
Soul Of Christ, Sanctify Me

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
by the Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler,
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I have appreciated all sorts of parishioners sharing with me their Lenten disciplines. I have sat with you at meals. I have spoken to you in the Cathedral hallways. I talked with one of you while we were filling our cars with gasoline.

Not all of our Lenten disciplines should be shared with one another, for various reasons. Certainly our disciplines should not become badges that we boast about. Nor should our disciplines be so guilt-producing that we lose the joy and life of Jesus.

But what I am hearing is that these disciplines are working for us. "You know," a friend said, "I gave up chocolate not because I am seriously overweight or anything. But what happens is that every time I think about chocolate, I think of my discipline, and then I think about God and prayer." I've heard the same thing from folks who have given up alcohol or sugar, or whatever. The discipline is that we substitute a thought about God-even a fleeting thought about God-for that daily natural craving or urge or hunger. That is the benefit of any fast. We do without so that we discover something else.

I share with you the prayer that has become my Lenten discipline. It is not the only prayer I pray in Lent, but it is a special one for me. I have put a copy of it in my wallet, so that I see it whenever I pay the bill. And whenever I am delayed, standing in line, with a few minutes where I might become impatient, I instead pull out my wallet and pray it.

The "Anima Christi" has been attributed to St. Ignatius Loyola. Loyola, from the Spanish Basque region originally, became one of the great Roman Catholic saints and founded The Society of Jesus (now known as the Jesuits). But the prayer was probably used before Ignatius, often as a prayer that the faithful prayed after receiving communion. Still, one does not have to know all this to appreciate the succinct power of this prayer.

ANIMA CHRISTI

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me.
Within Thy wounds hide me.
Permit me not to be separated from Thee
From the malicious enemy, defend me.
In the hour of my death, call me.
And bid me come unto Thee
That with Thy saints I may be

Praising Thee, forever and ever. Amen.

Sometimes, all I need to say are the prayer's first words. Sometimes, I try to speak it in Latin, because "Anima Christe, sanctifica me" has another beautiful rhythm to it altogether. And I like the word "anima." Each of us needs more "anima" in our lives. We need soul.

May our Lenten journeys return us to the soul of Christ.

Sam Candler signature



The Very Rev. Sam Candler

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