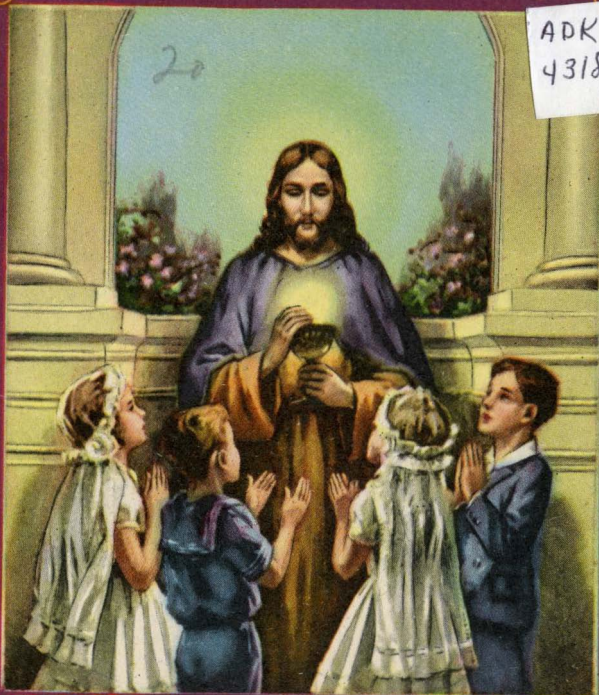


My Happiest Day

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My
Happiest Day
by

REV. DANIEL A. LORD. S. J.



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Life

Of course, you love your birthday.

That was the day when you began your life on earth.

On your first birthday, you were born.

You were given a name.

Your mother and father were very happy.

Your mother held you in her arms and said, "This is my little baby."

Your father smiled on you and said, "This is my child."

So every year on your birthday, you receive gifts.

But on your first birthday, you received the great gift of life.

Your parents gave it to you. But so did God our Father in heaven.

For He made your beautiful soul.

Because of your life you could smile and laugh.





You could learn to talk, to love your mother and father and your little friends.

You could eat, grow, play, and work.

So life is a beautiful gift from your mother and father.

But it is also the first gift that our Father in heaven gives to His children.

God's Life

Because you are alive, you work and play on this earth.

You can be happy here and sing and dance.

But someday you will die.

Death is not ugly and frightening. It is the beginning of your real life in heaven.

When you go to heaven, you will see God.

You will be with the saints and the angels.

You will be wonderfully happy and full of life and joy.



When saints die, we call that day their birthday.

They are born into heaven.

They see God and are wonderfully happy.

Now your mother and father give you your life on earth.

But God alone gives you your life in heaven.

We call that life the life of grace.

That life is already in your soul.

It makes your soul strong, beautiful, and able to do the things that God can do.

It makes you look like your Father in heaven.

It makes you God's child.

Death and Sin

When life on earth is ended, we call that death.

For a good little girl or boy, the day of death is very happy.

For a bad little girl or boy, it is very sad.



For if a bad little boy or girl sins, he kills the wonderful life of God in his soul.

He can still walk and talk and play. But his beautiful soul is dead.

Do you remember about Adam and Eve?

They were God's children too. They were full of happiness for God had given them His own life.

But you remember that they sinned.

God had said, "You may eat of all the fruit in Paradise. But don't eat the fruit of that forbidden tree."

Foolishly they disobeyed and ate the fruit.

So their souls were dead.

They were unhappy.

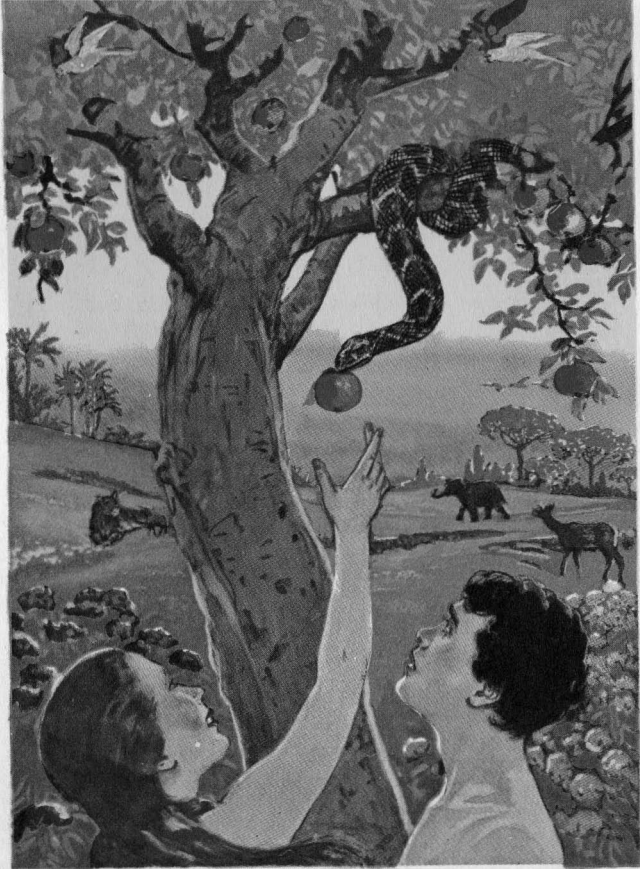
But God wanted them to be happy once more.

He drove them out of Paradise.

But He forgave them their sins.

He promised them that one of their children would be our dear Lord.





Baptism

When a little baby is born, everybody thinks he is very sweet.

They say, "Isn't that a beautiful baby?"

And everybody is happy because a new child has come into the world.

We are all the children of Adam and Eve. They are our first parents.

God meant all His children to have life in this world and life in heaven.

But Adam and Eve sinned.

They threw away their heavenly life.

So we are born without that life.

A little baby's body is sweet.

But his little soul is not yet alive.

So he is carried to church. The water of Baptism is poured over his head.

The priest says, "I baptize thee in the name of the





Fathér, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The water flows over the baby's head. And God pours His own beautiful life into the soul of the little child.

God says, "This is My child."

So his body and his soul are both alive.

His body will live on earth.

His soul will live in heaven.

Food for Life

So every little Catholic boy or girl has two kinds of life.

He has the life of his body.

His parents and God gave him this.

He has the life of his soul.

God the Father gave him this.

Perhaps he looks like his father and his mother. People say, "He has his father's eyes." Or, "She has hair like her mother."



If you could see the soul of a baby after Baptism, you would say, "This little child looks like God."

Because you see God has given him His own beautiful life.

Now the little baby begins to grow. He eats. He drinks.

This food makes him strong.

If he does not eat, he cannot play.

If he does not eat, he will not grow.

So the life of our body needs food.

But the life of our soul needs food too.

And God gives us food both for our soul and our body.

The World Is Full of Food

God filled the world with sweet and healthful food.

Have you ever walked in an orchard?

Over your head you see the beautiful apples.

Or you reach up and pick the peaches or the cherries.



A wheat field looks like a sea of gold.

It will be made into flour.

Flour will be made into bread for your dinner.

Sometimes you visit a farm.

The farmer tells you, "That cow gives you milk and cream and butter."

You see the sheep. You visit the pigs.

You take the eggs from the nests of the chickens.

And you know all these things are good to eat.

God filled the world with the things that mother cooks for dinner.

God filled the world with the things you buy at the grocery store.

God taught cooks how to make these things into delicious meals for His children.

God Feeds His Chosen People

Sometimes men and women are hungry.

They do not have enough to eat.





God is not pleased when His children are hungry.
He wishes the good food of the earth to be given
to all His boys and girls.

Once upon a time the Jews were God's Chosen
People.

He promised to give them a beautiful land flowing
with milk and honey.

But because they sinned, they were lost for a long
time in the desert.

There they were very hungry.

But God did not let them stay hungry.

He dropped down from heaven a delicious food
called Manna.

This Manna was heavenly bread.

It tasted very good.

It made the people strong and brave.

When they ate it, they did not need any other
food.

Some day the Chosen People knew that God would
give them another Bread from heaven. The Savior





would give this to them.

He did. This was the Holy Eucharist.

Our Dear Lord

We all know and love our dear Lord Jesus Christ.

He was the Son of God.

He was our elder Brother.

He saved us from sin.

All His life He spent doing good for everyone.

He taught us that God is our Father.

When people were sick, He cured them.

But most of all, He freed men and women from sin.

He drove the devils out of souls into swine.

He was the new Adam.

Adam threw away the life of God in his own soul.

Our dear Lord brought back the life of God for all of us.

He wanted to give us a new Manna. This was the new Bread from heaven.



He wanted to feed the life of our souls so that we would be strong, brave, and full of grace.

So He promised to give Himself to us.

He said He would become "our Bread for the life of the world."

Water and Wine

Our dear Lord was God.

So He had the power to do wonderful things.

Once on a time, He made the world out of nothing. He made everything that was in the world.

Then one day, He changed water into wine.

Jesus and His mother, Mary, were invited to a wedding party.

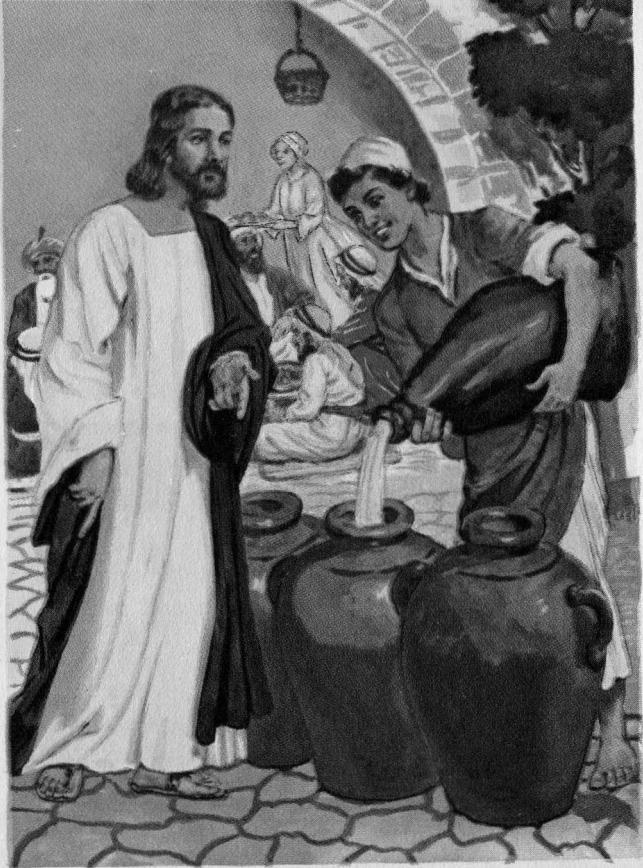
Everyone was very happy because the bride was sweet and the bridegroom was young and strong.

They all ate together.

They drank the good wine.

Suddenly the bride grew very sad.





She saw there was not enough wine for her friends.
But what could she do, for she was very poor?

Mary, our Blessed Mother, noticed this too.

She asked her dear Son to take care of things.

So our dear Lord did something very wonderful.

He found tall jars near the wall filled with water.

He blessed these jars.

The servants drew out the water. Only now they
found it was delicious wine.

Our dear Lord had turned the water into wine.

The Loaves

Once five thousand people were listening to our
dear Lord.

He talked so beautifully that they forgot they
were hungry.

But our Lord remembered. He wanted to give
them food.

"There is no food," said the Apostles. "There are
only these five loaves and few fishes."



How could five thousand people have enough to eat with so little food?

But our dear Lord had power over everything in the world.

He made the wheat. Out of this, men make the flour.

From that wheat, He taught men to make the loaves of bread.

So He took the loaves and blessed them.

Then a wonderful thing happened.

The five loaves grew and grew and grew.

The Apostles gave them to the five thousand people.

They all had enough to eat and were very happy.

There were even twelve baskets of bread left over.

Our Lord had fed all these people with a few tiny loaves.

So, you see, He proved what wonderful things He could do with bread and wine.





Christ's Power

So we see our dear Lord had power over bread and wine.

He changed water into wine.

He made five loaves feed five thousand people.

But He wanted to feed our souls as well as our bodies.

For He wanted the life of our souls to be strong and to grow stronger.

So one night He gathered His Apostles for the Last Supper.

He told them how much He loved them.

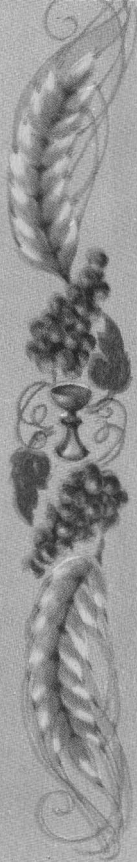
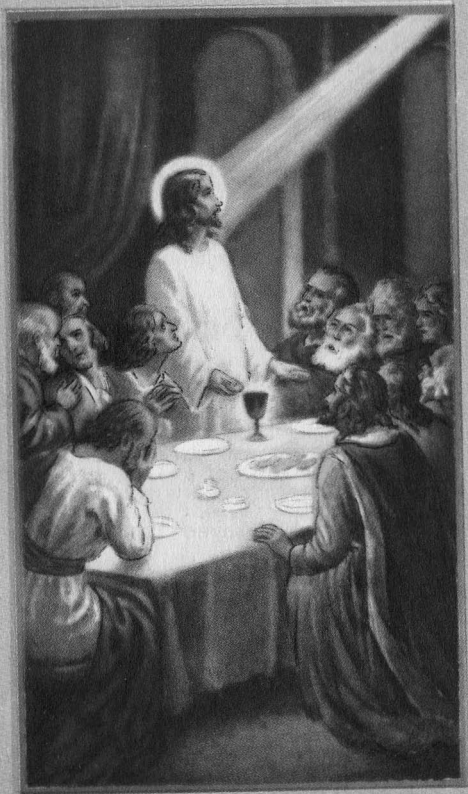
He told them that He was going to die.

But He promised that He would stay with them forever.

He loved them so much that He wanted to be close to them.

So He took bread in His hands and said, "This is My Body."





He gave this to His disciples to eat.

Then He took the cup of wine in His hands and said, "This is My Blood."

He gave this to His disciples to drink.

Then He made His Apostles priests. He said, "Keep on doing this in memory of Me."

This was the first Mass.

This was the first Holy Communion.

The Last Supper

Let us pretend that we are present at the Last Supper.

To the Jews this Supper was very sacred.

Each family ate it together every year.

It recalled how God had saved His people from the cruel Egyptians.

As the Jews ate the Supper, they remembered how much God loved them.

So we see our dear Lord sit down at the table with His Apostles.



First He washes their feet to show them how much He loves them.

Then He eats the lamb which is the main food of the Supper.

Saint John had said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

For our dear Lord was really the Lamb of God.

After the Apostles ate the lamb, our dear Lord gave them His own Body and Blood to eat and drink.

He united Himself with them as their food.

So He became the Food of all our souls.

He gave us His strength, courage, purity, and divine life.

Wouldn't you like to have been at the Last Supper?

But you are at the Last Supper every time you go to Mass.

Mass

For the Last Supper was the first Mass.

Every priest does just what our dear Lord did.



First our dear Lord said prayers and sang some hymns.

Then He offered to His Father the bread and wine.

Next He said, "This is My Body and this is My Blood."

Last of all, He gave His Apostles Holy Communion.

This is just what the priest does at Mass.

First he says the prayers at the beginning of Mass.

Often there are hymns and songs.

Then He offers to God the bread and wine.

We call this the Offertory.

Then over the bread and wine he says, "This is My Body. This is My Blood."

This is the Consecration.

Last of all, the priest gives Holy Communion.

So, you see, the Last Supper and the Mass are the same.

At the Last Supper our dear Lord made His Apostles priests.

Priests have said Mass ever since.





Holy Communion

When we love someone very much we like to be with him or her.

We like to hold our mother's hand.

We like to kiss our baby brother or sister.

We like to talk to our friends.

Sometimes we hear mother say to our baby brother, "I'd like to eat you." She says this because she loves him very much.

Now God loves us more than anyone could. He is our Father.

Jesus Christ is our Brother.

He gave us our life.

He gave us our food.

He gave us His own life so that we can live forever in heaven.

But most of all, He wants to give us Himself.

He wants His life to be in our souls.



He wants His strength and courage and purity to be ours.

That is why our dear Lord changes bread and wine into His Body and Blood.

For then we can take Him into our hearts.

Then He can be very close to us.

Thus His life becomes our life.

We call this Holy Communion.

My Confession

Of course, no one would want to receive Our Lord in Holy Communion if his soul was not pure and clean.

So before our First Communion, we go to Confession.

Our dear Lord said to His Disciples, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven."

The priests are those who carry on the work of the Disciples.





So we examine our conscience carefully. We ask God to let us know if we have committed any sin.

We tell God we are sorry. If our sins are very big, we do not want to go to Hell. If they are small, we do not want to go to Purgatory.

In any case, we do not want to hurt our dear Lord by sin. He has been so good to us.

Then we tell our sins to the priest. After confession, we say the penance he has given us.

Often in our life, we shall go to Confession.

This is our lovely preparation for Holy Communion.

Before Holy Communion

Before we go to Holy Communion, we must get our souls ready.

Jesus is coming to visit us.

He is going to live in our souls.

If there is any big sin in our soul, we must go to confession.



If there are small sins, we tell our dear Lord we are sorry.

We do not eat anything before we go to Holy Communion. We call this our Communion fast.

It starts at midnight before our Communion day.

When we go to church, we say to ourselves, "To-day I am going to receive our dear Lord in Holy Communion."

So we kneel quietly in our pew.

We say, "Oh my God, I am sorry for my sins. Make me pure enough to receive You."

We say, "Dear Lord, I believe this is Your Body and Your Blood. You said this was so. I believe what You said."

We say, "Oh dear Lord, come and visit me. I want you very much."

Then we pay very close attention to Mass.

When it is time for Holy Communion, we fold our hands and go up to the Communion rail.

We receive our dear Lord with joy.





Thanksgiving

After Holy Communion

After Holy Communion our dear Lord is in our hearts.

That is not bread which we have received.

It looks and tastes like bread. But Christ said, "This is My Body."

So very quietly we go back and kneel in our pews.

We say, "Dear Lord, I believe You are in my heart."

We say, "Dear Lord, thank You very much for all You have given to me. But I thank You especially for giving me Yourself."

Then we ask our dear Lord to bless and take care of us.

We ask Him to take care of our parents, our friends, our country, and the whole world.





We ask Him to forgive sinners and to protect people who are in danger.

We offer Him the day ahead.

We say, "Dear Lord, be with me all day today. Help me in school. Protect me when I play.

"Be with me and my companions everywhere."

Then we ask our dear Lord to take care of our whole lives.

We say, "Help me to be good. Bring me safely to heaven. I want to see You and be with You forever."

The Day of My Communion

Our dear Lord wants to stay with us. He comes to us in Holy Communion. He will stay with us as long as we let Him.

Only big sins drive Him out of our soul.

How happy you will be if our dear Lord stays with you always!

Then you need never be afraid. Jesus is in your heart.





You will never be weak. Jesus will give you His strength to help you.

When the devil tempts you, you can laugh.

"Jesus," you say, "the devil is Your enemy. Do not let him hurt me."

Jesus will help you to become like Him.

Your mother will say, "How good my little son is! How sweet my little daughter is!"

That is because you are becoming very like our dear Lord.

So go to Holy Communion often and ask Jesus to stay with you all your life.

Then when you die, Jesus will be with you.

He will take you safely to heaven. You will be happy with Him forever.

All Day Long

Jesus stays in the tabernacle after Mass is over. The tabernacle is the little house on the altar. He comes out of that house for Benediction.





He is very happy when He sees you kneeling at Benediction.

The priest takes Him from that little house to visit the sick.

All day long our Lord waits for His little brothers and sisters to visit Him. "Come and see Me," He says very quietly.

The boys and girls who love Him drop in to church to make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

They kneel before the altar and they smile up at our dear Lord.

They say to Him, "Keep us good. Help us to control our tempers. Don't let us ever sin."

At night when we are asleep, Jesus is watching in the tabernacle.

When the enemies threaten a city, Jesus is there to protect it.

So when a boy passes the church, he lifts his cap.

When a girl passes the church, she bows and says, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord."

And good boys and girls stop in to see our Lord as often as they can.



