

Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth this Bread shall live forever" (Jno. C. 6, V. 59). For from this comparison of the Bread of Angels with bread and manna, the disciples could easily understand that just as the body is daily nourished by bread, and just as the Hebrews in the desert were daily fed by manna, so the Christian soul can be daily fed and strengthened by the Bread of Heaven. Moreover the injunction of Our Lord in the *Our Father*, that we should ask for *our daily bread*, is almost unanimously taken by the Holy Fathers as meaning not so much that material bread, or bodily food, but that the Eucharistic Bread should be daily received.

The desire of Jesus Christ and of the Church to promote daily Communion is based chiefly on the fact that, by living united to God through the Sacrament, the faithful receive strength to control the passions of the flesh, to do away with the lighter faults of daily occurrence, and to avoid those graver sins to which human weakness is exposed. It was not chiefly to honor and reverence God, nor to be given as a reward of virtue (St. Aug., Ser. 57 on Matt., De Orat. Dom., V. 7). Hence the Holy Council of Trent calls it "the antidote by which we are freed from our daily faults and preserved from mortal sins" (Sess. 13, C. 2).

Understanding such to be the will of God, the first Christians approached this Table of Life and strength every day. "They were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread" (Act 2, 42). That this was done in subsequent ages of the Church, to the great advantage of sanctity and perfection, we learn from the Fathers and writers of the Church.

When piety grew cold, and especially after the dissemination of the error of Jansenism, discussions began about the dispositions necessary for frequent or daily Communion. Each one surpassed the other in requiring excessive and difficult preparation. The result was that while some maintained that very few were worthy of daily Communion or capable of deriving more abundant fruit from this saving Sacrament, the rest were satisfied with once a year, or once a month, or, at most, once a week. Some