

“Mary and the Eucharist”

from the Letters of Mother Antonia Colombo

In her capacity as Mother of Jesus and Mother of the Church, Mary has an unbreakable relationship with the Body of Christ present in the Eucharist and also in His Mystical Body, to which the Eucharist gives nourishment and makes grow. Our Founders vitally experienced this truth and made of it the foundation of our spirituality, of the proposal of the way of sanctity which is common to both educators and the young.

In Letter 820, Mother Antonia presents some reminders of the Eucharistic-Marian love that Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello had, which evoked the great spiritual energy that characterized the beginnings of our charismatic Family. She presents things that are significant for us today. Concretely-speaking, she presents to us that Mary brings us to Jesus and she suggests how to live that truth together with our Sisters and in our educating Communities:

To be accepting is a fundamental attitude of openness to the gift of oneself. It demands the silence of our entire being in order to allow that the Word reaches us and acts in us. Mary listened and became the womb that welcomed, protected and nourished the Word. She made room for God's thoughts, which upset her rhythms, her habits, her reasoning and opened herself to the unexpected message of the Angel. Her *yes* made possible the *great yes* of Christ to the Father, renewed in every Eucharistic Celebration. To accept is both a Eucharistic action and a gesture which challenges our life and our mission. What do still need to tell God in order to entrust ourselves totally to Him as Mary did? To follow in the footsteps of Mary means to wait, to welcome the Word of God, and to learn how to accept in Him our sisters and brothers and every human life that aspires to be born.

To care for is the commitment of accompanying life in its growth, for helping the young to develop a personal project which will lead them to build their own identity, to discover their place in society and in history, to read the project of God in their existence. The roots of that "taking care" are, first of all, in the family and from there extend to all those who work in educative ministry. "Mary gave birth to a Son and placed Him in a manger" (Lk 2, 7). This is a mother's gesture which provides food and warmth for her own son. The manger recalls the table. What food and what care do our young people need today?

To live time as Kairos: the coming of Christ has given time a new beginning. Not only because a new historical-chronological period began from this event, but because this coming was actualized through the *yes* of a woman, it gave it quality and conferred on it a new order: that of grace. It is the time of the remembering and of hope.

To thank: the body and blood of Jesus offered for the life of the world is the most authentic thank you given to the Father. Jesus is the only one capable of giving thanks because in Him the offering is not inferior to the fullness received. Mary, however, as creature, is the first Eucharistic life fully actualized. In her person and in her life, the highest degree of the real presence of the Lord became a reality as well as the fullest welcoming of such a presence.

For reflection and prayer:

How do I live the Mass and the Encounter with the Word each day? Are they realities which transform me and bring me closer to Jesus and His Mission?

Spiritual exercise: I will unite my voice to Mary's to say "thank you" to the Father who, in the Eucharist, gives us the gift of His infinite Love and makes us participants in His Life.

Mary, help me penetrate more profoundly into the Mystery of the Eucharist and to live it with greater faith and love. I will contribute in this way to Jesus' coming to us in His Eucharistic presence today, as a transformation of human destiny and of peoples, according to the Father's plan.