**Spiritual Communion**

In difficult times like these, when you are unable to attend Mass due to the coronavirus, you can still reach out to Christ Jesus in the Eucharist, by making a *spiritual communion* in prayer.

In his encyclical letter, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, Pope St. John Paul II wrote:

> In the Eucharist, unlike any other Sacrament, the mystery [of Holy Communion] is so perfect that it brings us to the heights of every good thing: Here is the ultimate goal of every human desire, because here we attain God, and God joins Himself to us in the most perfect union. Precisely for this reason it is good to cultivate in our hearts a constant desire for the sacrament of the Eucharist. This was the origin of the practice of “spiritual communion,” which has happily been established in the Church for centuries and recommended by saints who were masters of the spiritual life. St. Teresa of Jesus wrote: “When you do not receive communion and you do not attend Mass, you can make a spiritual communion, which is a most beneficial practice; by it the love of God will be greatly impressed on you!” (*The Way of Perfection*, Ch. 35).

The great St. Thomas Aquinas, too, encouraged spiritual communion, when attendance at Mass was not possible. He described it as “an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the Holy Sacrament and a loving embrace, as though we had already received Him.”

A prayer of spiritual communion with Jesus can be made in a matter of seconds, and you can even repeat throughout the day. The following are two beautiful, classic prayers of spiritual communion, asking the Lord to nourish our hearts with His love.

**My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You! Amen.**

**Oh Jesus, I turn toward the holy tabernacle where You live hidden for love of me. I love you, O my God. I cannot receive you in Holy Communion. Come, nevertheless, and visit me with Your grace. Come spiritually into my heart. Purify it. Sanctify it. Render it like unto Your own. Amen.**

Praying for spiritual communion – even offering one *without* words, just expressing the yearnings of your heart – shows a deep longing for the Eucharist. It shows your soul’s greatest desire: to be united to the Eucharistic life of Christ, the heart of Love, incarnate.