

# Do-It-Yourself Discernment Retreat on Precious Blood Spirituality

This series of reflections is meant to be read over five days. Each reflection contains scripture verses and questions for journaling or silent reflection.

## Day 1: How does God prepare you to recognize Jesus?

Ours were the sufferings he bore, ours the sorrows he carried (**Isaiah 53:4**). Many passages in the Hebrew Scriptures give hints about the coming Messiah, and some of them are about his suffering. Yet the people of Jesus' time could not see that, except in hindsight. Visions of conquest and glory blinded them to the way God really works.

Read the fourth Suffering Servant Song, Isaiah 52:13-15 and 53:1-12, or Psalm 22.

Reflection Questions:

- What sufferings have you endured?
- In hindsight, what lessons and gifts have been in these times?
- How do they help you identify with Jesus? Do they help you see that Jesus identifies with you?

Prayer

*Suffering Servant of God, you bear my sorrows. You shed your blood for me. Help me to experience your presence in all the moments of my life, and to know that you want only good for me.*

## Day 2: Who is Jesus?

“In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus,” (Philippians 2:5). His state was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God ... In Philippians 2:5-11, we read that Jesus, who is God, enters fully into our human experience. We are challenged to respond to God’s will as Jesus did: humbly, wholeheartedly, and with complete trust.

Spend some time meditating on Philippians 2:5-11.

Reflection Questions:

- Who is Jesus?
- How does his supreme act of love affect you?
- What response are you asked to make right now?

Prayer

*Jesus, with all creation I bend my knee before you. Give me understanding to know and courage to do your Father’s will.*

## Day 3: How is Jesus present in you?

At the Last Supper, in Jesus’ farewell to his companions, [Jesus] said, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood which will be poured out for you,” (Luke 22:20) In a sense, this is also the first Mass, Jesus’ eternal presence in his church and in you.

Read a whole Last Supper narrative (Luke 22:14-38) and Imagine yourself present at that meal.

Reflection Questions

- A covenant is an agreement. What does Jesus promise? How do you respond?
- Bread and wine are “the work of human hands.” In what way does Jesus’ continuing presence in the world depend on people — on you?
- How is the Blood of Jesus poured out for you today?

Prayer

*Jesus, blood is life — your blood is your life — and you offer it to me every day. Help me to break through the routine to encounter you, the Bread of Life and Cup of Salvation.*

## Day 4: How are you are washed in water and in blood?

“One of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance, and immediately there came out blood and water,” (John 19:34). Here is a sign of Jesus’ total gift of himself, to the very last drop of his human life. This is a sign of Baptism and Eucharist, our participation in that life.

Spend time with John 19:17-37 or another Gospel story of the crucifixion. Stand at the foot of the cross. Look on the one whom they have pierced – from John 19:37.

### Reflection Questions

- What response — praise, thanksgiving, sorrow, awe — wells up within you?
- Speak to Jesus with trust; he understands everything about you and loves you more than you can ask or imagine.

### Prayer

*Jesus, I am overwhelmed by your sacrifice. Teach me the ways I might give my life for you.*

## Day 5: What power does the Blood of Jesus have on your life?

“Through his blood you gain your freedom!” (Ephesians 1:7). What does the Precious Blood of Jesus mean to you?

Read Ephesians 1:3-14. The words are directed to you, a follower of Jesus. What do they call you to?

### Reflection Questions:

- What spiritual blessings have you received in the past? What about now?
- How is his hidden plan unfolding for you?
- If you have put your hopes in Christ, what response are you moved to make?

### Prayer

*Blood of Jesus, we adore! Make us love thee more and more.*

(from the Song, “Blood of Jesus”)

The following are additional Scripture passages that can be used to reflect on Precious Blood Spirituality.

- Exodus 24:1-11 The first covenant sealed in blood.
- Isaiah 42:1-9; 49:1-7; 50:4-11 The other Suffering Servant Songs
- John 6:35-58 The Bread of Life
- Matthew 27:32-56; Mark 15:22-41; Luke 23:33-49 The other crucifixion narratives
- 1 Peter 1:18-21 Redeemed in the Precious Blood
- Rev. 7:9-17 Washed in the Blood of the Lamb