

JESUS CHRIST IS THE NEW COVENANT. In the Old Testament, covenant commitments were typically sealed in blood and with sacrifice. In today's 1st reading, Prophet Jeremiah prophesies a new covenant that the Lord will make with his people – the power of which can make the whole world into the New Israel. That covenant came in the person of Jesus.

The central saving act of Jesus Christ was his shedding of blood as a sacrifice for us – dying on the cross in order that we might share in God's life. Through the blood of that covenant all of us, Jew and Gentile alike, can share in God's divine life. In the fullness of Jesus Christ – body and blood, soul and divinity – present in the Eucharist, God shares his life with us, and offers us the opportunity to respond. And so we do. We receive the body of Christ from the table of the Lord, and receive the blood of Christ from the chalice of our salvation given to us in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament, the call for union with God was found in the voices of the prophets and in obedience to and observance of God's laws. But that union was somewhat distant. Now it is restored in the blood of Christ who, in the words of our 2nd reading, *was made perfect, and became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.*

God is love, and love always seeks union. In Jesus Christ that union is perfected, impossible to be broken even by death itself. In fact, it is through the sacrificial death of Christ that we find the ultimate union God seeks with us. Such is the profound reality of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who continues to pursue union with us in the blood of his cross, *drawing everyone to himself.*

*Fr. Michael*



JESUCRISTO ES LA NUEVA ALIANZA. En el Viejo Testamento, compromisos de la alianza-pacto eran típicamente sellados en sangre y con sacrificio. En la 1era lectura, el profeta Jeremías profesa un nuevo pacto que el Señor hará con su pueblo – el poder del cual hará al mundo entero en un nuevo Israel. Esa alianza-pacto vino en la persona de Jesús.

El acto salvífico y central de Jesucristo, fue su derramamiento de sangre como un sacrificio por nosotros – muriendo en la cruz para que nosotros compartiéramos la vida en Dios. Por medio de la sangre de esa alianza todos nosotros, los judíos y gentiles, podemos tener parte en la vida divina de Dios. En la plenitud de Jesucristo – cuerpo y sangre, alma y divinidad – presente en la Eucaristía, Dios comparte su vida con nosotros, y nos ofrece la oportunidad de responder. Y lo hacemos. Nosotros recibimos el cuerpo de Cristo desde la mesa del Señor, y recibimos la sangre de Cristo, desde el cáliz de nuestra salvación dado a nosotros en el sacrificio de Jesucristo.

En el Viejo Testamento, el llamado para la unión con Dios fue encontrado en las voces de los profetas, y en la obediencia y observancia de las leyes de Dios. Pero esa unión era algo distante. Ahora es restituida en la sangre y cuerpo de Cristo quien, en las palabras de nuestra 2da lectura, *fue hecho perfecto, y llego a ser la fuente de salvación eterna para todos los que le obedezcan.*

Dios es amor, y el amor siempre busca la unión. En Jesucristo esa unión es perfecta, imposible de quebrarse incluso ni la muerte misma la puede separar. En efecto, es mediante el sacrificio de la muerte de Cristo que encontramos la última unión que Dios busca con nosotros. Tal es la profunda realidad de la pasión, muerte y resurrección de Jesucristo, quien continúa persiguiendo la unión con nosotros en la sangre de su cruz, *trayendo a todos hacia él.*

*Padre Miguel*

## AREA NEWS

**GET CONNECTED!** Join Eugene Catholic Young Adult group (ages 21-39, married or single) on Thursday evenings, **6:45pm**, at St. Mary in the Parish Center — deepen your faith thru bible study, retreats, Theology on Tap, and have fun, also! For info contact: [eugeneyoungadults@gmail.com](mailto:eugeneyoungadults@gmail.com) or 541-270-9329 or [facebook.com/EugeneCYA](https://www.facebook.com/EugeneCYA). ALSO — **Theology on Tap** every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at the K of C Hall.

MARCH 24<sup>TH</sup>  
9:00AM — NOON  
**ALL COUNCILS' & STAFF RETREAT**  
@ THE CARMELITE MONASTERY

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**MAY 1<sup>ST</sup> (TUESDAY) 6:00PM**  
*Annual Carmelite Dinner*  
TICKETS GO ON SALE IN APRIL

### UPCOMING RETREATS:

**HOLY WEEK RETREAT** — At St. Benedict Lodge, **March 29<sup>th</sup>** (begins with dinner) — **April 1<sup>st</sup> at noon**. Cost is \$125/person for a private room or \$90/person with double occupancy — \$30/person deposit required with registration. For info: 541-822-3572 or website ([www.sblodge.opwest.org](http://www.sblodge.opwest.org)). Address for St. Benedict Lodge: 56630 North Bank Rd, McKenzie Bridge, OR 97413.

**MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND** — The next Marriage Encounter Weekend is **April 20-22 (2018)**, at Powell Butte Retreat Center (near Redmond, OR). Learn how to once again foster **COMPASSION AND FORGIVENESS IN YOUR MARRIAGE**. For more information call 503-853-2758, or at [www.rediscoverthespark.org](http://www.rediscoverthespark.org). Additional dates and locations are listed online.

### FAITH SERIES: CATECHISM THROUGH THE YEAR

#### HEAVEN ..... AND EARTH

Psalm 42:1-2 sings of the human heart's deepest longing: "As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God?"

Even those who aren't aware of such a longing — even those who don't believe in God — yearn to see him, because he created us for this very purpose. We may search for ultimate happiness in other places ... we may mistake this deep desire as a longing for something else. But in the end, only God, himself, can satisfy us.

Our desire for God, in fact, corresponds to his own desire for us. Though we have broken our relationship with him through sin, he woos us to return from our faithlessness, and he delights in our love (Hos 3:1-5; Sep 3:16-20). If we repent and embrace his offer of reconciliation through his Son, Jesus Christ, we are called to a life of grace that transforms us into Christ's own likeness (2 Cor 3:18).

This new life begins in the present world and continues beyond death if we die in God's friendship. Once we are perfected, it culminates in eternal joyous fellowship with the Most Holy Trinity: "We shall be like him, for we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn 3:2).

The "beatific vision", as it's called — unending sight of God's face that grants perfect blessedness — is the full and final union with him that we call "heaven". Such a communion of life and love with God, shared with all his angels and saints, defies description (1 Cor 2:9). But scripture speaks of this mystery in imagery that suggests its perfect goodness and glory: the Father's house (Jn 14:2-6); a river of life-giving water (Rv 21:6; 22:1); the heavenly Jerusalem studded with gold and jewels (Rv 21:1-4, 10-21); a crown (1 Cor 9:25); radiant light (Rv 21:23-25; 22:4-5); a wedding feast (Rv 19:7-9).

The Christian hope of heaven anchors and transforms our lives even now, for "everyone who has this hope based on [God] makes himself pure, as he is pure" (1 Jn 3:3).

**RECOMMENDED READING:** Excerpt taken from The NEW Catholic Answer Bible  
Is 65:17; 66:1 · Mt 5:8; 22:1-14; 25:21,23,34,46 · Rom 2:7; 6:22-23; 8:18-25 ·  
1 Cor 13:12 · 2 Cor 12:2-4 · 1 Pt 5:4 · 2 Pt 3:10-13 · Rv 7:9-17; 21:1-27 ·  
& Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) Nos. 325-326 · 1023-1029 · 1042-1050 · 1053 ·