

## April Reflection

### **Developing a Eucharistic Lifestyle**

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“This bread, indeed, requires the hunger of the inner man...”  
(St. Augustine, On the gospel of John XXVI, 1)

The Catechism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, “Christ our Pascha” (English ed. 2016) teaches that through the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist we “grow in the grace received in Baptism and Chrismation – the grace to be sons and daughters of God” (# 431).

To belong to God’s family, by virtue of being His children has implications for how we must live our lives. This notion of considering Christians “sons and daughters” of God, becomes a major challenge to everyone who seriously reflects upon their vocation of how to become authentic followers of Jesus Christ in our modern and secularized world. In this world many are hungry for unconditional love, authentic friendship, and for a deeper meaning of life.

It becomes a difficult task of developing a Eucharistic life style in our times, when we are all impacted by the hectic rhythms of modern life.

However, let us remember that God remains the same, full of love for all human beings, never tired of calling man “to seek Him, to know Him and to love Him” (CCC 1). How can we do this? How can we seek, know, and love God? This can be done only through our faith in the risen Christ, the foundation upon which His Church stands! Therefore, our Christian faith must be seen through a threefold prism: it must be *professed* - meaning we courageously and joyfully express our knowledge of God’s mysteries present in our lives; it must be *lived* – we are to bear fruits in our daily lives which are inspired by the faith we profess and through which we must bring others closer to God; and it must be *celebrated* – every time we meet as a parish community at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy we come to thank God (Eucharist in Greek means “thanksgiving”) for the gift of our salvation and redemption. These three aspects of our faith and how we experience them in our spiritual life are deeply intertwined with the reality of Christ’s presence in his Church through the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist.

St. Hilary of Poitiers, called the Holy Eucharist “the sacrament of divinization”, a central theme of eastern spirituality (Dizionario Patristico e di Antichita Cristiane, *Eucharistia*, Marietti 1994). Saint John Chrysostom emphasizes that the mystery of the Holy Eucharist “makes earth become heaven” (Homilies on First Corinthians XXIV, 8). In all patristic literature, the Church Fathers point out the necessity for Christ’s disciples to lead an exemplary life inspired by the Mystery of Christ’s presence among us. Therefore, it is indispensable that today’s disciples of Christ continue to be nurtured and invigorated by Christ’s presence in His Church and continue to be agents of peace, unity, and respect of human dignity toward all of God’s children. This can be accomplished when we live the life of Christ! St. Augustine exclaims: “how much more boldly ought we to say that a man is drawn to Christ when he delights in the truth, (...) blessedness, (...) righteousness (...) and in everlasting life, all which Christ is!” (St. Augustine, On the gospel of John XXVI, 4)