



THE MISSIONARIES OF THE MOST HOLY EUCHARIST

GRACES FOR THE PARISH

By renewing the heart of the parishioners, adoration leads them to become more involved in their parish community. A community is primarily made up of people who feed their baptismal life by means of an intense Eucharistic life.

Focus of prayer: One Parish Priest recalls that adoration nourishes and strengthens faith: "The Lord has always answered the prayers of the adorers and continues to do so. The chapel of adoration has become a real 'centre of prayer' for several years now. Our Christian community is full. I believe that Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration is the most noble and yet the easiest accomplishment of my life as a priest. The benefits are numerous and the effort on my part is minimal. What I can do better for my parishioners is to help them grow spiritually ... The perpetual adoration makes Jesus present all the time for each one of us. He is really there in person for all of us."

Spiritual foundation and fecundity: Sometimes parishes can be like dryland in which it is difficult to launch new pastoral projects or to renew existing ones. Through continual adoration, Jesus pours out His Spirit on all the various movements of the parish, like rivers of living water flowing from his Divine Heart (cf Jn 7, 37-39). This Living Water gives life to the parish community, making it more available to the mission, and giving all pastoral activities a greater fecundity. Through adoration, the parish is anchored on Christ, the Good Shepherd of souls, who blesses and gives fecundity to the pastoral initiatives, despite the inevitable changes in priests, parishioners, movements ... Jesus celebrated and adored is the rock on which the parish rests ... From his pierced Heart which throbs for love of us in the Blessed Sacrament, the Spirit from Whom springs spiritual waters irrigating the dryland of the parish so that it can produce abundant fruits of conversion, commitment, charity ...

Grace of unity, charity: Another Parish Priest gives the following testimony: "The parish of St. Louis-St. Blaise has been experiencing graces of charity which are drawn from Eucharistic adoration: links are forged or tightened, the parishioners are more attentive to each other, more supportive. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament overwhelms the heart of the parish and opens it gradually to the mission that we are trying to put in place. Thanks to this chain of uninterrupted prayer, all the groups of the parish are gathered in prayer. In the exercise of my ministry, I know that at each moment, there is a parishioner who is praying for the parish and its priest. On the first anniversary of Perpetual Adoration, we had more than two hundred people attending the conference. This shows how the parishioners have truly gathered around Jesus in the Eucharist. I am touched by the loyalty of my parishioners and to their commitment to prayer. It is so beautiful!"¹³ Jesus said, "*I am the vine, ye are the branches, if you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit, but apart from me you can do nothing*" (Jn 15, 5). Thus, any pastoral fruitfulness stems from the union of the community with Christ. Since the Eucharist is the sacrament of communion with God and neighbor, the more we live the Eucharist, the more our communion with Christ is authentic and therefore the more our love of neighbor is concrete.

Vocations: In living the Eucharist, that which is at the service of the Gospel walks in the love of God and neighbor. It helps to build the Church as communion. Eucharistic Love motivates and founds the vocational activity of the whole Church. "In the intimacy of the Eucharist, some find they are called to the ministry of the altar, others to contemplate the beauty and depth of this mystery, others to make this momentum of love be pour out over the poor and weak, and others to reap the transforming power in the

¹³ Testimony of Fr. Michel Pieron, Parish Priest of Vichy, 2005.

realities and gestures of everyday life. Every believer finds in the Eucharist not only the interpretative key of his life but the courage to carry it out so he can build up, through the diversity of charisms and of vocations, the one Body of Christ in history.”¹⁴ So many bishops testify that priestly vocations in their diocese have abounded ever since they introduced continual adoration.

Adoration and Charity: Mother Teresa of Calcutta says: “It was not until 1973 when we began the daily holy hour, that our community began to grow and flourish.” Blessed Teresa distinguishes three graces received from Eucharistic adoration. First, she learns to love her sisters with the love that flows from the Eucharist. Then, the recognition of Jesus under the appearances of bread helps her to better recognize Christ in the poorest of the poor. Finally adoration allows her to give the people she serves, not just herself or what she possesses, but rather, Jesus who lives in her. In a letter she wrote: “Every day we expose the Blessed Sacrament, and we have perceived a change in our lives. We felt a deeper love for Christ disguised in the poor. We were able to know ourselves better and to better know the poor as the concrete witness of God. Since we started this adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, we have not reduced our work, we spend as much time as before, but with more understanding. People accept us better. They are hungry for God. They no longer need us, but Jesus.”¹⁵ “The Holy Hour before the Eucharist must direct us to the holy hour with the poor.”¹⁶ [...] John Paul II wrote: “Proximity to Christ, in the silence of contemplation, does not separate us from our contemporaries but, rather, makes us attentive and open to the joys and sorrows of men, and it enlarges the heart to the dimensions of the world. It gives us solidarity with our brothers in humanity, particularly the littlest, who are the beloved of the Lord.”¹⁷

Spiritual motherhood: To raise holy religious and priestly vocations, the Congregation of the Clergy encourages the practice of continual adoration in dioceses. Cardinal Hummes was writing that today, emerges the urgency of “a movement of prayer, that places at its centre 24-hour continuous Eucharistic Adoration, so that from every corner of the globe, a prayer of adoration, thanksgiving, petition and reparation, will be raised to God, with the primary intention of awakening a sufficient number of holy vocations to the priesthood and, at the same time, spiritually uniting with a certain spiritual maternity—at the level of the Mystical Body—with all those already called to the ministerial priesthood”¹⁸ A parish that adores day and night obtains the graces of spiritual motherhood. It ‘gives birth’ for the Church saintly vocations to the priesthood and religious life and obtains for them graces of sanctification. Through continuous adoration, the parish becomes the bride who unites to her Bridegroom, Jesus in the Host. The Eucharist is the wedding banquet in which Christ gives to His Church the vocations they need in order to proclaim salvation to all nations. Yes, priestly vocations are obtained kneeling before the Lord in the Eucharist.

Adoration and Evangelization: In the Gospel, “*Jesus went up the mountain and called to Him those He wanted. They came to Him, and He appointed twelve to be with Him and sent them out to preach*” (Mk 3: 13-14). Here adoration is the ‘*come to him*’. Evangelization is ‘*the being sent to*’. Before ‘going to’ others in the name of Jesus, we must first ‘come to’ Jesus in the Eucharist.

Adoration and Healing: “*The sun of righteousness will shine with healing in his wings*” (Mal 3, 20). Jesus in the Eucharist heals and illuminates not only individuals but also groups, movements that come together to grow in zeal and ardour in proclaiming the Gospel.

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¹⁴ John-Paul II, Letter to Priests, Holy Thursday 2000.

¹⁵ Mother Teresa, on the love of the poor through adoration. Tu m’apportes l’amour, Écrits spirituels, Le Centurion, 1975.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Jean-Paul II, Lettre à Mgr Houssiau, 28 Juin 1996.

¹⁸ Lettre du Cardinal Hummes, préfet de la congrégation pour le Clergé, 8 décembre 2007.