

Accompanying Jesus: Prayers from a Lent Retreat

Sharing by Louisa and Anthony

In the retreat which lasted over the entire Lent season and which we had shared in the April 2008 issue of Grapevine, we have received and keep receiving many gifts. Among them is the sweet companion with Jesus in the Eucharist.

I guess no one would prepare oneself with the sacrament of the sick before going to the hospital for a normal delivery. Yet when it was found later that Louisa had lost blood clotting function and had already lost about half of the body's blood, it became most urgent to find a priest to administer this sacrament. I was thankful for the gift of this sacrament which had prepared her with either the grace to enter into the perfect love of God or the grace that we may stay longer.

When I did not know yet where she would go, the time we had in the past was most thankful for. It had been a tremendous gift that Louisa and I had come into each other's life so that we can accompany each other in our journey to experience the love of God. I thank Jesus for so many daily gifts throughout many years we have journeyed together to share and witness the love of God.

What we have at present could only be a dream at that time. I was told that a patient normally cannot hold more than 24 hours without encountering organ failure. As she continued to bleed while receiving transfusion, Jesus having emptied all His Blood to reveal the love of God has become our strength.

When I take gifts for granted, the worldly desires would then occupy the soul, and an ungrateful heart can never be satisfied. It is through thankfulness that I realize the abundance of gifts. Being so much indebted with gifts, many other things do not matter any more, be it a delicious meal, an argument, or an ego.

I can never thank Jesus enough. I deserve nothing, but God continues to give us more and more. I do not know what else we can offer in return, but to live a meaningful life according to its purpose from God who is love. So if we are gifted with the opportunity to stay together again we pray that we may witness love together. Not only was I desperate for this opportunity, I also needed to pray for Irene that she, being new born at that time, would not lose her mother.

Louisa was subsequently able to pass through numerous medical conditions one at a time. Some conditions may be fatal. Others bear risks of permanent damage. As we need to thank for the gifts we have already received, it is most humbled having to pray for the next gift of healing in each new condition.

Having experienced the generous gift of blood from so many people and the gift of life, the experience with the Eucharist sacrament is never the same any more. Each time the priest consecrates the Eucharist, I am determined to respond to the love of the Body and Blood of Jesus, whose love will then overwhelm my soul so much that I sometimes cannot hold my tears.

At first, I felt embarrassing to cry during the Eucharistic celebration. I thought it might be rare so that I had kept this as a secret with my sweet Jesus. Yet how can one not breakdown as it is impossible for our physical body to hold so much love of Jesus? Now I understand that many people must have cried also.

It is then not necessary to keep this secret, in order that we can share with each other the love of Jesus in the Eucharist.

A few weeks later when Louisa was undergoing therapy at home, we visited one specialist who did a blood test for her to check for hepatitis. The specialist had explained that one in about 10 people has hepatitis, which will pass to other people through transfusion. Louisa already had received transfusion from over 110 people in a system for which the screening process is not without fault. Yet we were speechless when the test results turned out all negative.

Prayer can longer be adequately expressed in words, especially each time when my most sweet Jesus humbles His Body and Blood to come to me. If I am ever distracted, I pray that I may hear nothing. It is like whatever happens around me does not matter any more, so that I may not let anything else to be in the way between Jesus and me.

The love of Jesus knows no bound. The only bound is perhaps in our determination and commitment. The more we respond to His intimate love, the more He invites us into the ocean of his love.

The communion with Jesus is just so sweet. I feel so sorry that love of Jesus is often not known by many of his own people. Whatever love I am capable of, I wish I can give to Jesus. My regret is the limitation in my weakness that I am only capable of this much love. My dear Jesus, the little thing my miserable soul can offer is only these drops of tears when your heart is being inflicted with so much ingratitude. The bare 5 minutes after the communion towards the end of the mass is just too short to give Jesus even just this much love. I later started a very small commitment to accompany Jesus at least one hour per month. (Please refer to the sharing of "Accompanying Jesus: Even for Busy People.")

My sweet Jesus hidden in the Eucharist, You have chosen to bear our pain. Your heart is so much consumed with the fire of love. It is not imaginable how painful to love the ungrateful souls. Knowing that your sacrifice is still in vain for so many souls who will chose only worldly desires had caused you so much pain in your agony in the Garden. Sharing only a very small bit of your pain is enough for me to cry to death. Yet you continue to bear this pain as you humble yourself in the Eucharist.

My dear Jesus, many friends do not know how to accompany You. You never turn down anyone. When one knocks it will be open. Please grant the grace to accompany you. Allow me to offer my love, if it may help just a tiny bit to comfort your wounded heart.

Dear Jesus, there will be no need to implore my friends to accompany You when You return in glory. At that time, many people will want to accompany You. Yet I pray that we do not wait till that time. I pray that we desire to accompany You now when the world is rejecting You.

Dear friends in prayer, the chapel will be open the whole day every first Saturday for adoration. Please sign up to spend at least one hour each month to accompany Jesus.

Thank you very much for accompanying Jesus.

陪伴耶穌：四旬期避靜的祈禱

陳鴻慶、周漸群分享，王念祖譯

在 2008 年四月份的葡萄籐，我們分享了一個持續了整個四旬期的避靜經歷。那次避靜中，我們領受了許多豐厚的恩寵，至今不斷，其中一項就是在陪伴聖體中與耶穌親密相偕。

我們像一般狀況正常的產婦，沒有在去醫院待產前就先領受病人傅油聖事。但後來發覺漸群因凝血功能失常，已全身失血近半時，便得迫不急待找神父為她傅油了。我要感謝這聖事讓漸群準備好了接受任何可能發生的結局：不論是蒙主恩召進入祂完美的愛中，或是讓我們有幸能繼續廝守。

當漸群命危旦夕之際，我最感念的就是我們曾經共同擁有的時光。在生命的旅途中能與漸群相遇，攜手同行，一起體驗主的愛，真是無限天恩。我感謝耶穌多年來每日賜予我們的恩典，讓我們分享和見證了祂的大愛。

我們今天在一起，是在那時做夢也想不到的。當漸群一面在輸血，一面又不斷失血時，支撐我們的力量就是耶穌流盡祂的寶血所彰顯的天主大愛。

當我把一切恩賜視為理所當然時，靈魂就會被世俗的慾望霸佔。不知恩的心是永遠也不會滿足的，唯有懷著感恩的心，才能體認到天主恩賜的豐厚。相較於這豐厚的恩寵，生活中的其他瑣事，無論是山珍海味、意氣爭執、或自我本位，都顯得無足輕重了。

我對主耶穌有無盡的感激。我雖不堪，可是天主的恩寵卻源源不斷。我實在無以回報，只能以愛還愛，照祂的旨意，在祂的愛內活出生命的真諦。因此漸群和我若得天恩，能繼續在世上相伴，我們必要一同為主的愛做見證。我不只渴求這恩寵，也更要為巧慧祈求，不要讓她剛出生就失去母親！

漸群終於一一熬過了無數的危險病情，有的狀況是性命攸關，有的則可能會留下永久的後遺症。我們雖然已得到這麼多需要感謝的恩寵，但當另一個新的病況發生時，我們的感恩祈禱還未足夠，便需無能為力地祈求多一個治癒的恩寵了！

我們接受了珍貴的生命禮物，也接受了許多人的慷慨捐血，從此就更珍惜聖體聖事。每次在彌撒中當神父祝聖聖體時，我都深感耶穌聖體聖血的愛，滿溢了我的心靈，每每使我無法忍住淚水。

起初，我在感恩祭中流淚覺得難為情，就把這作為我與親愛的耶穌之間的一個小秘密。然而，當我們心悅誠服在耶穌那世上沒有凡身肉

軀能承受得住的巨大愛情時，誰不會流淚呢？我這才明白很多人領聖體時會哭的。所以我們不需要隱瞞，好讓我們更多的互相分享耶穌聖體的愛。

幾週之後，當漸群出院回家接受復建治療時，一位專科醫生特別為她驗血檢查肝炎。醫生解釋說大約有十分之一的人是肝炎帶原者，並會經由輸血傳染給別人。漸群接受的輸血來自一百一十多人，在血液的檢驗過程中難保沒有失誤。然而，檢查的結果顯示漸群絲毫沒有染上肝炎，這真讓我們驚訝萬分！

言辭實已不足以表達我心中對主的讚美與感謝，尤其是每當我最親愛的主耶穌謙卑自下來和我結合時。如果有任何雜音，我祈求天主使我充耳不聞。週遭發生任何事情也不在乎；在我與耶穌之間，不容任何事物干擾。

耶穌的愛沒有止境；唯一的限制也許只在於我們的決心與承諾。我們對祂的摯愛回應越多，也就越被引入祂那汪洋無際的愛中。

領受耶穌的聖體是如此甘飴。我為許多天主子民未能領會耶穌的愛而深感哀傷。願把我能付出的愛都奉獻給耶穌。可惜我軟弱卑微，能給耶穌的僅這些少的愛。我親愛的主耶穌，當您聖心被不知恩的長矛刺傷時，我所能奉獻給您的，就只有這麼幾滴淚水，但從領聖體到彌撒結束只得幾分鐘，連這些微的愛也不夠時間來呈獻給耶穌。後來我遂開始踐行一個小小的許諾，那就是每個月至少花一小時來陪伴耶穌聖體。（請參閱「陪伴耶穌：四旬期避靜分享」）

隱藏在聖體中親愛的耶穌，您甘心為我們受苦，您的聖心燃燒著如此熾熱的愛。去愛不知感恩的靈魂，我實在無法想像是多麼大的痛苦。您在山園祈禱時，看見將有許多人仍耽於世俗，甘於罪惡；即使您愛的犧牲這麼大，仍被許多靈魂拒絕和糟蹋，使您萬分痛心。祢這樣大的痛苦，只要分擔一點兒，就足以使我哀慟逾恆。然而祢卻謙卑地在聖體內繼續受這樣的苦！

可愛的主耶穌，許多朋友不知道要怎樣陪伴您。但您從不拒絕任何人。只要敲，門就會開。請賜給我們陪伴您的恩寵。請接受我們的一點愛心，好能稍微安慰您那傷透的聖心。

親愛的主耶穌，當您光榮地再來時，就無需再懇求我的朋友來陪伴您了；到那時，將有許多人都想陪伴您。然而，我希望不要等到那時候。祈求就在當下，當世界違棄您、當您時常被那飽受您恩惠的人出賣、當您受盡凌辱時，請讓我們陪伴您！

我親愛在祈禱中的朋友，盼望您能夠每月至少認簽一小時來陪伴耶穌聖體。衷心感謝您來陪伴耶穌。