

ciples to love Him as He loved them, *before* the Last Supper. He did not yet say to them, "Abide in my love." It was too strong a word for such timid souls, they would not have understood Him. But *after* the Last Supper, He said to them no longer, "Love God, love your neighbor;" but "*Love me as your Brother, your Friend, with a love that may be your life and the law of your life,*" *Non jam dicam vos servos sed amicos meos.*

If you do not receive Communion, therefore, you may love our Lord as your Creator, your Redeemer, your Benefactor, but you will never know and love Him as your Friend. Friendship is based upon union or a certain equality, and these relations with God are found only in the Eucharist. Who would dare to think himself the friend of God, and deserving of His intimate affection? The servant who would treat his master as a friend would insult him, unless the master had first given him the right to do so. But when God comes Himself to sit at our fireside, when he is come to cement with us a union, a partnership in life, in goods, in merits, thus making the first advances, I may have the right to call Him my Friend. Hence the words of Our Lord to His disciples after the Last Supper: "I call you no longer servants." What then dost thou call them, Lord? Glory of God, Strength of God, Remedy of God, as the Archangels? No, more than all these titles, great as they are, "I have called you *friends*. You are my *friends*, because all that I have received from God, I have given to you. You are my friends, because to you have I confided my royal seal."

He goes farther still; He appears to Magdalen and says to her, "Go and tell my *brethren* what you have seen." What! His *brethren*? Can He do more? And yet the apostles have only received Communion once! What then of those who like us have received Him so often! Who now will fear to love our Lord with the most tender affection? Tremble if you will *before* Communion, remembering what you are and whom He is that you are about to receive. It is well, you have still need of his mercy.

But *after* Communion rejoice only, there is no more