



Let Us Adore

*33 Holy Hours
for the Eucharistic Revival*



Introduction

The other day, someone I know was activating her debit card, and the person on the other end of the line asked her: “Where is life?” She responded without delay and without thinking twice, “In Jesus Christ!” “Great,” he said, “now just one more question and we’ll get this activated.” She was a little puzzled at first, then realized that must have been her security question when she opened the account, but which she had since forgotten. Where is life? In Jesus Christ.

At this moment, we are in a time of Eucharistic Revival in this country. Revival means to bring back to life, to awaken to deeper life, to restore to vigor, to strength, to ardor. Studies have shown recently that many practicing Catholics do not understand or do not believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, and thus don’t know that life is to be found in Him, in the Eucharist.

In the Eucharist, we receive the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Life itself. Jesus Himself tells us this in John 6: “I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.” And we can come into daily contact with this Life in the Holy Mass and in adoration.

O the humility of our God! The second Person of the Trinity, the Eternal Son of the Father, the Word through whom all things—this whole vast, 93+ billion light years across universe in all of its details—were made, in the Incarnation hid His divinity in human nature, taking on our flesh, our life. And that God-Man, out of His immense love for us, hides Himself in the simple host and wine of the Eucharist, transforming them into Himself, so that we can receive Him, so that we can be united to Him.

Who could fail to adore a God whose love is so great that He makes Himself so small for us to be able to feed on Him?

Here, in the Eucharist, we encounter the Living God, holy and almighty, hidden so that we can look upon Him and live. We should, like Moses, remove the shoes from our feet. We should, like St. John in Revelation, fall down on our faces before Him.

But Jesus, hidden in the Blessed Sacrament and shown to us in the monstrance, invites us to look at Him, to adore Him, to love Him, to contemplate Him, the very God who created us, who became incarnate and gave His own life for us, who rose again in victory over sin and death forever, and now is seated at the Father’s right hand in heaven.

So come, let us adore Him. Let us bow down in worship. Let us be renewed in love for Him, who out of love for us has hidden Himself in the consecrated host so that we can receive His life, so that we can be before Him, face-to-face, heart-to-heart.

These meditations are written as a small part of the Eucharistic Revival taking place in our country right now. The goal is to help us grow in our understanding of the Eucharist and thus in our love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, awakening in us a revival of our faith and love for the Eucharist. Based in Scripture, they invite us to contemplate the Lord of all things who humbles Himself to become Living Bread for our sake. They are intended to be used for a weekly Holy Hour, a weekly hour of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

How to do a Holy Hour with this booklet

If you are not familiar with how to do a holy hour, please see the appendix at the end of this booklet.

1. Bring your Bible, spiritual journal, and a pen with you to adoration.
2. Make an act of spiritual communion (see the Visit to the Blessed Sacrament prayer below).
3. Place yourself in the presence of God.
4. Review your week. What did I learn about/from God? About/from myself? About/from others?
5. Read the Scripture passage slowly, maybe even twice.
6. Read the provided meditation and pray with it.
7. Contemplate Jesus.
8. Pray and intercede for others.
9. Write down any lights or desires or resolutions from your prayer.
10. Pray the “How Much You Have Loved Me” prayer.

Visit to the Blessed Sacrament

Blessed and worshiped be the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar, now and forever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. (3x)

Lord Jesus, I firmly believe that You are present here, in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar. I adore You as True God, here hidden. For my sins, I ask Your pardon. And because I love You above all things, I desire to receive You spiritually in this moment. (brief pause) Having been united to You, I thank You, and totally surrender to Your Holy Will.

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*
Oh good Jesus, *hear me*
Within Your wounds, *hide me*
Separated from You, *let me never be*
From the evil one, *protect me*
At the hour of my death, *call me*
And close to You, *bid me*
That with Your saints I may praise You forever and ever. Amen

How Much You Have Loved Me prayer

How much you have loved me, my God!
How much you have done so that I may love you, my God!
How much you have desired, and desire still, that I love you!
Here I am, my God, here I am. My heart is ready.
I won't reject anything that could prove my love for you.
What do you want from me?
Here I am.

MEDITATION ONE

Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed

Exodus 12:1–13, 21–28

When the Lord God freed the children of Israel from slavery in Egypt, the Passover lamb played an important part in that deliverance. The unblemished lamb was offered in sacrifice, then its blood sprinkled on the doorposts of the house of each Israelite family. The angel of death passed over each of the homes marked with the blood of the lamb, so that all the Israelites were saved from death, and could be delivered from slavery in Egypt and go to the Promised Land.

There were five steps for the Passover lamb. First, the Israelites were supposed to find unblemished lambs, one per family. Next, they sacrificed the lamb, gathering its blood and then spreading its blood on the doorposts. Then they were to eat the flesh of the lamb. Finally, the Passover was to be celebrated as a day of remembrance.

In the Gospels, we see that Jesus is the Passover lamb: pure, spotless, unblemished, never to have sinned. He is, as St. John the Baptist cries out, “The Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.” And Jesus, the unblemished Lamb of God, is sacrificed on the cross, offering His whole life, His whole being, for the sins of the world. When we consume the Body of Christ in the Eucharist, we consume the whole host, not leaving any particle, just as the children of Israel were commanded to consume the whole lamb.

The blood of the Passover lamb was collected and marked the doorways to the homes of the Israelites. The Blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, offered on the Cross and offered on the altar in each Mass, marks our lips, the doorways to our bodies, which are temples of God.

Christ, our Passover Lamb, the Lamb of God, who takes us away the sins of the world, passes over from death into life, and thus delivers us from slavery to sin, setting us free to live again as God’s chosen people. Christ’s blood poured out for us on the Cross and in the Eucharistic sacrifice saves us from death.

What happened once for the children of Israel was a type of what happens in Jesus’ self-giving death on the Cross, and in every single Mass, where He offers Himself for our salvation on the altar. Every time we come to Mass, we witness the Lamb of God, offering Himself for the sins of the world. Every time we receive the Eucharist, we consume the flesh of Jesus, given for the life of the world. And here He is, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. The Lamb of God, who takes away my sin.

Spend some time now, before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, reflecting on how He has delivered you from slavery to sin and given you new life.

What was your Egypt? In what ways were you enslaved by sin?

How did Jesus act in your life to deliver you?

If Jesus were physically present here, the one who rescued you from sin and the power of death, what would you say? What would you do? (Then say and do what you would if He were present in human form, because He IS here, in the Eucharist.)

As you look at Jesus, pray with the words “Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.” Give thanks to Him for being the Lamb of God, for offering Himself to deliver you from your Egypt.

Then pray for those whom you know who are enslaved by sin, who need Jesus, the Passover Lamb, to save them.

You can close your time of prayer with this short prayer:

Lord Jesus, every year the Israelites gathered to ask for forgiveness and seal the covenant again and again during the feast of Passover. Then you came in the flesh to renew the world. Every day we continue to celebrate the Passover meal, and you renew your covenant with us. You are with us, saving us, forgiving us. Thank you for calling me to spend this hour with you.

MEDITATION TWO

Nothing leavened may you eat

Exodus 12:14–20, 39

The children of Israel, Exodus tells us, left Egypt before they had time to put any leaven in their bread. They had been purified by the blood of the lamb and left Egypt in a hurry, escaping slavery, without any time to become corrupted again by the sins of Egypt. So in the wilderness, they bake their unleavened bread, and that is the food that sustains them for the first part of their journey.

In the New Testament, leaven is often used as a symbol of corruption, sin, impurity, hypocrisy. Jesus tells the disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, for example, and St. Paul calls the Christians in Corinth to cast out the leavened bread of malice and wickedness, and instead celebrate with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Since the Last Supper, in the western rites of the Church, the bread consecrated in the Mass, the bread that is transformed into the Body of Christ, has been unleavened bread. Jesus, the bread of life, is unleavened. He is uncorrupted by the sins of Egypt, perfectly pure of heart, absolutely sincere. He is Himself, the eternal Son of the Father, who has assumed our human nature, and in Himself, He purifies us of the leaven, the corruption, of Egypt.

As we behold Him today in the Eucharist, hidden in the unleavened white host, let's contemplate His purity, His sincerity. Here is Jesus, free of all corruption, so powerful in His purity that He enters into us, impure and insincere and hypocritical as we are, and purifies us. His perfect Body casts out from us the malice and wickedness that linger in our hearts.

Think about your most recent Holy Communion: you received the pure, unleavened Body of Christ into your own body, into your own heart, with all of its impurities, with all of the leaven that still lives in you. As you gaze at Him here in the Eucharist, imagine Him going to those places in your heart that are the least pure, that still have more leaven. Ask Him to break down and cast out that leaven, to take away its power. Ask Him to make your heart simple and sincere and pure like His.

What sins have you already left behind in Egypt? What are the sins that still cling to you?

What areas of temptation, when you give in to them, leaven your whole life?

Contemplate the purity of Jesus in the Eucharist and the power of His purity. Where do you need Him to purify you?

Praise Jesus for His great purity and sincerity, the perfect holiness of His heart, present here in the unleavened Host. Jesus, You are the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth!

Pray for greater purity of heart, greater sincerity and truth in your own heart. Ask Jesus to cleanse your heart of all malice, all insincerity, all lies of the Enemy.

You can close your time with this prayer:

Jesus, You are the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth! When I consume you in the Eucharist, you don't become polluted by the evil in me, but instead, you purify my heart and my mind. I praise you, entering into me in each Holy Communion, purifying my heart, transforming my mind, even as you have been purifying me in this hour of prayer. Thank you for calling me to spend this hour with you.

This is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat

Exodus 16:13b–35

When the Israelites grumble that they would rather be in Egypt, with satisfied bodies, even though it would mean to be enslaved again, the Lord God saves them from turning back by providing quail for them in the evenings, and each morning bread from heaven, a miraculous substance left on the ground after the dewfall, a bread that sustains them for the rest of their pilgrim journey through the desert.

“This is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat,” Moses tells them.

Imagine for a moment that you are there, in the wilderness. You have eaten the last of your unleavened bread. You have nothing left. And it is a desert. There are no wheat fields, no stores, no place to get supplies for more food. You have nothing left. And imagine, for a moment, that, rather than grumbling, you make a simple and sincere petition to the Lord your God. “O Holy One,” you say, “I trust in You. I believe You called me and all of us out of Egypt. I don’t believe You want us to perish in the desert, but I don’t understand why we are here and there is nothing. So please,” you pray, “provide like only You can provide. I trust in You.”

And then you lie down to sleep, hungry, with some worries, but making acts of trust and faith in the Lord your God, who delivered you from Egypt. You can’t see what He is doing. You don’t understand why you are here and why you are so painfully empty. But you know that God is good and that He is powerful.

When you wake up in the morning, the ground is covered with this unknown substance, this manna, which Moses tells you is the bread that God has given you to eat. That morning you gather all you need, this bread that is sweet and wafery, seeming to melt in your mouth, yet still satisfy your hunger, giving you strength for another day’s journey. And the same is true the next day, and the day that follows, and so on every day of your journey.

Wherever you are empty today, Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament wants to fill you. Wherever you are in need today, Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament wants to provide. He has never left you, and never will leave you, without everything you need for your day’s journey. All you need to do is ask Him. And He will give you the true bread from heaven, His own life, His own strength, His own trust in the Father’s providence, His own love, His own mercy. So today, as you adore Him, gather from Him all that you need for this day.

When have you experienced the Lord providing for your needs?

What needs do you have today which only Jesus can meet? Present them to Him with faith.

What are you hungry for today? Let Jesus satisfy that hunger by His presence in the Blessed Sacrament.

Present your needs to the Lord today with acts of faith in Him and trust in His goodness.

You can close your time of adoration with this prayer:

I praise You, Jesus, because You are always enough. You always provide what I need when I need it. Thank You for Your perfect providence in my life. Help me to trust more deeply that You know what I need before I ask it and that You will always give me all that I need.

MEDITATION FOUR

The jar of flour shall not go empty

1 Kings 17:1–16

The widow of Zarephath is in a tight spot. She has just enough flour and oil left to make one final and meager meal for herself and her son, in a time when the whole land is undergoing drought and famine. She has nothing left, just a cup of flour and a measure of oil, and the sticks she is gathering to prepare the fire.

And then there appears this man, bearded and wild, asking her for water. She goes to get it, and he asks her for food. So she explains. But he insists. And in his insistence, he makes a bold promise: If you prepare bread for me first, then you will have enough for you and your son also, and you will not run out until the famine is over.

It's a wild demand and a wild promise. What would you do if you were her? What would Jesus do?

The second question is easier: Jesus would have, and did, give Himself as bread for the life of the world. We are starving for meaning, for purpose, for identity, for love, and Jesus gives us all of those things when He gives Himself to us in the Eucharist. He holds absolutely nothing back.

His generosity is absolute, complete, down to the last particle of His Body, the last drop of His Blood. Contemplate Jesus here in the Eucharist, giving Himself entirely, holding nothing back.

He calls us today to be generous like Him, to give even if we are afraid that giving will leave us empty, leave nothing for ourselves. He still promises that the jar of flour shall not go empty, not as long as we put Him first, not as long as we give what we have for His mission.

And what else could we possibly need? He is here, right in front of us, giving Himself to us, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. He is our life, our hope, our joy, our strength. So whatever He is asking for today, give it. And watch Him fill your jar.

When have you experienced the Lord blessing your generosity?

When and how has the Lord asked you to give more than you thought was possible? What was the result?

Where is the Lord asking you to be generous today? What hesitations do you experience? What will happen if you surrender and give what He is asking of you?

Close your time of prayer by thanking Jesus for His generosity with you, in giving you all you need each day in the Eucharist. Ask Him to increase your trust in Him and to unite you to His generous heart.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:
Jesus, You hold nothing back. You always give everything I need, and more than what I need. Thank you for Your abundant generosity in my life. Lord, configure my heart to Yours. Help me to trust in You, to know, with a deep conviction, that You will always give me what I need. Trusting in Your care for me, I can be generous with others.

MEDITATION FIVE

Strengthened by that food

1 Kings 19:1–8

Right before this passage, Elijah has just done some pretty incredible work for the Lord, allowing himself to be used by God to show forth God's power and the powerlessness of Baal and Asheroth, the false gods whom the children of Isreal were worshipping. And he has slain the 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asheroth, trying to return the heart of the people of Israel to God, the only one who can save them.

His reward? To be hunted down by the evil queen of Israel. And this mighty prophet, who just days before had defeated 850 false prophets, is afraid. He flees for his life, and in his fear and discouragement, becomes depressed, feels like his life is meaningless, and asks God to just take his life. It seems to him that everything he has done is in vain, that all he has worked for has failed, and that, somehow, he himself has failed God.

Have you ever been there? Have you ever felt like all of your efforts—maybe at sharing your faith with a family member, at praying for others, at some apostolic endeavor, even at fighting your own temptations—have all been in vain? Have you ever let discouragement cast you down so far that you don't even want to get back up?

It's really striking how God doesn't castigate Elijah for his fear or for his discouragement. Instead, God sends him an angel, who wakes him up and tells him to eat. And what Elijah eats gives him strength to keep journeying, forty more days, through the desert (think interior dryness, or hard spiritual battles, or whatever your own desert might be), until he can do the next thing the Lord has in store for him.

The bread that the angel gives Elijah is a type of the Eucharist. In the Eucharist, the Lord Himself gives us the food that strengthens us in our battles, gives us the courage to face difficulty, gives us the power to keep going despite persecution or famine or war, the food that lifts us out of discouragement. And strengthened by

that food, the food of angels, the Body of Christ, we can continue our journey in this life, even if it is for a long desert stretch.

When have you experienced discouragement? How has the Eucharist strengthened you?

What are the battles or difficulties you are facing in your life right now?

In what ways do you need the Lord to strengthen you through His Eucharistic presence?

You can repeat to the Lord, Jesus, You are the Bread that gives me strength. You are my bread of courage.

Spend some time contemplating Jesus as the one who strengthens you, receiving from Him all the graces you need to journey on, and receive from Him now whatever strength you need at this moment in your life.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:
Lord Jesus, I believe that You are the Bread that gives me strength. When I come before You in adoration or receive You in communion, You give me the strength I need to continue in whatever battle I'm facing, whatever step I need to take. You are my strength!

MEDITATION SIX

The Word became flesh

Luke 1:26–38

Throughout the Old Testament, the idea that no one can see the face of God and live is repeated. Even the New Testament repeats it, in the prologue to John's Gospel, saying that "no one has ever seen God." That is, in our very limited humanity, marred by sin, we cannot look upon God. He is too great for us, dwelling in what Scripture calls "inaccessible light."

But in that little house in Nazareth, when the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, when God, the Creator of the universe, asked for her to consent to His plan, in that moment when she said "Fiat, let it be done to me," the Word of God, the only Son, the second Person of the Trinity, became flesh and made His dwelling among us. And in Jesus Christ, God revealed His face to the world. Hidden in human flesh, God became visible, and everything that Jesus did and said and thought and felt, every moment and every aspect of His life, reveals to us the hidden face of God.

They mystery of the Incarnation is the mystery of God's love. Why else would He become man? Why else would the limitless God of the universe confine Himself to a human body, in a specific place in the universe He created, in a specific moment in time? Only love can explain the Incarnation, only an eternal, intense, personal love. In the Incarnation, Jesus reveals to us the face of God in human form, so that we can look on God and live, so that we can know Him, touch Him, converse with Him, so that we can be friends with Him.

And not only that: so that we can mock Him, beat Him, buffet Him, and crucify Him. So that He can take our place, and in taking our place, can overthrow the powers of sin and death in our life.

The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us, and we have beheld Him. And here before us in the Eucharist, we behold Him still, the flesh now hidden behind the appearance of bread, but unveiled to us through the gift of faith.

And not only can you see Him, face to face, but even more, in the Blessed Sacrament, you can receive Him, God, the Creator of the universe, hidden and yet revealed in what appears to be a tiny piece of bread. The God who became flesh has now become bread. What more could Love do?

You are looking upon the face of the living God. You are beholding the Word made flesh. Behold your God!

What most amazes you about the mystery of the Incarnation?

When you gaze upon the Blessed Sacrament in awe and wonder that here is your God, what stirs within you?

What do you find most surprising about who God is, as revealed by Jesus Christ in the Incarnation? As revealed by Jesus Christ in the Eucharist?

Spend time in grateful adoration and praise as you behold Him in the Blessed Sacrament.

You can close your time of adoration with this prayer:

I adore You, Jesus, Word made flesh and splendor of the Father! I adore Your divinity hidden and revealed in Your sacred humanity. I adore Your divinity and humanity hidden in this white Host. Here You are, my God! Here before me is my God and my King! I worship You!

MEDITATION SEVEN

The house of bread

Matthew 2:1–12

In Bethlehem, in the Church of the Nativity, you can kneel down beneath the altar and touch the place where Jesus was born. It's astonishing when you think about it. Jesus, the living bread from heaven, was born in Bethlehem, which means "house of bread," and to this day, right above where He was born more than 2000 years ago, He is "born" on the altar again in the Eucharist. The Church of the Nativity, built over the spot where the Son of God was born in the flesh and first revealed the face of God, is still the place where the Son of God reveals the face of God, in every single celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

And it's not just in Bethlehem. In every place in the world, in every Catholic Church, every tabernacle is a house of bread, where Jesus dwells, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. This chapel or this church where you are praying right now, in front of the Blessed Sacrament, is a house of bread, a new Bethlehem.

The magi travel far, a difficult and dangerous journey, to find themselves in Bethlehem, kneeling in adoration before the humblest King they have ever seen, a little Baby, in a humble place. But yet they recognize Him—this is the King they have been seeking. So they bend the knee and adore Him, offering to Him the best of what they have, gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Every time you and I enter into a Catholic Church, into a house of bread, we, too, are in the presence of this Baby King, the One whom the magi travelled far to see. Whether we have travelled for miles or just walked across the street, the King is here, worthy of our worship, worthy of our offerings. Hidden in the Blessed Sacrament, is Christ the King, the same one whom the magi visited and adored.

So let us bow down in worship with them, and like them, offer Him the best that we have as we adore Him today, the Babe, the King.

What gifts can you offer to the Lord Jesus today in your time of adoration?

How does your reverence (making a good genuflection, for example) help you recognize the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle or on the altar?

Examine whether you are sometimes lazy to come to the Church for prayer or adoration, or even for Mass. What do the magi have to teach you?

Spend some time offering to the Lord Jesus, hidden here, all the gifts that you have.

You can close your time of adoration with this prayer:

As I contemplate You in the mystery of Your Nativity today, my God, I adore You. I want to worship You with the determination and dedication of the Magi. I adore You with Your pure-hearted Mother, even though my heart is not perfectly pure, I adore You with her. I adore you, born in humility and poverty, oh King of kings and Lord of lords!

MEDITATION EIGHT

Wrapped in swaddling clothes

Luke 2:1–14

Back in Biblical times, the youngest boy in Jewish families was sent out to tend the sheep, since shepherds had to work with dogs, and dogs were unclean animals. But since they were just boys, they had a particular job: to look for the unblemished lambs. When they found an unblemished lamb, they wrapped it in swaddling clothes, as a sign that this lamb was set apart, that this lamb was destined for sacrifice at the temple.

When Jesus is born, Mary wraps Him in swaddling clothes. She marks Him as the unblemished Lamb of God, destined to give His life in sacrifice for the sins of His people.

When the angels tell the shepherds that the sign is finding a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, they grasped something of the significance: a child, born to save them, wrapped in swaddling clothes, a baby who will bear their sins, who will take their place.

This same Baby, wrapped in swaddling clothes, is present here before you now. From before you were born, He came for you. When He was lying in the manger 2000 years ago, He was wrapped in swaddling clothes for you, set apart as the unblemished Lamb for you. Because His favor rests on you. Because you are worth it to Him.

As you adore Him in the Blessed Sacrament, adore Him lying in the manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes, set apart as the unblemished Lamb who will grow to give His life in sacrifice for your sins. Let your heart be filled with gratitude and joy. This swaddled Baby, hidden here in the monstrance, is a sign for you that God's favor rests on you, that He has come for you.

What moves in you as you adore Jesus, wrapped in swaddling clothes, set apart by His Mother at His birth, for you?

Think of all the ways that Jesus has saved you, both from things you did and from things you would have done without knowing Him. What are all the reasons you have to thank Him for being your Savior?

What is your greatest joy in adoring Jesus today?

Spend time worshiping and adoring this swaddled Baby, hidden in the Eucharist, set apart to save you, and thank Him for all the ways in which His salvation has already been manifested in your life.

You can close your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, from the moment of Your birth, Your Mother marked You as the perfect, unblemished Lamb to be slain for our sins. I praise You in Your Nativity, determined to die for me. I praise You, swaddled and hidden here in this monstrance. Thank You for letting Your favor rest on me. Thank You for being born so that You could die for my sins.

MEDITATION NINE

More than they could eat

John 6:1–15

Just one reception of Jesus in Holy Communion contains every grace and spiritual blessing, contains all that you or I could need for eternal life, for perfect happiness and holiness in this life and the next. Because we receive Jesus Himself, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, and in Him every grace, in Him every virtue, in Him every blessing, in Him every gift.

So why are we not there yet? Why is there still such a long path to climb, so much interior work to do, if I've already received Him, and not just once, but so many times?

Because just as the five loaves and two fish were more than the 5,000 could eat, so too in the Eucharist, the graces and virtues and gifts and blessings, the very life of Christ Himself, is more than we can eat, more than we can digest, more than we can assimilate. We are so small, so finite, that we can't possibly take in all that Jesus is giving to us when He gives Himself to us in the Eucharist, which is why the Church commands us to go to Mass each Sunday, which is why Jesus offers Himself to us each day in communion, which is why we come to adore Him. Each time we receive a little more grace, a little more of His life in us. Each time we are able to, as it were, digest a little more of His life.

Contemplate Him here, giving us everything He has and is, and contemplate Him in His wondrous patience, giving Himself again and again, knowing that we are capable of receiving just a little at a time. He doesn't tire to give us more than we can eat, and He doesn't chide us for being able to receive just a little at a time. What humble and self-sacrificing Love!

Look at your life since encountering Christ and beginning to receive Him regularly. What has changed in you? In what ways are you more like Christ than you were in the beginning?

What grace are you most needing? Go to your next communion asking specifically for that grace, to be able to digest that aspect of His life.

Praise Jesus, present before you in the Eucharist, more than you can eat, more than you can take in. Praise Him for the wealth of His life given to you. Praise Him for His gentle patience with your limits.

Then pray for those who don't receive communion regularly to feel Him call them back to Himself. Pray for those who are discouraged in the spiritual life because they don't grow more quickly.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, You are more than I can take in! You give Yourself to me over and over again in Holy Communion, Your whole self, all that You have and are, and like the hymn says, I cannot compass it. I can't get my mind or my heart around it, but can only take in, can only digest, can only assimilate, just a tiny bit of Your life each time. Thank You for giving me more than I can eat in every single communion. Thank You for being patient with me as I slowly take You in. You are more than I can eat!

MEDITATION TEN

The Bread that gives life to the world

John 6:22–33

An amazing miracle happens at every single Mass. It's greater than any physical or emotional healing, more awesome even than someone being raised from the dead, more amazing than five loaves and two fish being multiplied to feed the five thousand. It's a miracle we never could have imagined, a miracle no human mind could ever have thought of. Only we've become accustomed to it, so we often don't recognize it for what it is. But today, as we kneel before the Lord in adoration, Jesus wants us to think about this miracle, to meditate on it, to contemplate it, to understand it more and thus love Him more.

At every Mass, we offer to the Lord a small chalice of wine and some tiny wafers of bread. Just bread and wine, fruit of the earth and work of human hands. Nothing special. Nothing sacred. Nothing powerful. Not even enough to satisfy just a small hunger or thirst. At every Mass, we are like the disciples, who have not even enough for our own lunch, just five loaves and two small fish, and there are far too many people who need to eat. But we offer to Jesus the little that we have, just a bit of wine and a few small wafers of bread. And He does with it something far more amazing than the multiplication of the loaves—He doesn't just multiply what we offer, but He transforms it, transubstantiates it, makes it still appear as bread and wine, taste like bread and wine, but no, He makes it into Himself, into His own Body and Blood.

Ask Him now, as you kneel before Him, for the grace to see Him hidden in the consecrated host, for the grace to be renewed in awe and wonder and worship. No miracle has ever been so amazing as this one. Ask for the eyes of faith to see it for what it is, to see the amazing gift the Lord has made of Himself to us in transforming our tiny, insignificant offering at each Mass into His very Body and Blood. This is the bread that gives life to the world.

As the reality of this miracle sets in for you, praise and adore Him. Stay in adoration and worship for as long as you have that grace.

When has the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist really impacted you, surprised you?

What difference does receiving communion make in your life? How does this Bread give life to you?

You can repeat the following phrases: “Jesus, You are the Bread that gives life to the world. Jesus, this miracle of Your infinite Presence in this little Host is more amazing than anything else in the world. Jesus, You are the Living Bread.”

Pray for those Catholics who don't really believe in the Real Presence to have the eyes of their hearts opened to this reality.

You can close your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, absolutely nothing on earth can compare to your Eucharistic Presence. You are here, alive, giving Yourself, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, in every single Mass, transforming wine and bread into Your very self. Please don't let me grow accustomed to this miracle! Keep alive in my heart this wonder and awe, this worship and desire to praise You.

Whoever comes to Me will never hunger

John 6:34–40

We are all hungry for something: for love, for recognition, for success, for comfort... We all have deep and lasting desires of our hearts, hungers that are hard to satisfy. Jesus tells the crowds that His Father “gives you the true bread from heaven.” They ask Him to give them that bread always, and Jesus responds: “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.”

Whatever your soul is hungry for today, this is the only Bread that can satisfy that hunger. Everything else you “feed” yourself might cover up that hunger for a while, but it can’t satiate it, can’t satisfy it. Only Jesus, who gives Himself as Bread to us, can satiate our souls, can nourish us, can give us the food that leads to eternal life.

And He gives Himself, all of Himself, to satisfy your hunger in every single Mass, day in and day out, offering His Body as bread so that you will never hunger again. And He is here right now, before you, the Bread of Life, offering Himself to you spiritually as you adore Him. Let His Presence fill any emptiness that is in your soul today as you kneel before Him.

Let Him say to you, “I am the Bread of Life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.”

*What are you seeking? What do you need? What are you craving or longing for?
In what ways does your soul feel unsatisfied?*

Have you been working for food that perishes? What does Jesus offer you instead?

What existential hungers does Jesus’ Eucharistic Presence satisfy in your soul?

Make acts of faith in Jesus, the Bread of Life. Say to Him: “Jesus, I believe that You are the Bread of Life. I believe in You, Jesus. I believe that You satisfy every need and every longing of my soul.”

Pray for those who are trying to fill themselves with what can never satisfy. Pray for them to come to know Jesus is the Bread that satisfies.

You can close your time of adoration with this prayer:
Jesus, You are the Bread of Life. You give Yourself to me each Mass. Teach me to receive You with faith and with desire, to open up to you any interior hunger as I go to communion, so that You can satisfy that longing of my soul. Make me hunger for You, my God!

Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life

John 6:41–59

It's easy to think of eternal life as something that comes next, something that, if we're lucky, we'll get after we die. Or sometimes we think of eternal life as a kind of prolongation of this earthly life, in its fallen state. But that's not what Jesus is talking about. Eternal life isn't a prolongation of this earthly life, nothing more, and it doesn't just start in the future.

No, the eternal life that Jesus gives is His own life, life in abundance. It is a life of perfect happiness and joy, fulfillment, peace, meaning and purpose, in which our humanity is developed fully, in which we live in the presence of God, aware of being beloved sons and daughters. It is His life given to us here and now, His life growing in us. In His high priestly prayer in John 17, Jesus tells us that eternal life is to know God and Jesus Christ, whom the Father has sent, which means that eternal life is to be in relationship with Him, so that His life becomes my life, and my life is taken up into His life.

Contemplate Jesus before you, fully God and fully Man, fully alive. There is nothing lacking in His life, nothing lacking to His humanity, nothing defective in His personality, nothing fallen in His human nature. This is the life He gives to us in each holy communion. This is life in abundance. This is eternal life. Each time we adore Him, that life grows in us. Each time we receive Him, that life grows in us. We live more and more in Him, and He lives more and more in us.

What fruits of eternal life do you already discover in your own life?

In what ways do you experience that life in relationship with Christ is abundant and full?

What growth in life do you want to ask Him for in this time of adoration?

Pray to know the Father more fully, to know Jesus more fully, to grow deeper in your relationship with the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Thank Him for all the life you have already received in Him.

Pray for those who think heaven must be boring, for those who have not yet tasted abundant life.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, You are my life! I adore You and praise You, because in You I have life, and not the same quality of life as before, but life that is fuller, richer, more abundant. Thank You for the gift of Your life in me, given to me in every Mass. Draw me deeper into Your life, Jesus, until my life is united to Yours, until my life is overflowing with Your life.

MEDITATION THIRTEEN

This is My Body

Luke 22:14–20

The Eucharist is a mystery that we often take a little bit for granted, and today we want to ask for the grace to be overcome again with wonder, with awe, with gratitude, and enter into profound worship of Jesus Christ, fully present, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, in this small host that looks like bread but is really Jesus Himself.

“I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you,” Jesus says to the apostles. And to us, as we adore Him, He says, “I have eagerly desired for you to eat this Passover, for you to eat the Bread I break and give you. I have eagerly desired for you to consume Me.” Ask Him for the grace to know His desire to give Himself to you in the Eucharist, the all-consuming desire of His Heart for you to receive Him, to feast on Him, to share in His life. Let Him reveal to you His Heart, His great love for you, His great desire to be united to you, all manifested in the Blessed Sacrament here before you.

“This is My Body.” Jesus is not being metaphoric or symbolic. He doesn’t say, “This is a symbol of My body,” or “this is like My body.” He says, “This is My Body.” Spend some time making acts of faith in Jesus’ Real Presence. Tell Him you believe that He is truly and really present, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, and ask Him to increase your faith. Honestly share with Him any doubts or any lukewarmness in your devotion to Him in the Eucharist, and ask Him to remove them as you adore Him.

“This is My Body, which will be given for you.” For you. Jesus said those words in the upper room to His apostles, but today and in each Mass He repeats them to you. “This is My Body, which will be given for you.” Yes, you, the one who is in this moment before Him in adoration. This is His Body, and it is for you. He knows you. He knows exactly who you are. He knows your whole history. He knows every sin you have ever committed or thought about committing. He knows exactly how you are struggling this week, this day. He knows the sorrows and joys of your heart. He knows your hopes and dreams for the future. He knows everything you have ever done, everything you have ever thought, everything you have ever felt. And He loves you so much that He gives Himself

for you. He tells you now, in this moment, “I am for you. I love you so much that I give Myself for you in each Mass. I have eagerly desired to give Myself to you.” Let Him convince you of His love for you.

Thank Him. Thank Him for His love which is for you, His Body given for you, given to you, His Heart revealed to you in this time of adoration. Thank Him and praise Him and worship Him, your Lord and your God.

Have you ever connected with Jesus’ desire to give Himself to you in Holy Communion?

When have you been convinced of Jesus being for you?

How does knowing that Jesus eagerly desires to give Himself to you in Communion make you want to change how you receive Him?

Pray for the grace of greater love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, greater awareness of His desire for you.

Then pray for those who don’t know that Jesus is for them. Pray especially for those Christians who don’t know His Real Presence to come to the fullness of faith and receive His Body, given for them.

You can close your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, I believe that this is Your Body. I believe that You give Your Body for me. I believe that You have eagerly desired me to be with You in this time of adoration much more than I have desired it. I believe that You are for me. I want to be all for You, my Lord and my God!

Blood shed for the forgiveness of sins

Matthew 26:26–30

At the moment of the Last Supper, which is also the first Eucharist, Jesus not only transformed the bread into His Body, He also transformed the wine into His Blood. His Blood, which the very next day was to be poured out during His Passion. The Blood of the unblemished Lamb of God, the sign of the God's new covenant with us, the Blood that marks the doorways of our hearts, the Blood that washes us clean from all our sins.

Jesus' Passion and Crucifixion drained Him of every last ounce of blood in His Body. The scourging, the crowning with thorns, carrying the heavy cross, those things already had Him bleeding for us, from all over His Sacred Body. And then, on the cross, when the centurion pierced His heart with the sword, blood and water came flooding out. Jesus, in that moment, was bleeding out for us. Nothing could stop the outpouring of His Blood.

This same pierced Heart, this same bloodied Body, we are adoring right now, in the Sacred Host. We do not see His Blood, but it is still pouring out of His open Heart, for you and for me, and as we adore Him, He invites us to take our place at the foot of the Cross, to stand beneath the monstrance, where in this time of adoration we can be present to Him on the Cross, and to let the blood and water which flowed from His wounded side flow onto us, wash over us, and purify us.

What can wash away our sins? Nothing but the Blood of Jesus. What can make me whole again? Nothing but the Blood of Jesus. Oh, precious is the flow, that makes me white as snow. No other fount I know, nothing but the Blood of Jesus.

As you stand here, beneath His Cross, adoring Him, He wants to renew you in your experience of His love poured out for you, in your experience of His forgiveness, your deep interior knowledge of His mercy. Let His merciful love wash over you, flood your heart, and unite you to His Heart.

What sins do you need to ask Jesus to forgive?

What sins has He already forgiven but for which you still feel guilty or unclean? Let His Blood wash over those places of your heart again.

What death can you die to self to be more united to Jesus' merciful love?

Ask the Lord for a deeper awareness of and acceptance of His forgiveness in your life. Ask Him for the grace of strength, to truly turn away from those sins which you have brought beneath the flow of His Blood today.

Then thank Him and praise Him for pouring out all of His Blood for you.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

O merciful Jesus, thank You for Your Precious Blood! Thank You for Your Blood, which washes me clean from all my sin, which You never stop pouring out for love of me! Your Blood, my God, has the power to wash me clean. Your Blood, my God, has the power to cleanse the whole world. I praise You for Your Precious Blood!

Known in the breaking of the bread

Luke 24:13–35

Over and over in the Gospels, we see Jesus taking bread, blessing it, breaking it, and giving it. He does this when He feeds the five thousand and when He feeds the four thousand. He does this when He eats with the disciples. He does this at the Last Supper, when He institutes the Eucharist.

On the way to Emmaus, the disciples don't recognize Jesus. It almost seems like they were looking down, too dejected to even see His face as He fell in with them and began to walk with Him. And for some reason, they didn't recognize His voice, so discouraged and saddened were their hearts. Even as He opened Scripture to them, as their hearts were burning while He explained all that in Scripture referred to Himself, they couldn't get out of themselves, couldn't see Him, couldn't recognize Him.

So there must have been a particular way that Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave thanks, because when He does that, although for many miles He has walked and talked with them, they finally recognize Him. And when their eyes are open, He vanishes from their sight, but is now present, alive, in their hearts, as they have received Him in the bread that He blessed and gave to them.

It's an amazing transformation. They had walked the seven miles from Jerusalem discouraged, disheartened, downcast, and dejected, and now, having seen Jesus in the breaking of the bread, having received Him in the Eucharist, they run those seven miles back to Jerusalem, intent on sharing the good news with the other disciples.

Jesus, in the Eucharist, does the same for us. Today, as you adore Him, He is falling in beside you, whatever road you are walking on in life right now, asking you to open your heart to Him, to share with Him whatever is going on in your life. Today, as you adore Him, He is making Himself known to you in this consecrated Host, His Body under the appearance of bread.

What road are you walking right now? How does Jesus' presence on that road make a difference for you?

When has your heart burned within you in the Lord's presence? What did He teach you then?

To whom is He calling you to run to announce that He is alive and that He can be known in the Eucharist?

Spend some time sharing with Jesus whatever is on your heart today as you walk on the road and He falls in beside you. Then, ask Him to reveal to You what Scripture says about Him and what He wants to say to you about yourself and your current situation.

Thank Jesus for the great gift of knowing Him in the Eucharist, and then pray for those whom you know who still do not recognize His presence in the Eucharist.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, thank You for the gift of knowing You in the Eucharist. Thank You for walking with me on this road that I am on, and for lifting me up out of myself to recognize You again, to fix my eyes on You again, and to know that You are with me. Thank You for the way You open Scripture to me. Make me more grateful for Your great gift in each Mass, and give me the same eagerness and joy to run and announce to those in my life that You are alive, that You can be known in the breaking of the bread.

MEDITATION SIXTEEN

Come and eat

John 21:1–14

If you visit the Holy Land today, you can sit on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, in the very place where this event took place. There, on the pebbled beach, you can imagine the disciples bringing in the boat, the little waves lapping at the edge, the net full of fish inside, and Peter, sopping wet from his swim, already there with Jesus, on the rock known as the *Mensa Christi* (the table of Christ).

And like the disciples as they get off the boat, tired from the all-night fishing venture and heaving in the miraculous catch at dawn, you can be surprised to see Jesus there, a charcoal fire prepared, fish roasting on a spit over the fire, flatbread warming on the rock nearby. Radiant in the morning sun, He smiles at you, waving you over. “Come and eat!” He says. Jesus Himself has cooked breakfast for you!

It is what Jesus does for you at every single Mass: He prepares a meal for you, invites you to draw near, to sit and eat with Him. Except this meal He prepares in the Mass isn't just ordinary flatbread and freshwater fish: it is the Bread of Life, it is the Body of Christ Himself. “Come and eat!” He says to you.

He invites you to share in the Eucharistic meal whether you have been up all night working or barely rolled out of bed in time to make it to Mass, whether you come with a heavy heart or overflowing with joy. Each altar is just as holy and anointed a place as the *Mensa Christi* on the Sea of Galilee, because at each altar, in each Mass, Jesus prepares for you this sacred banquet.

Today, as you adore Him, He also invites you to come and eat, to take from this altar where the Eucharist is exposed in the monstrance all the spiritual graces you are needing, to make an act of spiritual communion (as you did when you began this time of prayer), and to do so with great faith: Jesus, before me here in the Blessed Sacrament, has prepared for me a banquet in this time of prayer, food to satisfy the hunger of my soul.

Think about the intimacy of someone preparing you breakfast. What moves in you to think of Jesus Himself preparing breakfast for you, preparing a meal for you?

How has the Lord spiritually fed you through Holy Communion?

What spiritual food, what graces, do you want to ask Him for in this time of adoration?

Spend some time giving thanks to the Lord Jesus, who prepares a meal for you, who gives Himself as food for you. Thank Him for wanting to have such an intimate friendship with you, and for all the ways He has been thoughtful, attentive, to your needs.

Then pray for the needs of someone else with great faith, knowing that the Lord can work through your prayer to nourish them spiritually even though they are not physically present with you and Him in this moment.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, I am so grateful for Your friendship! You prepare this Eucharistic feast for me, You give me Yourself as food to eat, and You welcome me from whatever I have been doing to receive You. Thank You for being such a close and intimate Friend. Thank You for inviting me into deeper friendship with You every time I come to adoration.

They devoted themselves to the breaking of the bread

Acts 2:42–47

If you look up the word “devotion” in the dictionary, you will see a list of meanings, including dedication to a cause or activity, ardent fidelity or loyalty. We can be devoted to so many things in life: a favorite sports team, a specific band or musician, our families, our work, our studies, our image, our career, a favorite cause.

And while many of these things are right and good, there is really only one thing worthy of our devotion, and the early Church got it right. “They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers.” And the center of these things, the source and summit of these things, the central devotion, was the breaking of the bread, that is to say, the Eucharist.

Without true devotion to the Eucharist, devotion to anything else loses its deepest and truest meaning, because without the love of God, all other loves fall short, cannot be what they are called to be. Without true devotion to the Eucharist, even our attendance at Mass is hollowed of its deepest meaning. We gather together for communal life, yes, but the center of that life is the Eucharist, the living and Real Presence of Jesus, crucified, died, risen and glorified, in our midst, giving Himself to us in the breaking of the bread.

It’s worthwhile, as we adore Jesus today in the Blessed Sacrament, to examine all the things we are devoted to, and the order in which we are devoted to them. It’s worthwhile to put Him back in the center, to center the ardent loyalty, the dedication, the desire, and all the devotion of our heart on Him.

To what things are you devoted?

How does your devotion to Jesus in the Eucharist compare in reality to your devotion to these other things, causes, or people?

What step of growth in devotion does the Lord invite you to take?

Present to the Lord all of your different devotions—the things, people, projects, etc., to which you are devoted. Surrender each one of them to Him, and ask Him to be the center of that devotion.

Pray for the grace to have a more ardent devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, to be more attentive at Mass, more constant in prayer.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, Living Bread! You are here, really present! You are the only One who is worthy of the devotion of my whole heart, my whole mind, my whole life. O, let me be truly devoted to You! Let my love for You, Jesus, grow and re-order all the other devotions of my heart. I want You to be the center, I want to devote myself to You.

MEDITATION EIGHTEEN

In remembrance of me

1 Corinthians 11:23–26

As someone who loves words, I've always been struck by the word "remember." It suggests something that has members, or parts, being put back together. So when we remember, we are putting back together whatever event of the past, or some aspects of our interior life. So, if I were, etymologically speaking, to write the opposite of remember, I would write "dis-member." What happens when we forget is that we become dis-membered, scattered, disordered, broken into pieces. Remembering brings us back together, unites us.

So when Jesus says, "Do this in remembrance of me," one of the things He is telling us about the Eucharist is that the Eucharist is what unites us to one another, what re-members the Body of Christ, uniting us to Him. The Eucharist is what brings Christ's Body, the Church, back into union, from whatever dis-membering that Body may have been suffering.

In every single Mass, as Jesus offers Himself upon the altar, He draws us back together around Himself, uniting us to Himself and to one another. Without this center, without the Eucharist, the source and summit of our lives, we become scattered, disconnected.

Jesus, in the Blessed Sacrament, draws us back together as His Body, and He draws each one of us back together, interiorly. He is the center, and when we participate in the Mass, He unites us all together, and when we adore Him, He re-orders and re-centers and re-unifies, re-members, our interior life around Himself.

In what ways do you experience the Mass as the unifying principle of your life?

How does the Eucharist unite you to others?

In what ways does regular Eucharistic adoration re-member you?

As you adore Him today, try to bring every aspect of your life back into union with Him. If there is something that cannot be united to Him, re-membered, speak with Him about how to let that thing go or how to convert it so it can be united to Him. Place Him again in the center of all your activities, plans, desires, and choices.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for being the source and the summit, thank You for being the center, the one who draws us back together again. Help me to live in remembrance of You, having You always as the center of my life.

The wedding feast of the Lamb

Revelation 19:5–9

Before you in the Blessed Sacrament is the Bridegroom. Look at Him, and think about all that it means for a man to be so in love with a woman that he wants to unite himself to her forever, for the rest of their lives, in a mutual self-giving, permanent commitment. Think about how a man will pursue the woman he loves, all the ways he tries to woo her, to win her heart. Then ask Jesus to show you how He has been pursuing you, how He has tried to win your heart, all that He has sacrificed in order for you to love Him, to belong to Him. Think about the lengths He has gone to win your heart: the Incarnation, His public life, His passion, death, descent into hell, His resurrection, the sending of His Holy Spirit. Think about the sacraments as the means He uses to win you over, to unite you to Himself.

Look at Him here in the Eucharist—He gives Himself to you completely, holds nothing back, gives His whole heart, His whole soul, His whole life, all that He is, in each Holy Communion. So much love! And all for you! Look at Him in the Blessed Sacrament, the Lover of your soul, the One who has given everything to prove His love for you. And here He is, wanting to be with you, to spend this time with you, to speak with you face to face, heart to heart, Lover to beloved, Bridegroom to bride.

What does the Lord's love for you, His passionate pursuit of you, stir in your own soul? In what ways do you respond to His love? In what ways do you not respond, or respond inadequately?

Let the Lord show you in particular what He has done to pursue you in your own life—beyond the fact of His earthly life and sacramental presence. How has He made His love for you known to you? How has He pursued you? What are the personal, individual ways in which He loves you?

Contemplate Jesus, the Bridegroom, here before you in the Eucharist. Rest for some time in His enduring love for you.

Then spend some time interceding for married couples. If you are married, pray first for your own marriage, that together you may witness to the love of Christ for His Church, and the love of the Church for Christ. Then pray for those who are facing difficulties in their marriages. Finally, pray for those couples you know who are preparing for marriage.

You can end this time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, You are the Bridegroom, the Lover of my soul! How can I ever thank You for the totality of Your love for me? How can I ever repay Your passionate pursuit of me? Make me your faithful bride, my God, loving You with all my heart, responding to Your love with ever greater surrender. Teach me to give myself to You completely as You give Yourself to me completely in each Eucharist.

A gift from the spring of life-giving water

Revelation 21:1–7

The English word “mercy” is derived from the Latin word, *miser cordia*. If we break that Latin word into two parts, we will see that it is *miseri* = misery, and *cordia* from *cordis*, heart. So *miser cordia* is a heart that is moved with compassion for the misery of others. Nowhere is this mercy more evident than in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, pierced by the lance of the centurion, pouring forth blood and water, here before us in this moment in the Blessed Sacrament.

God’s love for us, for His creation, is always a merciful love, a *miser cordia*. Because in comparison with God, all creatures are miserable, full of misery, lacking so many perfections that God has. God’s eternal love, when it is extended toward His creation, always takes the form of mercy. And His love for us, for fallen human beings, is even greater mercy, because sin is the greatest possible misery.

And here He is before us, ready to immerse us in His mercy, desiring for us to place ourselves beneath that spring of life-giving water flowing from His wounded Heart.

To receive God’s mercy today in prayer, first present to the Heart of Jesus your own struggles with weakness, temptation, sin. Speak sincerely to Him, without making excuses, just revealing to Him the wounds and wrongs of your soul. Be especially clear with Him about any spaces of unforgiveness or resentment, because He needs to transform those places so that you can receive His mercy.

Then take each of these offenses from your own heart and bury them deep in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and place yourself at the foot of the cross, beneath that flow of blood and water pouring out of His open Heart. Let this flow of His mercy wash away your own sins. Then imagine that mercy, that flow of blood and water, keeps flowing through you and into the hearts of those against whom you have harbored ill feelings.

Look at the Blessed Sacrament, and see here the Heart of Jesus, pierced by a lance for love of you, pouring out His mercy upon you. Immerse yourself in the mercy of the Heart of Jesus. Let His mercy fill and flood your heart, until all that is left there is His merciful love. Rest for some moments in His merciful Heart.

Now that you have been united to the merciful Heart of Jesus in prayer, ask for the grace to become a powerful channel of that mercy in the world.

Look first at those around you: do you see brokenness? Woundedness? Sin? Ask Jesus to pour His merciful love into that person’s heart. Ask with faith, knowing that it is the desire of His Heart.

Then look at the world around you. Jesus says, “Gather all sinners from the entire world and immerse them in the abyss of My mercy.” Who in the news or on social media needs to know the Lord’s mercy? Who is suffering from their inability to forgive? Who needs to know that their sins are forgiven? Who is broken and living out of that brokenness? Who doesn’t know that the Lord is good and merciful? Hold each of them in your prayer beneath the Heart of Jesus on the cross, and let the blood and water that flowed from His wounded side flow over each of them. Pray with faith—His mercy is more powerful than any sin, than any division, than any resentment. Pray that they receive His mercy in their hearts. Entrust them to His mercy.

As you finish your prayer today, ask Jesus one more thing: *how do You, Lord, want me to be an instrument of your mercy this week in my interactions with others?* Write down what He shows you, then try to live this week as a channel of His mercy.

I will give you rest

Matthew 11:28–30

In one of the Gospels most associated with the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jesus tells us to come to Him to find rest, because He is “meek and humble of heart.” Today as we adore Him in the Blessed Sacrament, we want to do just that: come to Him, contemplate the meekness of His heart, see how He calls us to be meek, and pray for more people to come to find rest for themselves in His meek and humble heart.

What is this virtue of meekness that our world today does not understand? Although the world understands meekness as a kind of weakness, it is actually a virtue of true power, because meekness allows one to remain oneself in the face of adversity; meekness makes one self-possessed. Meekness enables one to do good in the face of evil, by restraining anger and subjecting it to reason. Fr. John Hardon calls it “the virtue that controls every inordinate movement of resentment at another person’s character or behavior.” The Greek word that is translated as “meek” or “meekness” comes from the bridle that is used to tame the wild stallion. The bridle doesn’t take away the power of the stallion, but tames it, brings it under control, so that it can be used for good. “The power of meekness,” says Fr. Garrigou Lagrange, “lies in its capacity to defuse anger... Meekness disarms the violent.”

Contemplate Jesus in His meekness. In His Passion, He doesn’t get angry, doesn’t threaten, doesn’t resist. He is victorious on the Cross by becoming the victim for us. His meekness disarms Satan’s destructive plans against us, because He takes upon Himself all of the evil of the world.

Look at the Blessed Sacrament, and see here Jesus, meek and humble of heart. He invites you to come to Him, to lay down at His feet all the things that burden you. “Come to me, you who labor and are heavy-burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for yourselves.” Rest some time in His meek and humble heart.

How do you tend to think of meekness? How does contemplating Jesus’ meekness change that idea?

In what ways has the Lord Jesus manifested Himself as meek in your own life? How has His meekness helped you?

What step can you take to rest in Him and grow in meekness?

Spend some time asking the Lord for conversion of heart, presenting before Him the ways in which you get defensive or angry, and asking Him to give you His meekness. Ask for the grace to learn from Him. Then spend some time interceding for those who have been angry or violent towards you, that they, too, may come to Him and find rest in His Heart.

You can close your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, I adore Your meek and humble Heart, present before me in the Blessed Sacrament. I adore You, destroying the power of Satan by your meekness in your Passion. I adore You, taking on Yourself all the evil of the world. I adore You, meek and humble of Heart, not losing your peace, not for a moment. I adore You, and I ask You to yoke me to You, so I can learn from You, so I can be like You.

Gazing with unveiled faces

2 Corinthians 3:18

In the prologue to his Gospel, St. John writes, “And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father’s only Son, full of grace and truth.” What else happens in adoration, than that we see Christ’s glory, the glory of the only Son? Upon whom else are we gazing if not on the Word made flesh?

Sometimes we think that prayer is mostly about what we do. We can come to adoration with a sense that we have to do something, that we have to make prayer happen, that we have to somehow make ourselves holier or more prayerful or more Christ-like, that somehow prayer mostly depends on our own efforts.

But the truth is that, if we come before the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, just as we are, and simply adore Him, simply gaze on Him with unveiled face (that is to say, being completely sincere with Him), He is at work in us in ways we cannot imagine. St. Paul says that as we gaze on Him, “we are being transformed into the same image, from glory to glory.”

Isn’t that amazing? As I kneel here, gazing on Jesus my Lord, who is hidden here in the Blessed Sacrament, He is transforming me, remaking me into His image, bringing me to new levels of love and prayer and holiness. It is His work in me. I have to show up, unveil my face, give Him permission to work, and then just adore. He will do the rest.

So today just unveil your face. Just be before the Lord just as you are. And simply adore Him, simply gaze upon Him, and let Him do in you whatever it is He wants to do in you today in this time of prayer. After all, He is the only one who can bring you from glory to glory.

What does it mean for you today to unveil your face before the Lord?

What about your holiness and growth in Christian life do you tend to think depends on you?

What difference would it make if you entrusted that more to the Lord’s work and simply surrendered to Him?

Simply be in the Lord’s presence. Give Him permission to transform whatever He wants to transform in you today.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, what a gift that I can behold Your glory! What a gift it is to simply be with You in prayer, to simply adore You! I believe that, as I’ve adored You today, You have been transforming me, working in my heart in ways that I can’t see yet. I believe that You are the One who brings me from glory to glory, that my holiness depends on Your work in me. Teach me to surrender more and more, to adore You more, and to let You do in me whatever You want to do in me in each time of prayer.

All power in heaven and on earth

Matthew 28:16–20

Sometimes we feel powerless. We encounter situations in which we seem to be unable to do anything. Or we face our internal struggles and feel helpless, weak. Or we go to confession again, and confess the same things again, feeling powerless to change, to overcome. At times the battle seems too much for us, and we grow weary of our weaknesses, discouraged that we have not overcome. We can be tempted to give up, to stop fighting, to think that it is impossible to grow, to change, to advance, because all we experience is how weak we are.

But you are kneeling before Christ Jesus, who has been raised and enthroned “far above every principality, authority, power and dominion, and every age that is named not only in this age but also in the one to come” (Eph. 1:21). There is no power on earth or under the earth that is greater than Jesus Christ, and all of His power is present here, in the Blessed Sacrament, because He is present here, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. The power that resides in Christ, that is here in the Blessed Sacrament, is the same power that raised Him from the dead, the same power with which He worked during His earthly life, calming storms, multiplying bread, casting out demons, healing the sick. “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to Me,” he tells us in Mt. 26:18. Contemplate Jesus, all-powerful, hidden here.

Then contemplate Jesus reigning in power over each of your weaknesses and struggles. Contemplate His power at work within you in the face of each temptation. Ask for the grace to realize that His power is at work within you, that His power is not diminished by your weaknesses or wounds, by your struggles or temptations. All power in heaven and on earth is for you who believe, and is at work within you. Imagine Jesus within you, overcoming in you and for you in each of the situations where you feel weak or powerless. Praise Him for His power and for His victory. Allow Him to strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner self.

*In what areas of your life do you tend to believe that you are powerless?
Ask the Lord to manifest His power there.*

Where do you need to experience the power of Jesus at work in your life today?

What steps can you take to live in His power, in His victory in your life?

Praise Jesus, here before you, all power in heaven and on earth hidden in the Blessed Sacrament. Hidden, but not diminished. Praise Him giving to you, or enacting in you, all of His power each time you receive Him in Holy Communion.

Then, remaining in this awareness of His power, pray for those around you, asking Him to manifest His power in them, so that they be strengthened interiorly in their battles. Pray for your family. Pray for your friends and co-workers. Pray for someone else at this parish. And praise Jesus for how He is already answering your prayers.

You can close this time of prayer with these words from Revelation:

We give thanks to you, Lord God almighty, who are and who were. For you have assumed your great power and have established your reign. Now have salvation and power come, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Anointed. Alleluia! Salvation, glory, and might belong to our God!

Nothing will be impossible with God

Luke 1:36–37

When the angel Gabriel appears to Mary in the Annunciation, after she has asked “How can this be?”, he tells her that Elizabeth is pregnant, and then says, “Nothing will be impossible with God.”

Let those words resound in your heart for a moment: “Nothing will be impossible with God.” Let them search your heart. What are you afraid might be impossible? Is there some situation that is troubling you? Some struggle that is discouraging you? Is there someone you know who needs a miracle . . . but you are afraid to ask?

Jesus tells the disciples that all they need is faith the size of a grain of mustard seed. He tells Nathanael, “You will see greater things than this!” He tells the disciples: “All things are possible for God.” He tells the father of a possessed boy, “Everything is possible to the one who has faith.”

Too often, our prayer is not a prayer of faith, but of desperation or hopeless resignation. But Jesus invites us to pray with faith, to pray with boldness. He is here before us in the Eucharist, the same Jesus who during His earthly life did astounding miracles, the same Jesus who is now enthroned in glory. And He says to you, from His throne on high and from this humble throne of the monstrance on the altar: “Everything is possible if you just have faith.”

He wants you to pray with faith, with absolute confidence that He hears you, that He cares about your needs, that He has the power to do much more than you can imagine, and that He is going to answer your prayers. (Maybe not in the way you expect, but He will answer.) So pour out your heart to Him, to the Holy One who sits on His throne, who rules over heaven and earth, and who cares about every worry and concern of your heart.

How is your faith? Do you believe that all things are possible for God?

When have you seen the Lord answer prayer in powerful ways?

Have you asked Him to increase your faith?

Spend some time praying this prayer: “Lord, I believe, help my unbelief!” As you present your needs before the Lord and ask Him to act, repeat that prayer: “Lord, I do believe, help my unbelief!” Tell Him You believe that He can do what is humanly impossible. Tell Him you believe that He can do what is beyond the bounds of science. Pray with faith, asking for your own needs, and interceding for those around you. Then praise Him who sits on His throne, who hears you, and who is even now doing something about all that you have presented before Him.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, I believe that You have heard me, that You care about everything I've brought before You. I believe that, even now, You are at work in every situation of my life, in all the lives of those I've prayed for today. Give me, my God, the faith that can move mountains, so that You can work with greater power in my prayer and through my prayer. I want to be a person of mountain-moving faith!

Christ in you, the hope of glory

Colossians 1:24–29

There are people who are naturally optimistic, who always seem to look at the bright side, for whom the glass is always half full. And there are people who say they are realistic, who in reality (at least to the optimistic) seem to be pessimistic, who always see the shadow side, for whom the glass is never more than half full. And then there are people who hope.

Hope is an essentially Christian virtue. It's not optimism. It doesn't overlook the shadows, or pretend that things are better than they are. It's not Pollyannaish. No, Christian hope is anchored in Christ, Hebrews tells us, because He has already passed beyond the veil of death and is eternally alive. Christian hope is firmly rooted in the reality of the resurrection of Jesus.

Because Jesus is alive and risen, because Jesus has ascended into heaven and is seated at the Father's right hand in glory, we have this hope that we, too, will one day be with Him in glory. Sure, we are sinners, and we definitely still struggle, and sometimes we can be tempted to discouragement. But St. Paul tells us that Christ in us is our hope for glory, even as we suffer, even as we struggle.

Christ is in you. You receive Him in holy communion, and that union with Him on earth is a pledge, a promise, of the eternal and total union you will have with Him in heaven. Christ in you is your hope for glory, for the eternal life He promises.

There's a song I used to sing when I was a child, not understanding it much, but which lately has taken on a lot more meaning for me: "It will be worth it all, when we see Jesus. Life's trials will seem so small, when we see Christ. One glimpse of His dear face all sorrows will erase, so bravely run the race till we see Christ."

It will be worth it all, not only in the end when we see Him, but also even now. Every struggle, every battle, every wound, every sorrow, just to receive Him in

communion makes it all worth it. Even the troubles and struggles of this day, now that I can look on Him face to face, here in the Blessed Sacrament, it's worth it all.

How is your hope? How connected is it to being united to Christ?

What are the things that most threaten your hope?

In what ways have you experienced that receiving Jesus in the Eucharist or adoring Him is more than worth all the struggles in your life?

Spend some time contemplating Christ before you and in you as the source of your hope, the promise of total and eternal union with Him. Ask Him to increase both your desire and your hope for that union.

Pray for those who are hopeless or despairing, that they come to know Him and the hope that He offers.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, You are my hope! I don't set my hopes on the things of this earth, the things that are passing. I set my hope in You, crucified and buried for me, risen, alive, ascended into heaven. You, Lord, are the anchor of my hope. You, my Jesus, are the source of my hope. Just to be here with You, to gaze on You, makes all the struggles of my day worth it. I praise You, my hope!

Overjoyed

Matthew 28:1–10

In a letter to his friend the philosopher Jacques Maritain, the Catholic novelist Leon Bloy once wrote, “Joy is the most infallible sign of the presence of God.” And it certainly is one of the most evident signs of an encounter with the Risen Jesus, one of the characteristic marks of those who have seen Jesus risen from the dead. It’s a deep and constant thing, this joy, so much so that it can be present at the same time as other powerful emotions.

Because joy, the joy that comes from the presence of the Risen Christ, is more than just an emotion. It is an abiding sense of well-being, a deep contentment in hope, knowing that the One whom we love above all things is alive, is risen, and is with us always. Philosophers say that happiness is possessing what you love or being in the presence of what you love, and sadness is not having what you love.

The women in this Gospel went to the tomb full of sorrow, because the One they loved above all things had been crucified and buried in the tomb. But, hearing from the angel that Jesus is alive, go quickly away from the tomb to tell the disciples, “fearful yet overjoyed.” Overjoyed—joy that comes when the news is impossibly good, when Jesus is risen and alive, the One whom you love but who you thought you had lost. He’s alive! He’s risen!

And in faith we possess Him, even now. We receive the Risen Lord every time we receive communion. We are kneeling before Him, right now. We are in the Presence of the One we love.

So let joy arise in your heart again. It may be there at the same time as other powerful emotions—the holy women were overjoyed and fearful at the same time—but Jesus is really here, alive, and as you encounter Him today, He awakens again that joy that is the fruit of His presence, the joy of being with the One you love.

How is your Christian joy? What things tend to overcome your joy?

When have you been overcome with joy in the presence of Jesus?

How can you cultivate this joy that comes from knowing Christ?

Spend some time rejoicing in the Lord, rejoicing in His presence. Tell Him how much He gladdens your heart!

Then pray for those who are suffering or sorrowing, that they encounter Him and the joy His presence brings, even in difficult moments.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, You are alive! You are risen! You are here! And You are mine! You, my God, my Risen Lord, You are mine! You not only stay with me, but You dwell in me, You enter into me in holy communion! What joy could ever compare with the joy of knowing You, Jesus? What joy could ever compare with Your loving presence? Thank You, Jesus, for being my joy!

I am with you always

Matthew 28:16–20

Every three seconds, somewhere in the world, Jesus is lifted up in the Eucharist in the hands of the priest. Every three seconds, somewhere in the world, the bread on the altar is transubstantiated into the Body of Christ. Every three seconds, somewhere in the world and thus at all times and in all places, Jesus is making Himself truly present in the world, in the Blessed Sacrament, fulfilling His promise to be with us always, even to the end of the age.

I am with you always, He promises us. And His presence in the Blessed Sacrament is the way in which, *par excellence*, He fulfills that promise to us. All around the world, He is present in the tabernacle in every Catholic Church. And we can go to Him, kneel before Him, be with Him for He has stayed with us.

We should be amazed: Jesus is here, in this tabernacle! Jesus is here, in this monstrance! And I, who am just dust that will return to dust, have the unbelievable honor and privilege of coming before Him, being face-to-face with Him, in prayer! And I, who am so small and even still so sinful, get to receive Him, the Lord of heaven and earth, in Holy Communion!

Let's wonder again at this truly wonderful gift. Let's bow down and worship. Let's thank Him for His wondrous humility, that He would become bread so that we can come into His presence in every Catholic Church, so that we can look upon Him and live, so that we can receive Him, our Author and Creator, into our very beings.

In what ways have you experienced Jesus' Real Presence in the Eucharist?

How has Jesus' Eucharistic presence been to you a source of strength, of solace, of comfort?

What can you do to be more aware of, and to better show your love for, Jesus in the Eucharist?

Spend some time expressing amazement. Think of all that it means that the Lord God Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, is in this tiny white Host before you so that you can be with Him, so that day or night, in every Church, you can enter into His presence physically. Then give thanks for this great gift!

Spend some time in intercession for all those who are lonely, who don't know that they can come to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

What wondrous love is this, my God! You make Yourself so small so that You can physically be with us wherever we go! You not only give us a sign of Your presence— You give us Your very presence, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity! O, Love that wants just to be with us, who for some reason, are Your beloved! Let me wonder at this mystery of Your love, let me be in awe that You, my God, should be here, hidden in this Host, so that I can adore You and be with You!

Remain in my love

John 15:1–17

Every time we receive Jesus in Communion, we receive all of His love and all of the Father's love. All of Divine Love is contained in the tiny Eucharistic host we receive, and that love doesn't leave us. Jesus doesn't get digested by us when we consume Him, like ordinary food, that then passes through our digestive system and is gone. No, Jesus *remains*. The Greek word here is *meno*, which means to remain, to be permanent, to stay, to abide. Jesus doesn't leave us after we receive Him. He's not a visiting guest, but He makes our soul His home, and then He remains there, dwells there, abides there, within us. Long after we've forgotten that most wonderful fact of having consumed Him in the Blessed Sacrament, long after we've forgotten His presence within us, He is still there.

So when He tells us to remain in His love, He's not saying something abstract, not making a nice comparison. It's an invitation, or even a command. Remain. Don't forget that I am in you, that I remain in you. Don't walk away from Mass as if nothing happened, as if I didn't just come to you again to dwell in your heart and in your body.

This hour of adoration, where we contemplate Jesus before us in the Eucharist, should help us learn to contemplate Him within us, the Host in the home of our heart, the one who welcomes us to the center of our being, just as He welcomes us into His presence in this church or chapel. As we leave this time of adoration today, let's ask for the grace to remember that He dwells within us, and that we can return to the center of our hearts again and again throughout this day and throughout this week, to adore Him, hidden in our souls, where He remains in us.

How aware am I of Jesus dwelling in me, remaining in me?

How quickly do I tend to forget about His indwelling presence after I receive Him in holy communion?

What little practices can I establish to help me return to the center of my soul throughout the day to adore Him there?

Give thanks to Jesus for His indwelling presence, for making your heart His permanent home. And ask for the grace to be more aware of Him dwelling in you, to be more able to remain in Him.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

Jesus, I believe that You dwell in the sanctuary of my soul, even as You dwell in this Host on the altar. I believe that You remain with me always. Thank You for never leaving me. Thank You for making my heart Your permanent residence. Teach me to return to Your indwelling Presence throughout my day, to worship, praise and adore You there. Teach me to remain in Your love.

My peace I give

John 20:19–29

Imagine that moment, Jesus coming through the locked door, suddenly appearing in front of you. Let Him show you His hands and His side. Let Him come close to you, look into your eyes, say your name, and say to you, “Peace be with you.”

In all the apparitions of the Risen Jesus to the apostles when they are locked behind closed doors for fear, the first words He says to them are “Peace be with you.” This is the Word of God speaking, the Word that said, “Let there be . . .” and there was. When the Risen Christ, the Word Incarnate, says, “Let there be,” or “peace be,” what He says takes place. As in the beginning of creation, when the Word spoke the world into existence, so in the New Creation, the Word speaks into existence in our hearts and in our world the gifts that come from His Risen Heart.

He is here, the Risen Christ is here, in the Eucharist, and He says to you, personally, “Peace be with you.” He sees all the things that cause you worry, or anxiety, all the sources of your fears, all the disorder of your appetites, any root of sin. Whatever has or is stealing your peace, He sees it, and right into that place of fear or darkness or anxiety, He says to you, “Peace be with you.”

As He breathes that peace on you, you hear echoed in your heart the words He spoke at the Last Supper: “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives it do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid!” The Word is recreating your heart, recreating His peace in your heart. Let the breath of His peace touch and transform each area of your heart where you have been lacking peace. Drink His peace from His open Heart.

And when you have been filled with His peace, remain in silence, in peace, in awe, in worship, of the Risen Jesus, saying with Thomas, “My Lord and my God!”

Where do you most need to receive the Lord's peace today?

When His peace has filled your heart, how do you now recognize Him in the situations that have been troubling you?

How can you remain in His peace?

Repeat in worship the phrase of Thomas, “My Lord and my God!” Feel free to add other phrases that help you worship Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Then pray for the peace of Christ to permeate our world. You can pray first for those close to you who are lacking peace, then for situations at work or in your city or in our country. And pray to be an agent of Christ's peace in all the environments where He has placed you.

You can end your time of adoration with this prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, You are the Prince of Peace. When You say, “Peace be with you,” You make that peace a reality in our hearts. I praise You for Your peace which passes all understanding. You are my Lord and my God, Risen and victorious. Let Your peace reign in my heart. Make me an agent of Your peace in this world.

MEDITATION THIRTY

The light shines in the darkness

John 1:1–5

We get so easily overwhelmed or saddened or troubled by the darkness of so much of our culture, the darkness on so many of our streets, sometimes even the darkness we discover in our own lives and hearts. The world seems to be getting darker, and it can tend to discourage us.

But before you right now, hidden in the white Host there in the monstrance is Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, the true light, who enlightens everyone. Even the darkness is not dark for Him.

His light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. *The darkness has not overcome the light of Christ.* The darkness *cannot* overcome the light of Christ.

Not the darkness of your life, not the darkness of your past, not the darkness of your sin, not the darkness of your struggles. The light, Christ Jesus, shines in the darkness. As you kneel before Him today, His light shines into and is overcoming whatever darkness is within you. And as His light penetrates and enlightens your heart, you will go from this time of adoration bearing His light into the darkness of those around you, into the darkness of our culture, into the darkness of the city.

So let the Light of the world shine from this monstrance into your heart, into your mind. Imagine the darkness fleeing as the light approaches, darkness being, as it were, rolled away, peeled off, as the light of Jesus fills and floods you. No darkness can match this eternal and never-dimmed Light.

What darkness do you encounter in yourself? What happens as you reveal that to the Lord now in adoration?

Where are you called to bear the light of Christ today? How does He want to enlighten the darkness of others through you today?

Imagine that the rays of the monstrance are ablaze with eternal light, shining in all directions. What is the darkness of this city or community that they are overcoming?

Adore Jesus, the Light of the world, who dims His glorious light so you can look at Him. (In reality, He is brighter than the sun!) Praise Him for His undying light, for being the sun that never sets, for powerfully conquering already in your life and in the world so much darkness.

Then spend time in intercession. Pray for those in your own family or circle of friends who walk in darkness. Pray for the areas of darkness in our city or in our nation that most trouble or discourage you. Pray with great hope and confidence: the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

You can conclude your time with this prayer:

Jesus, You are the Light of the world! You are the sun that never sets! You dwell in unfading and inaccessible light! I praise You for Your light which shines in the darkness and cannot be overcome by the darkness. I praise You because even the darkness is not dark for You, there is nothing You cannot see. I praise You because You are not discouraged or defeated by the darkness, but defeat the darkness with the light of Your love. Help me today to live in great hope and confidence: Your Light will triumph!

Grace in place of grace

John 1:16

Sometimes I've imagined that, when I receive Jesus in the Eucharist at Mass, in my heart the new Host takes the place of the previous one, in that inner sanctuary where He remains always with me, and where I can enter in and adore Him in the middle of activity for brief moments throughout the day. Maybe that's a little fanciful, but what's true is what St. John says here: "From His fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace." With every Holy Communion, with every Eucharistic Adoration, we receive grace in place of grace, a new grace, more grace, deeper grace.

Really, what's true is that in each Holy Communion we receive, literally, all grace, because we receive Jesus Himself, who is the source of all grace, who contains all grace within Himself. But we are small and finite, and can only receive grace in small doses, so while we ingest Jesus Himself who is the author of grace, we can only assimilate or receive a dose of grace.

He is always giving Himself to us, giving all grace to us, in each communion, in each time of adoration. What is the grace you need today? It is here before you, because He is here before you, and He is pouring out that grace into your heart. So you can ask Him with simplicity and love for the grace you are needing, even as you thank Him for the last grace you are aware of receiving from His Eucharistic Presence. And as you adore Him today, let Him fill your heart to overflowing with that grace.

What graces are you aware of having received from the Lord in Holy Communion?

What graces are you aware of having received in Eucharistic Adoration?

What grace are you most in need of receiving from the Eucharistic Lord today?

Give thanks to the Lord, who is so good as to give Himself and all His grace to you in communion and in adoration. Let the thanksgiving and praise flow from your freshly grace-filled heart until you run out of words to express it.

Then pray for those who receive the Lord in communion without recognizing or opening themselves to the graces He bestows.

You can end your time with this prayer:

I am so, so thankful, Jesus, for Your presence here, for all the graces You have poured out on me in this time of prayer, for those I'm aware of and for those that are still hidden to me. Thank you for giving and giving, grace in place of grace.

MEDITATION THIRTY-TWO

Jesus alone

Mark 9:2–8

The Transfiguration must have been an overwhelming event: the disciples are with Jesus as He prays, and suddenly He is changed, so much light coming through Him that they can barely look at Him, so white His garments, so brilliant His face. And then Moses and Elijah are there, standing with Him, talking with Him, and the presence of God is so palpable that they are not only overwhelmed, they are terrified. They hardly know what to say, and then Peter blurts out, “Master, it is good that we are here! Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He doesn’t know yet that Jesus fulfills the Law and the Prophets, doesn’t yet really realize that they are not even on the same plane as Jesus.

And then the voice comes from heaven: “This is my beloved Son. Listen to Him.” And when they look around again, only Jesus is there. “They no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them.”

That’s why you are here right now, before Jesus in adoration: to see no one else but Him, to be alone with Him, heart-to-heart with Him. In His Presence, all else must fall away: cares, anxieties, worries, concern for what others think or say. In His Presence, all that matters is Jesus alone.

And He is here, Jesus Himself, hidden here before you, but revealed to you in faith. Let all else fall away. Let every other voice grow silent within you. Let there be no one but Jesus alone. And simply be with Him, look at Him, love Him, listen to Him.

What are your greatest difficulties for entering into prayer?

When you let everything else fall away in prayer, what does Jesus reveal to you about Himself?

What does the Lord speak to your heart today in the silence of this adoration?

Like Peter, let whatever comes up in your heart as you are with the Lord in adoration come out to Him as a prayer. Then receive whatever answer He gives you with simplicity.

You can close your time with this prayer:

Lord Jesus, I want there to be no one but You in the center of my life. I want time with You in adoration to be a priority for me. Let all distractions fall away. Let all other voices be silenced, so that I can just be here with You, face-to-face, heart-to-heart, all of me present to You as You are fully present to me.

Buried treasure

Matthew 13:44–46

It is one of the greatest discoveries in life when you discover that Jesus is the treasure you have always been seeking. Maybe you have personally searched in many places, looking for what could fill the void in your heart. Maybe yours was a late discovery, and like St. Augustine you say, “Late have I loved you, Beauty so ancient and so new! Late have I loved you!” Or maybe you found Jesus early in life, and before having wandered far or searched in many places, you sold everything to buy the Treasure.

It’s worth it. It’s the only thing that’s worth it. To know Jesus, to receive Jesus, to over and over again sell everything we have to possess Him more fully and to be more fully possessed by Him, that is, as St. Paul knew, the only real treasure. “Whatever gains I had, these I have come to consider a loss because of Christ. More than that, I consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ” (Phil. 3:7-8).

And what could possibly buy this treasure? What could I, so small and so poor as I am, have to sell to purchase the God of heaven and earth?

Only myself. Only my life. Only my heart. Because amazingly, astoundingly, wondrously, Jesus says to me, “You are My treasure.” Jesus sold all He had, gave up everything, to buy you, to buy me. And He accepts just our small selves as the price for buying Him, the greatest of all treasures.

So today, as we adore Him, let’s tell Him again that He is the treasure of our lives, let’s renew our offering of ourselves to Him.

When and how did you first discover Jesus as the treasure?

What did you “sell” in order to purchase Him?

What does He ask you to give Him today so that you can possess Him more fully and He can possess you more fully?

Contemplate all the riches you have in Jesus Christ: His love, His mercy, His truth, salvation, joy, new life, etc. Imagine that each thing you have in Him is like a jewel you are taking out of the treasure chest of His Heart and examining in detail, marveling at its beauty. Let this contemplation of the richness of Christ expand your heart.

Then pray for those who don’t know that He is the treasure: first for those whom you know who are seeking in things that will never satisfy, then for those in the world.

You can close with this prayer:

Jesus, You are the hidden treasure, and I want to seek You everywhere and in all things. I want to sell all that I have again today so that I can receive all that You are, so that I can “purchase” You with my life. What an unjust exchange—to give You my life in exchange for Your life! Thank you for receiving me in my poverty and bestowing on me all of Your wealth. I adore You, Treasure hidden here in the Holy Eucharist.



HOW TO DO A HOLY HOUR

As Catholics we believe that Jesus is truly, really and substantially present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. We worship Him at the Mass, but we can also spend silent time of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament.

Spiritual Communion

Blessed and worshiped be the most Holy Sacrament, Now and Forever. Glory be... (Repeat three times)

Lord Jesus, I firmly believe that you are present in the most Holy Sacrament. I adore you as true God here hidden. For my sins I ask your pardon. And because I love you above all things, I desire to receive you spiritually in this moment.

(Moment of silence)

Now that I have been united to you, I give you thanks and totally surrender to your holy will.

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 your wounds, *hide me;*
Separated from you, *let me never be;*
From the evil one, *protect me;*
At the hour of my death, *call me;*
And close to you, *bid me;*
That with your saints,
I may praise you forever and ever.
Amen.

Enter into God's presence

The disciples on the road to Emmaus were walking with Jesus, but they couldn't recognize that it was him. It wasn't until they reached Emmaus that their eyes were opened. That is why the first step is to recognize Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to come to you
- Repeat the name of Jesus slowly. You can also say His name, then your name, alternating.

- Close your eyes and imagine Jesus looking at you
- Make acts of faith: Lord I believe in your presence! I believe you are here! I believe you are my friend, etc.
- Say the titles of Jesus (Master, Lord, Friend, Messiah, Savior, etc.)
- Like Moses, remove your sandals, that is, cast your sins, worries, fears, etc. at His feet.
- Pray with one of the 150 Psalms

Cor ad Cor

You don't have to do everything every time, but use these as inspiration:

REVIEW YOUR WEEK Look back on the past week and talk with Jesus about the main events. Talk with Jesus about your upcoming week. It helps us gain wisdom when we reflect on these three questions: What did I learn from Jesus? From others? From myself? If you visit the Blessed Sacrament on a regular basis you can use this time to your daily exam.

MEDITATION Let the Lord speak to you through His word and pray with the Bible: read a chapter in the New Testament, pray with the Sunday readings, or a Psalm. Or read from an inspirational or devotional book, such as *21 Forms of Worship* by Vinny Flinn,

Visits to the Blessed Sacrament by St. Alphonsus Ligouri; *Imitation of Christ* by St. Thomas A Kempis or *Holy Hour* by Word on Fire, or any short writing by a saint.

DISCERNMENT Speak with Jesus about a specific topic: it could be from spiritual direction, the Sunday message, confession, or just something you need clarity or guidance on.

CONTEMPLATION Spend time in adoration and inner silence. Don't say anything. Look at him and let him look at you. Try to connect your heart with his and his with yours.

PRAISE Join all the angels and saints who constantly praise and bless God for his majesty and greatness and beauty.

“Christian contemplation is never a one-way gaze and neither is it directed at the ‘Nothing’ (as in certain Oriental religions, in particular Buddhism). It is always the meeting of two looks; our look at God and God’s look at us. If, at times, our gaze weakens, God’s never does.”

—Raniero Cantalamessa

Intercession and Surrender

Take a prayer list and pray for others, presenting them one by one to Jesus, asking for what they need from Him. After interceding, entrust each of these requests to the Lord, and look with Him at what is coming up for you this week, entrusting each thing to His providence.

How much you have loved me, my God! How much you have done so that I may love you, my God! How much you have desired and desire still that I love you! Here I am, my God, here I am. My heart is ready. I won't reject anything that could prove my love for you! What do you want from me? Here I am!

