

**Month: December 2024**  
**Prepared by Sisters Servants of the Most Holy Blood**

**First monthly theme in preparation for the Jubilee of the Families of  
the Most Precious Blood - Rome, July 1st, 2025**

**THE THEME:**

***The blood of the child Jesus, a cry for life, defense, respect and  
dignity of every child***



### **Brief presentation of the Religious Family**

The sisterly community "***Handmaids of the Most Holy Blood***" and the "***Oratorians of St. Philip Neri in Aufhausen***", also called "***Oratorians of the Most Holy Blood***", work in the common service of evangelization and pastoral care. Lay faithful who feel particularly drawn to our spirituality can join the "***Fraternity of the Most Holy Blood***". These three different groups make up the "***Spiritual Family of the Most Holy Blood***," a reality initiated by Fr. Winfried M. Wermter and present in Germany, Austria, Italy and Poland.

**The soul of our Family is "Love poured out on the Cross".** For us, the **Blood of Christ** sums up:

- *the Mystery of the Incarnation*: the Blood in the veins of the Child Jesus, who became our blood relative, testifies to the highest and at the same time deepest closeness of God to each one of us.

- *the Paschal Mystery*: the wounds of Christ the Redeemer, who suffers and dies sacrificing himself in atonement for our sins and to save us, become, in his Resurrection, precious pearls: the source of our joy, of our hope and of our strength!

We pursue **evangelization** and Christian education through retreats and spiritual exercises, formation meetings and Bible groups, publications and spiritual programs for children, youth, adults and families.

In this way we seek to help those we meet (and who wish to do so) to **live the Paschal Mystery in their own reality**, so that by adding each "drop" of their own suffering to the chalice of the divine Blood, they may find the meaning of life and experience the transfiguration of their own wounds into the glorious signs of the Paschal victory, experiencing on each occasion the newness of the inner "resurrection." In the light of faith we recognize the presence of the Blood of Christ particularly in the suffering, in the abandoned and in the victims of various addictions.

Further information can be found on the following websites:

[www.sanguedicristo.eu](http://www.sanguedicristo.eu) (in Italian)

[www.blut-christi.de](http://www.blut-christi.de) (in German)

[www.duchowarodzina.pl](http://www.duchowarodzina.pl) (in Polish)

***"No one is too old or too sick so that they aren't able to convert and to make their contribution, so that they aren't able to offer at least a drop of blood from their own heart together with the Blood of Christ for the salvation of their neighbor and for the renewal of the Church and of the whole world." (WM)***

## **Seven Months in the Sign of the Seven Sheddings of Jesus' Blood**

During the seven months of preparation to the Jubilee we will be guided, as if by a red thread, by the traditional "Seven Sheddings of Jesus' Blood", an object of meditation for Christians since the patristic period. According to St. Bonaventure, meditating on the sheddings of the divine Blood is like the work of the bee which, entering a flower, gathers and sucks honey from each petal. Bishop Francesco Albertini summarized the seven moments in which the Savior shed his Blood for us in the Chaplet of the Precious Blood - later spread with tireless and passionate zeal by St. Gaspar Del Bufalo. In this prayer we keep finding, even today, the fundamental themes of our spiritual formation and mission. We learn to love like Christ by contemplating the stages of His love, given to the point of blood.

Going through the Seven Sheddings we contemplate not only the Blood of the Son of God and Son of Man in its **physical** essence, but also as its **liturgical presence** in the sacraments (mainly in the Eucharist) and in its **mystical** presence in the wounds of all humanity, that is, in its material, psychic and spiritual difficulties. This immerses us in the mystery of Christ's cross, making possible the spiritual experience of God's irruption into our lives with His transforming power.

## Reflection on the monthly theme:

In December we meditate on the first of the Seven Sheddings:

### **JESUS SHED BLOOD AT CIRCUMCISION**

#### **Circumcision - an Old Testament sign of covenant**

Circumcision was practiced in antiquity by various peoples who inhabited the desert. With **Abraham**, God made circumcision a religious sign of the covenant with Him, of consecration and election, of trust and responsibility and of belonging to His people. The Lord had led Abraham out of his country, into a foreign land, and tested his faith. So God promised him that he would be "the father of a multitude of nations" (Gen 17:4): " I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you" (Gen 17:7). The sign expressing this covenant will involve all Abraham's descendants: "Throughout your generations every male among you shall be circumcised when he is eight days old" (Gen 17:12).

#### **Circumcision of Jesus**

Jesus lowered himself and humbled himself for our salvation. He left heaven and became man by taking our body and blood from Mary. He wanted to be one of us, in everything except sin. To this end, he accepted the living conditions and customs of the people of Israel and submitted to the Jewish law.

Through his Blood shed at circumcision Jesus confirmed the covenant God had made with Abraham. He became man and son of his people to be at our side as the representative of humanity. He fulfilled the Old Covenant, establishing a New Covenant.

#### **The New Covenant - the Baptism - the Church**

Christ, the new father of the human race, establishes a new lineage, no longer through a genealogy of the flesh, but through the spiritual sonship we receive through Baptism. Just as Jesus through circumcision was accepted and welcomed into the people of Israel, so we, through Baptism, enter the New Covenant and are welcomed into the new chosen people, the Church.

#### **Holiness of life - purity of body, soul and spirit**

It is no coincidence that the rite of circumcision is linked to the sexual sphere. Jews belong to the chosen people directly by birth. Therefore, with the rite of circumcision, the entire family and the entire life of the Jewish people was and still is blessed and consecrated to God. With the sign of circumcision, God manifests once and for all to His people that the source of life belongs to Him and must therefore be considered holy. With the conception and birth of a new life, the parents collaborate directly with God, who infuses the child with an immortal soul. Sexuality must serve true love and the transmission of life. To deviate from this principle is not only to betray the covenant with God but also to self-destruct. Today, sexuality is often seen as 'decoupled' from service to life, and is de-qualified as a mere instrument of pleasure. This is the premise of the current widespread inability to live a true family life, the reason for so much deception and alienation. Is it not this fracture between sexuality and faith, between procreation and charity, that leads to the killing of the man in his mother's womb, to the destruction of the Christian vision of the world and of life? Baptism, the sign of the New Covenant that builds on the Old and at the same time elevates it, brings these principles to fulfilment in a sanctified family life. Against the temptation to despair, seeing how much blood is shed today through wars, terrorism, abortion and euthanasia, only the Divine Blood, the great sign of God's mercy, restores our hope: 'To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever' (Rev 1:5b-6).

## **Guidelines for personal or community prayer (duration: approx. 1h)**

### **Prayer scheme 1**

#### **Eucharistic Adoration: HOLINESS OF LIFE**

*(Where it is not possible to organize a Eucharistic adoration, an adoration of the Holy Cross might be a suitable alternative)*

#### **Opening song**

#### **Introductory prayer**

**Leader (L.)** Jesus, Son of the Eternal Father, through the Holy Spirit You became man like us, being born by the Virgin Mary. You lived and worked with us. You experienced joy and sadness, happiness and longing for the heavenly homeland. You wanted to return to the Father's House with us. For this you 'paid' the debt of man's sin with your blood.

**Assembly (A.)** We thank you for the infinite love with which you suffered for us. Your wounds have been a source of true life for us. Through your Precious Blood may we, already on this earth, participate in God's holiness.

**L.** Holy Spirit, strengthen our faith, so that we understand ever more deeply the value of the Precious Blood and faithfully follow in the footsteps of your love. Make us thirsty for the Most Holy Blood, which we can receive in all the sacraments, but most evidently in the Eucharist.

#### **Time of silent Eucharistic (or Cross) adoration**

#### **Contemplation of the 1st Mystery of the Chaplet of the Precious Blood**

*At the beginning:*

**L.:** The wounds of Jesus are sources of love and salvation. Let us rest at this source to strengthen ourselves in God's love and to experience the healing of our physical, mental and spiritual wounds. Let us contemplate the first mystery of the Chaplet of the Precious Blood.

**L.:** O God, come to my assistance. **A.:** O Lord, make haste to help me.

**L.:** Glory be to the Father... **A.:** .As it was in the beginning...

#### **FIRST MYSTERY: JESUS SHED BLOOD AT CIRCUMCISION**

"After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb" (Luke 2:21).

#### **WE PRAY FOR ALL THE UNBORN CHILDREN**

**L.:** Heavenly Father, all life comes from You. You give to every child, from the first moment of their conception, a unique and immortal soul. Already beneath their mother's heart, the little ones feel that they are welcomed, loved and expected, but also that they are not. Let us pray for all the children who have not had the good fortune to be born, whether for health reasons, or because they were rejected or killed.

**A.:** Let us also pray for those mothers, fathers, counsellors and doctors who do not respect God's property and the dignity of every person. Lord, touch their hearts that they may understand and repent and come to inner conversion. Help them to name, even if at a later date, the unborn

children and to pray for them, so that these little ones may feel in eternity that they are loved not only by God and the angels, but also by their parents.

**L. and A.:** Our Father... (5 times)

**L.:** Glory be to the Father...

**A.:** As it was in the beginning...

**L.:** We beseech you, therefore, help your servants

**A.:** Whom you have redeemed by your Precious Blood.

## **Community prayer**

- Heavenly Father, our Creator! Only You can give life and only You can call it back to You. By circumcision, according to the Old Covenant, the Jews become part of Thy people. I entered God's new people through Baptism, through the signs "of water and the Holy Spirit". I thank Thee with all my heart for this immense gift. Grant that I may remain faithful to you. **Sanguis Christi, salva nos!**

- Lord Jesus, we thank you for the Blood you shed to cleanse us from sin and make us God's children. Make us capable of giving our blood and our lives for the salvation of our brothers and sisters and thus reciprocate your love. Help us to always consider, in joy as in sorrow, the price of our redemption. **Sanguis Christi, salva nos!**

- Lord, we pray to you for the people who protect life with their testimony. Strengthen their prayer and give them words full of your Spirit. **Sanguis Christi, salva nos!**

- Father, we entrust to you those who do not accept life as your sacred and inviolable property. Help them understand that life is your gift, that it needs protection and love — from the first moment of conception until natural death. **Sanguis Christi, salva nos!**

- Jesus, your circumcision reminds us of the holiness of the source of life. Help us in every state of life and at every age to fight for purity and to protect it with modesty and genuine love. Lord Jesus Christ, You subjected Yourself to circumcision to show us how important purity is. Help us to always behave modestly and demurely. Let us avoid impure images, films and jokes, and stay away from those who take provocative attitudes. Give us a pure heart, that we may see God. **Sanguis Christi, salva nos!**

- Let us pray for Christian families that, with the help of the Holy Spirit, they will transmit not only human life, but also spiritual life, laying the foundations of faith and supporting its development. **Sanguis Christi, salva nos!**

- Lord Jesus Christ, in the history of the world and also of our country, your grace has raised up countless great saints and highly educated men. Unfortunately, even in Christian countries, many nefarious ideologies and currents of thought have spread. We therefore immerse our world in your Most Holy Blood and pray for purity of hearts, that through a renewed appreciation of modesty and chastity, people's eyes and hearts may be opened anew to the full truth of the Gospel. **Sanguis Christi, salva nos!**

- Lord, protect those who have repented for the abortions they have committed or for facilitating euthanasia. Give them the strength to overcome human despair, so that they may discover in their pain not a curse, but a blessing: the opportunity to allow themselves to be purified by your Blood, to mature and to commit themselves to the defence of life. **Sanguis Christi, salva nos!**

- Jesus, we praise your divine Blood. It is for us, even today, a source of healing and deliverance from all evil influences. Grant that in this "price of our redemption" we may always find protection and help in the battle against the powers of darkness. **Sanguis Christi, salva nos!**

**L.:** The Blood of the Lamb has already delivered the Jews in Egypt from the exterminating angel. The Blood of the New Covenant, which we receive in the Eucharist, heals the wounds of body, soul and spirit. Help us, that we may worthily adore this treasure of treasures, so holy and precious, and experience the fruits of redemption within us.

## **Children in whom My Blood flows**

*Let us listen to the following witness:*

*I would like to tell you how the Word of Life has acted in my life, or rather how it has changed my life. For many years, my husband and I tried to have children, but without success. And, sure, there were several people who suggested adopting, but I was completely closed to this possibility. I didn't want to, because my desire was to have children of my own — of my own blood, of my own bones, and that was something I always prayed for: "Lord Jesus, I want children of my own, blood of my own blood, flesh of my own flesh..."*

*At the same time, from various people I heard encouragement to adopt children.... Sometime before attending spiritual exercises with the Spiritual Family of the Most Holy Blood, I said in my heart: "Lord, if You want me to adopt children, tell me during this retreat." And it was not easy for me, because I really did not want to hear it. I went to the retreat hoping to hear, during the intercessory prayer, that I was already fertile and could have children of my own. On the first day of the retreat I again said to God: "Lord, You know me. You know that I have to hear it from You, because I am like that: I do not believe when it is only men who speak."*

*When we arrived at the retreat, we saw the Word of Life on the front door: "This is my blood." These words had a very strong impact on me. On the one hand I was ashamed. God had already been telling me for so long: "Take my children: they are my blood," but I was so stubborn.... On the other hand I felt filled with happiness, completely honoured that God was asking me to raise his children. I felt as if Jesus was saying to me: "Take these children in whom my blood flows and raise them for Me." So I received my answer even before I set foot in the house that was hosting the spiritual exercises! I had an incredible joy in my heart, so powerful that it still lasts today.*

*I returned from the retreat full of joy. I remembered the words of the hymn we had sung at the beginning of the first mass: "Give us your heart to see your blood in our brothers." I thought I had received from God the grace to see His blood in the children awaiting adoption, even though my husband had not yet received it. In time, however, he too became open to the idea of adoption. I then wanted to begin the adoption process as soon as possible.*

*In the documents we received from the adoption agency, we had to fill out dozens of pages of forms indicating our availability and preferences regarding children: eye colour, sex, diseases... We decided to write "God's will" everywhere - God knew the children he wanted to give us. Only in one place did my husband and I decide to do things our own way. Under "Number of children," we wrote: "Either one or two." But God must have thought: "Since everything must be in my hands, this should be too." When, two years later, we received the long-awaited phone call, we learned that there were three children, all brothers and sisters. At first I thought I would not be able to cope. But this thought was short-lived and after a while I said: "Lord, with You everything is possible, so if this is Your will, if this is what You want from me, then I will take all three of them in."*

*We received three wonderful children, two boys and a girl. Some people told me that it often happens that if you adopt children, you can have children of your own afterwards. I replied: "But I already have children of my own! I have the best children one can have from God!"*

*Since then, God has incredibly blessed our children and our family in everything. To others, these things may seem trivial, but I know that this is God's work. For example, we were told that*

*our eldest son would most likely not even speak and today he can read fluently. The children are healthy, even though they should have been sick. The kindergarten is very close and there is a bus to take our son to school every day because of his disability. I thank God for everything, even the smallest of things, for example milk for the children, which is brought directly from the farm to our house. Recently I was thinking that a shop close to home would be really useful, because I find it difficult to go far away every time. Then we found out that a market will be built around the corner from our house. I constantly thank God who does so much for me. I know that He will not stop here, because I feel that He is constantly guiding me. Praised be the Lord!*

J.S.

## **A time of silent adoration follows**

### **In-depth questions**

- What role does God's will play for me? Do I ask myself what pleases God most in different situations or do I seek, even in prayer, the fulfilment of my desires?
- Do I demand to understand God always and everywhere or do I leave Him the freedom to act in my life?
- Mary in Nazareth was ready to serve God unconditionally. Am I too? Am I open to God as Mary was?
- The Blood of redemption — God's love poured out on the cross — is also present today in a mystical way in the wounds of humanity. Do I pray to Christ to allow me to see his presence in every child, in every suffering person, in every difficult person? Am I able to hear the voice of this Blood and respond with love?
- How can I serve to protect the sanctity of life?

### **Prayer for the respect of human life**

God, Our Father, you love all men and you are especially close to those who are powerless and in danger. That is why you have placed a guardian angel beside every man. Children experience your goodness above all through the love and care of their parents. That is why today we ask You above all to help children whose parents are going through a crisis. Many children unfortunately have to come to terms with the feeling of not being wanted, and many of them have to struggle to survive under their mother's heart. We ask you to help their mothers and fathers. Pour Thy Holy Spirit into the hearts of those who have collaborated with Thee in the conception of a child. Make them true mothers and fathers. Show them how all the difficulties involved in welcoming one more child can become a blessing for the whole family.

In particular, we ask for the spirit of humility so that parents may be willing to ask for and accept the help needed for the healthy development of their children. May no child lose his or her life due to the belief that there is no room for him or her, or due to their parents' lack of food or willingness to provide for his or her life. Grant parents the willingness to continue to serve life, prioritizing their children over their own personal plans or careers. Awaken the willingness to adopt in those who cannot have children. Grant greater love also to those who are willing to entrust their children to adoptive parents, should their living conditions be too limited to allow for a healthy upbringing.

Give us all great respect for human life, which is your special gift and sacred property. Grant that we may help with advice and action all those who are in danger because of wrong opinions, life difficulties or the consequences of old sins. May our love for the Blood of Christ and trust in



the Word of God renew the spiritual life in all of us, so that the scourge of infanticide, which so strongly afflicts our time, may be transformed into genuine conversion and repentance and a new evangelization. Amen.

### **PRAYER OF A REDEEMED**

Dear Father in Heaven, I am your son,  
For out of love you created and moulded me,  
so that I can give love as you do -  
For through Jesus you have redeemed me,  
so that I may give mercy, as you do -  
For by the Holy Spirit you have sanctified me,  
so that I may give life, as you do:  
Dear Father in Heaven, I am your son!  
Let me grow and mature  
and take part more and more  
to your paternity, to your maternity,  
so that your joy, your honor and your glory may increase, now and again! Amen.

### **Final prayer**

**L.:** Glory to the Blood of Jesus,

**A.:** Now and forever. Amen.

### **Closing song**



## Prayer scheme 2

### Lectio Divina: I AM NOT ALONE!



#### Introduction

**G.:** Let us follow the path marked by the traces of the Blood of Jesus. The first Shedding of His Blood - the one that took place during the circumcision (Luke 2:21) - puts us before the theme of our Covenant with God. The prophet Jeremiah wrote: "The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. (...) I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts" (Jeremiah 31:31-33). Before we listen to the Word of God today, let us ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten us, to make us understand how we can live as His allegiant. **To be committed to the protection of the sanctity of life and to have the courage to oppose ideologies that are the enemies of life, I must first discover that even my life is precious: I AM NOT ALONE!**

#### Opening song

#### Opening prayer

##### ALLIED WITH GOD

**Leader (L.):** Heavenly Father, you are "a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Ex 34:6). Therefore you have offered your people a new covenant. You sent your only-begotten, beloved Son into the world. Through circumcision he was fully incorporated into the chosen people of Israel.

**Assembly (A.):** Jesus, true God and true Man, You became one with us men to such an extent that You were willing to make the covenant of alliance with the Father in our name. Like every child in Israel, You were circumcised, in the sign of this covenant. Blood flows, even if just a little, and already announces the price you would pay for this covenant: death on a cross! That is how much you love us!

**L.:** Lord, you want us to be living members of your new people. Your mercy makes us sharers already as little ones in the Church's stream of grace. In the sacrament of Baptism we have entered through you into the covenant with God. Make us ever more grateful for this sacrament and help us to live it more consciously and faithfully in your Name.

**A.:** Jesus, we want to shape our lives together with You and share joys and sorrows with You: Your concerns will be our concerns, Your happiness... our happiness! That is why I ask You for Your Holy Spirit. Give us together with Your Spirit also Your love, so that together with You we may be faithful to our covenant with God. With his help, I wish to be a consolation for You and for our Heavenly Father.

We thank you, Holy Spirit,  
for inspiring Holy Scripture  
for cooperating with those  
who have passed on to us  
the Old and the New Testaments:  
You are received by those who listen to the Word of God.  
They welcome you into their heart  
those who meditates on the Word of the Bible,  
those who work with You,

those who live according to the Covenant.  
They keep gifting You  
those who bear witness to the faith.  
We thank you for the light, for the truth,  
for the presence  
in the tabernacle of the Word of God!

## **Reading the Word of God**

### **VARIANT 1: Psalm 139 (138), 1-18: LIVING AS GOD'S ALLEGIANT**

<sup>1</sup> O Lord, you have searched me and known me.

<sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from far away.

<sup>3</sup> You search out my path and my lying down,  
and are acquainted with all my ways.

<sup>4</sup> Even before a word is on my tongue,  
O Lord, you know it completely.

<sup>5</sup> You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.

<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

<sup>7</sup> Where can I go from your spirit?  
Or where can I flee from your presence?

<sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, you are there;  
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.

<sup>9</sup> If I take the wings of the morning  
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,

<sup>10</sup> even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold me fast.

<sup>11</sup> If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,  
and the light around me become night,"

<sup>12</sup> even the darkness is not dark to you;  
the night is as bright as the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

<sup>13</sup> For it was you who formed my inward parts;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

<sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works;  
that I know very well.

<sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you,  
when I was being made in secret,  
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

<sup>16</sup> Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.  
In your book were written  
all the days that were formed for me,  
when none of them as yet existed.

<sup>17</sup> How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!  
How vast is the sum of them!

<sup>18</sup> I try to count them—they are more than the sand;  
I awake—I am still with you.

## **Brief points of reflection**

- How does the text of Psalm 139 concretize the meaning of life in the covenant with God?
- The fact that I am an ally of God means that I AM NOT ALONE! Am I grateful for that?
- Am I aware of God's presence in my daily life? Do I think about him? Do I talk to him?
- How do I live my covenant with God?
- How do I express and testify that my life is consecrated to God?

## **Time for silent prayer**

### **Prayers of praise and intercession**

**L.** Good Father in heaven, we thank You for Your wonderful creation and much more for the infinite patience You have with us humans. You have given us freedom so that we may learn to love like You. You would have us become capable of fully partaking in the life of your triune love in heaven. Although our forefathers and ancestors betrayed their covenant with You so many times, You have never grown weary, but you have renewed Your covenant with us men each time.

**A.** Jesus, you allowed yourself to be circumcised in humility and obedience, confirming the covenant with Abraham. Through the Blood you shed on the cross, it became, in your resurrection, a new covenant. Through the sacrament of Baptism we not only participate in it, but also become one body with You, Son of God and our Saviour...

**L.** Holy Spirit, God, you enable us to recognize God's will already here on earth, to accept it and thus to become one with God. We thank you for your mercy and your faithfulness towards us in all situations of our lives. You protect us, give us security and hope - the beginning of true happiness already on earth...

*(Spontaneous prayers)*

### **Final prayer**

**L.:** Glory to the Blood of Jesus,

**A.:** Now and forever. Amen.

### **Final song**

## **VARIANT 2: Gospel according to John, 15, 1-20: ALLIANCE WITH GOD IN JESUS**

<sup>1</sup> "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. <sup>2</sup> He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. <sup>9</sup> As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep

my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. <sup>11</sup> I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. <sup>12</sup> "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. <sup>14</sup> You are my friends if you do what I command you. <sup>15</sup> I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. <sup>16</sup> You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. <sup>17</sup> I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

<sup>18</sup> "If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you. <sup>19</sup> If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world—therefore the world hates you. <sup>20</sup> Remember the word that I said to you, 'Servants are not greater than their master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also

### **Brief points of reflection**

- Every farmer must regularly cut and purify the shoots so that they bear more fruit. The purifying knife in the hand of the FATHER is the Word of God proclaimed by Jesus. Do I allow myself to be purified by God? How? (Through his Word, the sacrament of penance...). Do I accept the purification that comes to me also through others?
- Do I try to remain in Christ by living his Will, his commandments? Do my participation in the sacraments, my listening to the Word manifest an authentic, living contact with him?
- With circumcision and then Baptism, men are not only bound to God individually, since at the same time they are received into God's people. With Baptism we are received into the Church, the living body of Christ. Am I grateful for this gift?
- The divine Blood and life want to flow in his Mystical Body, among us, his "branches", in mutual love. What can I do to renew unity with certain brothers, certain sisters, to live with Jesus in our midst, as a witness of faith for others?

### **Time for silent prayer**

#### **Prayers of praise and intercession**

- Lord Jesus Christ, through Baptism I have become a member of Your Body, bound to You who are the Head. And therefore **I shall never again be alone!** Thank you, Lord, for you are always faithful!
- Jesus, I have been incorporated into the people who belong to you. I am in **communion with the whole Church**: with the baptized who now live in the world as Your militant Church, but also with the members of the Church triumphant in heaven and with those who are part of the suffering Church in purgatory. Praise to You, Lord, for this family that transcends time and space!
- Jesus, **You** are my leader - it is YOU who lead me, it is YOU who take care of me! The knowledge of this wonderful gift has the power to restore my inner peace and security every time. For this I praise You with all my heart!
- When I entered the New Covenant I renounced all covenants with the "prince of this world". Grant that I may always remain faithful to you. May the fact that I am your ally, Lord, give me

courage in every difficulty. May I not forget that THE BLOOD OF CHRIST IS STRONGER (cf. Heb 12: 24).

- Jesus, you are my best friend! You don't leave me in the lurch. You always have time for me. You wait for me. I can find you everywhere. How can I thank You for what You have done for me? I already know: what You love most is love itself. So I would like to learn more and more how to really love: by sharing, by forgiving, by giving my time to You and to others. I also want to ask myself, each time, what it is that pleases You most, and then do it. Thank You, Jesus, for helping me to love more and more!

- Lord, forgive me if I too often waste time on useless things, alone. At such times I forget that I have made a covenant with You and allow myself to become despondent. Make me always return, with renewed impetus, to live in Your constant presence.

- Lord, we pray to You for those who suffer from depression because of loneliness, that they may discover that they are not alone and find the way that leads to You and the Church.

- Jesus, we pray to You for educators, that they respect God's plan for each child.

*(Spontaneous prayers)*

## **Final prayer**

**L.:** Glory to the Blood of Jesus,

**A.:** Now and forever. Amen.

## **Final song**

## **Commitments and initiatives to concretely live the theme of the month (drawn from our community experience)**

### **Praying to save life**

*An example of the power of prayer:* A woman wanted to have an abortion; her mother's arguments had failed to convince her to desist. The mother began to pray, invoking the Blood of Christ. On the appointed day, the doctor did not come to the surgery! After this, this daughter no longer sought other ways to terminate the pregnancy and gave birth to her child.

Let us remember the message of Fatima: "Pray, pray much; and make sacrifices for sinners, because many souls go to hell because there is no one to sacrifice and intercede for them" (Sister Lucia, *Fourth Memoir*, ch. 2,6). "Of all that you can, offer a sacrifice as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and of supplication for the conversion of sinners. [...] Above all, accept and bear with submission the sufferings that the Lord will send you" (ibid., ch. 2,1).

Those who are no longer able to do much outwardly, due to poor health, old age or other problems, can even do much more through prayer and the offering of their sufferings than during the active period of their lives.

### **Participating in initiatives to defend life**

Our Family participates in such initiatives and events, such as the monthly Prayer Vigils for Life (with Holy Mass and a procession in prayer to the abortion clinics in Regensburg (Germany) and Bregenz/Lindau (Austria), and the "March for Life" in the city of Berlin, *et cetera*.

## **Supporting people who are 'on the front line'**

We are in contact with those who are personally involved in the struggle for the protection of life (help with pregnancy). Some of them come to us to talk, to ask for help, advice and to find spiritual 'refreshment', as well as for intercessory prayer and to take part into the sacraments...

*An example:* B.N., an Austrian counsellor, wife and mother of her disabled, adopted son, provides support to many women on the Internet and by telephone. She encourages them to desist from abortion and provides support to those who have had an abortion and cannot forgive themselves. She also helps women, who regret using the morning-after pill, to save the life of their child by promptly using the appropriate pharmacological remedies. B.N. often attends our community house - for dialogue, intercessory prayer, teachings on the spirituality of the Blood of Christ, and annual family retreats. The Blood of Christ has become a source of strength for B.N.: every day she consecrates herself to the Precious Blood and places all of her hope in it.

## **Studying to acquire more skills**

Some members of our spiritual family are attending the study course in 'Theology of the Body' at the 'Benedict XVI' University of Philosophy and Theology in Heiligenkreuz (Austria).

## **Providing support for those who had an abortion**

Time and again people who have had abortions come to us and seek dialogue and support. We try to help them not only by asking for God's forgiveness but also by teaching them how necessary it is to forgive themselves and start living again.

## **Providing first aid**

In our homes we have for some time taken in young mothers who needed help to save the lives of their children.

## **Shrine of the Mother of Pure Love, publications, retreats**

The Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, Mother of Pure Love, is the centre of our spiritual family. The themes of purity of heart and chastity are at the heart of our pastoral work, and not only in the physical location of the Shrine.

Calix Editions offer prayer booklets and other publications on the themes of purity and chastity, directly related to the protection of life.

Another special occasion to witness the holiness of life are the spiritual exercises for adults, children, young people and families.

## **Proposal for a slogan of the month: I AM NOT ALONE!**

**I am not alone** - for I am in covenant with God! Being aware of our communion with God, we want to begin these seven months in preparation for the Jubilee and open ourselves to the Holy Spirit, so that this month becomes an opportunity to authentically renew our very personal covenant with Him.

*Comment for the slogan of the month:* 'I have the best ally one could have. It supports me, lives in me, gives me strength, helps me and defends me! People may oppose me, they may attack me, treat me unfairly... I am not alone! There is One who not only created me, but also remains with me and, together with me, wades every night and every darkness and every bewilderment - He never deserts me. I am not alone: not while taking an exam, nor in a hospital, nor in those conflicts I experience at work or anywhere else... We may sometimes feel abandoned - even in one's own family it may happen that one feels lonely, but it is important we say to ourself: I am not alone! Even

if everyone abandons me, betrays me, treats me miserably, persecutes me.... - I am not alone! And He knows what He can expect of me. Whatever God expects of me, I can manage - with His help! And if HE wants me to endure a difficult situation, He will support me. I can have full confidence that it'll be for my benefit, for my growth, for my maturation, even if I have to learn how to deal with defeat..."

(W. Wermter, *Resolved and rooted in the power of the Blood of Christ*, p. 9-10)

## Proposal for a short prayer to be recited daily, if possible

Holy Mary,  
Mother of Pure Love  
and Queen of the Precious Blood,  
help us to become, together with You and like You,  
a living chalice!



Mary is the first chalice of God's incarnate love, the chalice that God chose, prepared and blessed. We can also imagine **our heart as a living chalice**. In union with Mary beneath the cross, we gather today, as a 'living chalice', the drops of **Christ's saving Blood that, in a mystical sense, flow towards us from the wounds of humanity**. Through this offering, we raise to God this chalice filled with the Blood of Christ in an attitude of faith. Thus we too become a gift, together with the Blood of Jesus Christ.

**In this month of December**, let us offer in the chalice of our hearts intentions related to holiness of life, for example:

- for the politicians and the lawmakers, in atonement for their choices,
- for the little ones who are aborted - so that, even if rejected by their parents, they may feel loved by us and that they may one day welcome us into heaven,
- for those who have chosen to be euthanized,

Let us not forget that our prayer will be even stronger with the addition of a spiritual offering, e.g. a humiliation accepted without complaint

In the **attitude of the living chalice** we can also pray one of the versions of the **Hymn "Eternal Father"**. In our Family of the Most Holy Blood we recite it in the following version:

### ETERNAL FATHER,

*I offer you through the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ:*

- *in atonement for the sins of the whole world*
- *for the dying, for the souls in purgatory*
- *and for the renewal of the Church in the Holy Spirit.*

\*\*\*

### The chalice

I hold out my hands,  
giving and taking.  
I raise them to You and implore You:  
Receive, Father, the tears,  
the desire, the pain.



The cup is filled with my brother's blood,  
of my blood and that of Your Son.  
Take it in, Father!

I hold out my hands,  
giving and taking.  
I raise them to You and implore You.  
Give, Father, joy,  
fulfilment, unity.

The chalice is empty,  
my brother's chalice,  
my chalice and that of Your Son.  
Give, Father!

*M.B.*

## **FOR FURTHER DETAILS, in Calix Editions**

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