

Meditation before Holy Mass
intended for the prayer community:
The time of the Lord Jesus' visit in Holy Communion
vs. the time of Mary's visit in the Jasna Góra Image.

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Meditations led by three people:

A, M – women; W – man.

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(Duration of meditations with songs: about 30 min.)

1. Introduction.

W Dear Lord Jesus, hidden under the whiteness of the Holy Host! Being gathered for a prayer vigil, we are so close to You here today. Now, we are getting closer to the moment when the distance between You and each of us will cease to exist! Therefore, we would like to ask You now, O Divine Teacher, to enlighten our minds and make our hearts fall in love with You so that we may receive You in Holy Communion as You Yourself desire it. (0:47)

M Song: *I Know in Whom I Believe* – 1st stanza (0:50)

A Prayer: I am asking You, O hidden God: let me see now the difference between my everyday way of being with You hidden under the species of the received Host and the way dreamed by You, in the silence of Your Heart, of my being with You then. You are so good that You do not want anything from me that does not flow from the depths of my freedom, from my loving gaze on You, and from my desire to discover and fulfill Your desires. Please, O Good Jesus, reveal Your Heart's longing, and I promise I will willingly fulfill what You are waiting for. I am aware that You give Yourself entirely to me in Holy Communion out of love for me. Therefore, I want to surrender myself entirely to You in response to Your love. So what should I do, O Beloved Jesus, so that my desire to completely surrender to You after receiving You in Holy Communion is truly fulfilled? Tell me, I beseech You most earnestly: what should I do after Holy Communion so that You can read the most profound confession "I love You, Jesus!" from my acts? (1:48)

1. A reminder of the time of grace in the life of Tobit and his son from the Old Testament.

W At one of the previous vigils, we considered how the biblical Tobit and his son Tobiah had worshiped God after meeting His representative. When this messenger revealed before his departure that he was not a man but the Archangel Raphael, one of the seven brightest spirits allowed to enter directly before the Face of God Himself in heaven, Tobit and his son fell on their faces before him. In this way, they worshiped him, deeply moved by the discovery of with whom they interacted... After the Angel's departure, they continued in prayer for a long time: they praised God with hymns, thanking Him for such an unusual gift – for the opportunity to be with a Guest from Heaven, with an Archangel directly serving Almighty God! In this way, they honored God because they did not immediately deal with earthly problems, but quite the opposite: they engaged their earthly, human nature with great passion in expressing to God their delight at the fact that they were allowed to be so naturally with someone who came from a supernatural place, from the supernatural reality, from the world whose beauty is impossible to imagine. (2:00)

M Lord Jesus! The attitude of Tobit and his son, described on the pages of the Old Testament, can serve as a model for me to follow: every time I receive You in Holy Communion, I access a great honor: behold, You who sit on a throne with the Father and the Holy Spirit in heaven, before whose Face only the seven brightest Archangels enter, You, at every Mass, stand at my door! Do I, however, comprehend how great an honor I am accessing? Do I receive You as You deserve and as You desire? Do I appreciate this daily renewed unusual gift? (1:09)

A Do I omit the point “**the meeting with Almighty God after the Eucharist**” from my schedule? Isn’t it the case in my life that I always try to fit the point named “Eucharist” between other numerous events of the day, the consequence of which is that You, O Jesus, can never count on being with me in Holy Communion in an atmosphere of tranquility, quiet conversation, looking into each other’s eyes, listening to the rhythm of hearts,... hearts in love with each other?... How is it with me?... How is it with our love, O Beloved Jesus?... (0:56)

W I also think about bearing witness about You to others. Can our brothers and sisters read from my attitude after the Eucharist, Who is coming to our hearts? Can they read that it is worthwhile to remain for some time in prayer in this particular time of grace because the law of love towards the Bridegroom has a decisive voice here? (0:33)

M Song: *Jesus, Veiled in the Sacred Host* – 1-2 stanza (0:40)

2. Together with Mary, let us lean into the mystery of the time of grace

A Each reception of Holy Communion is abundant in grace, the value of which we will not understand without the Immaculate One, the Woman full of grace. And here is a unique explanation of this ‘time of grace,’ an explanation given by our Heavenly Mother: (0:25)

W Each of us probably remembers the profound religious experience associated with the peregrination of the copy of the Jasna Góra Image in our diocese. Maybe you remember that special place where your parish priest welcomed Mary in her miraculous image, carried in procession by the people of a neighboring parish. At that very place and time, when the Image of Mary was solemnly brought into the space of your parish, a time of special grace began for you. People who are usually too busy to pause a thought over the reality of Heaven during the day are now crowded to welcome Mary. They realized or somehow sensed that right now, on this one day, Mary wanted their presence with her, near her Jasna Góra image in their temple. Perhaps they realized that She wanted their physical presence at the place and time strictly determined by the date of the peregrination in order to bestow upon them the graces that She had prepared especially for this very occasion for each person who chooses to be here. (1:50)

M Furthermore, indeed, during this unique meeting, many experienced the grace of entering the sacrament of penance after decades of departure from God. Others received the gift of health, for which they had hitherto unsuccessfully asked. Many received new strength to undertake the tasks of their state more maturely. More than one heard the voice of a call to some task in the Church. Moreover, all hearts were filled with new, life-giving enthusiasm, delight at the obviousness of our destiny for eternal life with God, the Immaculate One, the saints, the angels... How much easier it was from that day to endure the hardships of everyday life, since its end was so obviously to be connected with the beginning of the way penetrating the supernatural spaces of eternal happiness with God... (1:20)

A However, did everyone take advantage of Mary’s invitation? Were there not those among the parishioners who postponed their visit to the parish church for some other time? Were these parishioners also given the gift of participating in the large gathering of so many parishioners and standing together for a long time in fervent prayer?... Could those who found some *excuse* for their decision not to take advantage of the time of visitation know the reality in which they were not participating? (0:53)

W The time of Mary’s visitation – a time of special grace... a time that has happened only a few times in my life... a time of love... a love so strongly felt, experienced, intensely lived, and profoundly penetrating my humanity... A time of grace associated with the physical presence of her miraculous image... (0:34)

M Song: *Lady of Jasna Góra* – 1-2 stanza (1:00)

A The time of grace associated with the physical presence of Her miraculous image... About what does this time tell me? – the time of physical presence, the time of the unique physical presence of the Image of the Immaculate Virgin of Jasna Góra. (0:23)

W By the meaning of this time, is Mary speaking to my heart today of another presence? Doesn't she, the Mother, who points to Jesus in the Jasna Góra Image with her right hand, want to make me aware of the similarity between the time of her physically perceptible visitation and the visitation of her Son, Jesus, who comes to me under the physically perceptible species of the Sacred Host in Holy Communion? (0:42)

M Through the meaningfulness of the time of grace of peregrination, does Mary speak to my heart today of an even more solemn physical presence – the presence of her Son, who peregrinates under the species of the Sacred Host in a well-defined passage of the day to my heart? (0:27)

A Every reception of Holy Communion opens a time of grace – a time of the Lord Jesus' physical presence with me. Jesus is with me under the species of the Sacred Host for a time in a way that cannot be compared to any other way of His presence during the day. As the Second Vatican Council proclaims, and what successive Popes have taken up in numerous statements, Jesus in Holy Communion penetrates me in a way that cannot be compared to any other way of His presence: whether in the Scriptures, in the person of the priest, in the liturgical assembly, or my neighbor – even the one who needs my help. (1:07)

W Jesus coming in Holy Communion abides with me in such a unique way for a limited fragment of time, just as a limited fragment of time was His earthly life. In the history of humankind, neither the time before His Incarnation nor the time after His Ascension provided such an opportunity to be with Jesus as the time when He lived as a man for about thirty years in the Holy Land. It is only by God's power that the time closely associated with the reception of Holy Communion provides the opportunity for identical contact with Jesus as was provided by the time of His earthly life. Moreover, even though we cannot see Jesus now, we cannot feel Jesus, we cannot hear Jesus, but we are truly with Him after Holy Communion as Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the wise men were with Him, as the Apostles and numerous multitudes later were with Him, as those who loved Him were with Him. (1:30)

M Song: *O Unspeakable Happiness Shone Forth* – 1st stanza (0:40)

A Just as abundant in special graces was both

- **the limited time of the thirty years of Jesus' earthly life**
- **and the limited time of one day of the peregrination of the Image of Mary in my parish,**

so too the time beginning at the moment of receiving Jesus in the Sacred Host is abundant in grace not until the next Holy Communion, but until the end of my prayerful abiding with Jesus. (0:37)

W Is it worth running immediately after Holy Communion straight to other tasks if I lose this time of grace irrevocably? (0:13)

3. The teaching of John Paul II regarding the time of grace

M The words of Jesus recorded in the Gospel of St. John and the commentary on them, written by Pope John Paul II, will answer the question posed here. (0:17)

A **John 12:1–8:** Six days before Passover Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² They gave a dinner for him there, and Martha served, while Lazarus was one of those reclining at table with him. ³ Mary took a liter of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair; the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. ⁴ Then Judas the Iscariot, one of his disciples, and the one who would betray him, said, ⁵ “Why was this oil not sold for three hundred days' wages and given to the poor?” ⁶ He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief and held the money bag and used to steal the contributions. ⁷ So Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Let her keep this for the day of my burial. ⁸ You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.” (1:31)

W It may seem to the people of an action-oriented world that prayer after Holy Mass is an unnecessary waste of time. John Paul II addressed the problem of some feeling this ‘waste’ in the context of consecrated life. It is worth quoting a few more broad excerpts from *Conclusion* of the Exhortation *Vita consecrata* and, by way of analogy, relate them to the issue of adoration after Holy Communion we are considering: (0:45)

M “Why embrace this kind of life, when there are so many urgent needs in the areas of charity and of evangelization itself, to which one can respond even without assuming the particular commitments of the consecrated life [or, as in this consideration, adoration after the Holy Communion – W. Kosek’s remark]? Is the consecrated life not a kind of ‘waste’ of human energies which might be used more efficiently for a greater good, for the benefit of humanity and the Church?” (0:52)

A These questions are asked more frequently in our day, as a consequence of a utilitarian and technocratic culture which is inclined to assess the importance of things and even of people in relation to their immediate ‘usefulness’. But such questions have always existed, as is eloquently demonstrated by the Gospel episode of the anointing at Bethany: ‘Mary took a pound of costly ointment of pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment’ (John 12:3). When Judas, using the needs of the poor as an excuse, complained about such waste, Jesus replied: ‘Let her alone!’ (John 12:7). ... (1:08)

W The precious ointment poured out as a pure act of love, and thus transcending all ‘utilitarian’ considerations, is a sign of unbounded generosity, as expressed in a life spent in loving and serving the Lord, in order to devote oneself to his person and his Mystical Body. From such a life ‘poured out’ without reserve there spreads a fragrance which fills the whole house. (0:40)

M What in people’s eyes can seem a waste is, for the individuals captivated in the depths of their heart by the beauty and goodness of the Lord, an obvious response of love, a joyful expression of gratitude for having been admitted in a unique way to the knowledge of the Son and to a sharing in his divine mission in the world. (0:37)

A Applying the words of John Paul II heard just now to the issue of the time of Eucharistic thanksgiving, one should say it is worth giving Christ precious time, it is worth it because the Church is thus filled with the precious fragrance of loving the Bridegroom – the One who gave us not just a little time, but all of His Divine time – He gave His life, His precious Body and Blood, and the time of Eucharistic union with Him! (0:47)

W Just as **Jesus gives Himself whole under the materially, sensually perceptible species of the Bread and the time of the Eucharist**, so also I should completely dedicate the time after Communion to Him and try to give Him completely myself through **this material gift**. Jesus waits for this material gift because the time given to Jesus realistically tells Him of my love for Him. Jesus must be received in the sacrament of Holy Communion not only spiritually but also materially / realistically because He gives Himself in this sacrament not only spiritually but also materially / realistically. (0:57)

M Failure to understand **this material dimension of the Blessed Sacrament** is the reason for disregarding the Gift. It is probably why the Council of Trent (see Session Thirteen Chapter Three Canon VIII) warned infallibly with the utmost severity: (0:21)

A “If anyone says that Christ, presented in the Eucharist, is eaten spiritually only, and not also sacramentally and really, let him be anathema.” (0:29)

W Prayer: Lord Jesus! We desire to enter the Holy Banquet with the greatest reverence, receive You in Holy Communion, and then abide in union with You in prayer. We ask that You assist us in this intention and that our devotion to You may fill this temple and the entire Church with the fragrance of the precious nard of our mutual love. (0:36)

M Song: *Here in this Sacrament* – 1-2 stanza (1:20)