. To the confessor pontiffs, Behold, ye shepherds of the Lord's flock, the Immaculate Lamb, whom ye were once wont to sacrifice to Almighty God in the odour of sweetness on the holy altar, enable me to occupy myself worthily in so great a sacrifice, to offer it aright to God, and ever associating myself with that sacred Oblation, to offer myself perpetually to Him by good works in the odour of sweetness. To confessors religious, Behold, faithful servants of my Lord, your sweet and beloved Lord, for whom in reality as well as in desire, ye did forsake all the pleasures of this world; enable me for His love to persevere till death in my state, however dishonourable or poor, and to climb to the heights of great holiness for the pure love of God alone. To the saints and beati of our own congregation, Behold, most dear brothers, your Leader, to whom in word and work ye were so truly conformed in

labourers called to the same harvest, who shall pass with mighty sheaves of merits to His blissful society and yours. To the holy virgins, Behold, ye spouses of the Immaculate Lamb, Him for whom ye did keep your virginity with so much exultation; make me to appear ever before the eyes of your Beloved and mine, pure both in heart and work, and free from all stain of sin and all obligation of punishment, to pass straight from this life to Him in heaven. To all the Saints, Behold, my dearest friends, who are the consolation of my poor soul, the Master, Author, and reward of your sanctity; get me grace to walk as ye did by mighty strides of holiness, and conformably to the spirit of my institute, so that the increasing series of my years may never find me lingering where I was before, but ever mounting upwards to the heights of holiness.

Then we may say to our dearest Lord, "Now, O my Lord, I retire from Thee for a little while, yet not without Thee! No! for Thou art the consolation, felicity, and every good of my soul. I commend myself with all vehemence to Thy most ample charity, with all my brothers, friends, and

enemies. Love us, O Lord, as much as Thou canst, and inebriate us with Thy love, and transform us into Thy likeness, O joy and exultation of our hearts; and grant that we may live wholly in Thee, be wholly occupied with Thee and for Thee, and that we may have no object in any of our words and actions, within us or without, but only Thee, our Love and our every good; who livest and reignest," &c. And last of all we may say the Responsor, "Look down, we beseech Thee, O Lord, on this Thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ did not hesitate to be delivered into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer the torment of the cross; who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen."



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