

Jesus † Mary † Joseph
Chapter 36 - Frequent Communion

Christ:

My child, you should come often to Me, the Giver of grace and divine mercy, the Fountain of all goodness and holiness. In this way you will gain greater control over your passions, faults, and defects. In Holy Communion, I will make you wiser and stronger against the temptations and deceits of the devil.

2. When I come to you in this Holy Sacrament, I offer you interior light and strength. These gifts are known only to my faithful ones. They are not enjoyed by unbelievers, nor by those who love sin. In this Sacrament, the soul receives the grace to regain lost virtues and the beauty which was lost by sin.

3. The blind desires of man tend to evil from his youth. Unless this divine Medicine assists him, he will quickly slip from bad to worse. Holy Communion withdraws you from what is evil and strengthens you in what is good. You need Me. Make full use of the wisdom and strength which I offer you in Holy Communion.

Think:

To fight sin, I need a strength greater than my own. Jesus promises to give it to me in Holy Communion. I must not pass up this marvelous invitation. As often as possible I will go to receive Him. I will lay before Him my hopes, plans, and ambitions. He will give me the strength to do what is best for me.

Pray:

Lord, this heavenly gift is certainly necessary for me. I become sluggish so easily, and I fall into sin so quickly. I need to be spiritually refreshed, cleansed, and inflamed once more by frequent prayers, confession, and a loving reception of Your Sacred Body and Blood. By staying away too long, I may fall away from my good intentions. Make me wise enough to come to You as often as possible, so that I may have Your grace to work for eternal life. Amen.

December 5th

Saint Sabas, Patriarchal Abbot in Palestine (†439-531)

Saint Sabas, one of the most renowned patriarchs of the monks of Palestine, was born in the year 439, near Caesarea. At the age of fifteen, in the absence of his parents, he suffered under the conduct of an uncle, and weary of the world's problems decided to forsake the world and enter a monastery not far from his family home. After he had spent ten years in religious life, his two uncles and his parents attempted to persuade him to leave the monastery to which he had migrated in Palestine. He replied: "Do you want me to be a deserter, leaving God after placing myself in His service? If those who abandon the militia of earthly kings are severely punished, what chastisement would I not deserve if I abandoned that of the King of heaven?"

When he was thirty years old, desiring greater solitude, he began to live an angelic life so far above nature that he seemed no longer to have a body. The young sage, as he was

called by Saint Euthymius, Abbot of a nearby monastery, dwelt in a cavern on a mountain near Jerusalem, where he prayed, sang Psalms and wove baskets of palm branches. He was forty-five years old when he began to direct those who came to live as hermits, as he did, and he gave each of them a place to build a cell; soon this was the largest monastery of Palestine. He left the region when certain agitators complained of him, for he considered himself incapable of maintaining good discipline. The Patriarch of Jerusalem, Sallustus, did not easily credit the complaints, and instead ordained Sabas a priest, that he might say Mass for his disciples — for they had been displeased by his lack of desire for that honor. He was at that time fifty-three years old. The Patriarch presented him to them as their father, whom they should obey and honor, and made him Superior of all the Palestine monasteries. But several monks remained obstinate, and Saint Sabas again went elsewhere, to a cavern near Scythopolis.

As the years passed, he was in charge of seven monasteries; but his influence was not limited to Palestine. The heresies afflicting religion were being sustained by the emperor of Constantinople, who had exiled the Catholic Patriarch of that city, Elias. Saint Sabas converted the one who had replaced Elias, and wrote to the emperor that he should cease to persecute the Church of Jerusalem, and to impose taxes on the cities of Palestine which they were unable to pay. In effect, the people were reduced to extreme misery. The emperor died soon afterwards, and the pious Justin replaced him. Justin restored the true faith by an edict and recalled the exiles, re-establishing the exiled prelates in their sees.

When Saint Sabas was ninety-one years old, he made the long journey to Constantinople to ask Justinian, successor to Justin, not to act with severity against the province of Palestine, where a revolt had occurred by the non-submission of a group of Samaritans. The emperor honored him highly and wished to endow his monasteries with wealth, but the holy Patriarch asked him to use the riches he was offering to build a hospice for pilgrims in Jerusalem, to decorate the unfinished Church of the Blessed Virgin, to build a fortress where the monks could take refuge when barbarians invaded the land, and finally, to re-establish preaching of the true Faith, by edicts proscribing the various errors being propagated. The holy Abbot lived to be ninety-two years old, and died in 531, in the arms of the monks of his first monastery.

Source: Les Petits Bollandistes: Vies des Saints, by Msgr. Paul Guérin (Bloud et Barral: Paris, 1882), Vol. 14.

Preparing the Stable - December 5th – Fence

Build a fence about the crib of your heart by keeping a strict watch over your eyes, especially at prayer.

Ejaculation: Sweet Jesus, I long to see You!

Jesus † Mary † Joseph

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