

“ And taking the chalice He gave thanks : and gave it to them saying : Drink ye all of this : for this is my blood, the blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins. ”

These solemn words of the good Master reveal to us and call to our attention three great mysteries of the Precious Blood :

(1) THE BLOOD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. The new testament, or alliance of God with men, is not made with a single people nor for a time only, like the old ; it is made with all peoples, for ever,—for time and for eternity ; it is made and concluded at the price of the Redeemer's Blood ; it is cemented and sealed forever by that adorable Blood. Jesus declares this to us, when, showing us His Eucharistic Blood, the Blood He is about to shed for us, He says to us : “ This is my blood, the blood of the new covenant. ”

(2) THE GIFT : The gift is expressed by these words : “ He gave it to them. ” The gift is for all and to all, like the Eucharist itself, of which the blood is an essential part ; it is given as a drink, a heavenly, a divine drink, necessary for all, necessary to the life of the soul, under pain of death and perdition, witness the words : “ He who eateth my flesh and *drinketh my blood*, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day ; *Unless you drink the blood* of the Son of man, you shall not have life in you. ”

Hence the words : “ *Drink ye all of this*, ” are not merely an invitation, or counsel ; they are a fundamental precept of the gospel. That precept is fulfilled as well by the faithful laity who communicate under one species only, as by the priest who receives both ; since the divine flesh and the adorable blood are present alike under each species.

(3) VIOLENT SHEDDING OF THE SAVING BLOOD. This blood, offered and given to all and to each one as a pacific host in the Eucharist, is also to be shed and poured forth for all without exception and for each one in particular, for the remission of the sins of each and all. That was the supreme declaration of the Divine Master at the moment, when He was about to commence His immolation, and was expressed in the words : “ *Which shall be shed for you*. ” That immolation was a bloody one and was an act of unspeakable violence, cruelty and brutality. We