

DOING THE WILL OF GOD

Speak Lord, your servant is listening

We will all say that we want to do God's Will, but the reality is most of us really do not want to do God's Will; in fact, we want to do our own will rather desperately. Consequently, when God asks us to do something that is contrary to our will, we do not do it because we only want to do God's Will when it is convenient: "When God is asking the same thing that I already want to do, well, then I'll be happy to do it. But if God is going to ask me to do something that I don't want to do, or that wasn't in my plan, well, forget it then." That obviously is the wrong attitude.

Remember always that what God wants is what is the best and He is going to ask us to do things that are not going to be easy and are not going to be the way we would have done it. We need to learn simply to accept and to allow the Lord to lead. That is very hard for us because we like to control our own lives. By now we should have given ample proof to our own selves that leading our own lives is quite a mistake. It does not work — it never has and it never will. But for some reason, which is beyond human comprehension, we still think we can do a better job than God. We need to learn to let go.

*Are you willing to drop what our plans were to do His? That is really what we have to ask. How are we going to find out? **The only way is to pray.*** Obviously, we can just simply carry on in our lives and deal with what gets dropped in our laps, but we have to remember that the devil is going to be more than happy to drop things in our laps too in order to get us running around in circles - especially in order to make sure we are not doing what God's Will really is. That is why we need to bring it all to prayer and ask the Lord to show us what He wants and we have to be willing to let go of anything; whatever God wants us to let go of, that is what we have to let go. That, again, is something rather frightening to most of us because we are attached to some of these things.

So we really need to ask ourselves: Am I willing to go before the Lord and tell Him that I will do His Will? Am I willing to look at the Lord and say, "Speak, Lord, Your servant is listening"? Or are we planning simply to go to prayer and say,

"Listen, Lord, Your servant is speaking"? It does not work very well that way. We need to learn to open our hearts, to hear the voice of God speaking in the silence, to be willing to let go of our plans and to do whatever it is that He tells us to do.

HOW long is JESUS present in the EUCHARIST after we've received Communion?

"We have to pay proper respect to Our Lord"

The great treasure of the Catholic Church is the Eucharist — Jesus himself hidden under the appearances of bread and wine. We believe, as the Catechism states, that "In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist 'the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained'" (CCC 1374).

Additionally, this Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist does not end immediately when we receive him at Communion time. The Catechism goes on to explain how, "The Eucharistic presence of Christ begins at the moment of the consecration and endures as long as the Eucharistic species subsist" (CCC 1377).

What does that mean when we receive him into our mouths? How long does Jesus' Real Presence remain in our bodies? There is a famous story from the life of Saint Philip Neri that helps answer that question. One day while he was celebrating Mass, a man received Holy Communion and left the church early. The man appeared to have no regard for the Presence within him and so Philip Neri decided to use this opportunity as a teaching moment. He sent two altar boys with lighted candles to follow the man outside of the church. After a while walking through the streets of Rome, the man turned around to see the altar boys still following him. Confused, the man returned to the church and asked Philip Neri why he sent the altar boys. Saint Philip Neri responded by saying, "We have to pay proper respect to Our Lord, Whom you are carrying away with you. Since you neglect to adore Him, I sent two acolytes to take your place." The man was stunned by the response and resolved to be more aware of God's presence in the future.

It is generally assumed that the Eucharistic species of bread remains for about 15 minutes after reception. This is based on simple biology and reflects the Catechism's statement that the presence of Christ "endures as long as the Eucharistic species subsist." This is why many saints have recommended offering 15 minutes of prayer after receiving the Eucharist as a Thanksgiving to God. This allows the soul to savor the presence of God and have a true "heart-to-heart" with Jesus.

In our fast paced world it is often difficult to remain long after Mass, but that doesn't mean we can't at least pray a brief prayer of thanksgiving. The main point is that we need to remember Jesus' presence in the Eucharist stays with us for several minutes and presents us with a special time when we can commune with our Lord and feel his love within us.