



## *Pick Up*: EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

Our lives are frustratingly fast-paced today. We buy smartphones with the intention of reducing anxiety and staying on top of things, like email and schedules, but instead we are consumed by them. They don't make us more productive, just busier, always-on, and always-reachable. We rarely have time to think, let alone grow in our prayer life. We need to slow down, we all know this, but how?

Have you ever been to our adoration chapel? It is truly an oasis of peace, a place of calm in the middle of The Woodlands. People remark to me all the time that they sneak into chapel for a few minutes after work or in between shuffling the kids around to their next event and it means the world to them. Adoration - the practice of worshipping Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament - has a thousand-year history in the Catholic Church. Other than genuflecting in His presence, there is no liturgy or formal prayers that must be said. It is simple. It is peaceful. It is slow.

In John's Gospel Jesus said of himself, "I am the bread that came down from Heaven" and "if you eat my body and drink my blood you will have life in you" and, just so there wasn't any confusion, he added, "for my flesh is food indeed and my blood is drink indeed." In the three gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus, at the Last Supper, takes the unleavened bread of the Jewish Passover meal and says those words that every priest for 2,000 years utters at the altar, "This is my body... This is my blood." He didn't say, "This bread is my body" as if he were speaking symbolically. St. Paul explains that receiving Holy Communion is a "participation in the blood of Christ... in the body of Christ" (1 Cor 10:16).

The teaching handed on from Christ and his Apostles up to today is that, at the words of consecration in the Mass, the offerings of unleavened bread and wine are truly transformed into Jesus Christ's body, blood, soul, and divinity. It isn't a symbol, a gesture, or playing pretend. It is Jesus.

Going to Mass and receiving our Lord in the Eucharist is the highest form of worship we offer God. Outside of the Mass, the consecrated Host is placed within a monstrance, a golden vessel that elevates and displays Jesus in the Eucharist. The word monstrance is where we get the word demonstrate, meaning "to make known or visible." So when we go to the adoration chapel and the Blessed Sacrament is in the monstrance, all that is required of us is reverence and love. "I look at him and he looks at me." That's it.

## How to go to Adoration:

This Lent we want to encourage you to spend some time either daily or a few times this week in the adoration chapel. As you Give Up non-water beverages, Pick Up the spiritual discipline of personal prayer in front of Jesus. You can pray however you'd like, but the Offer Up focus is on our own idols. Idols are good things, that when they become the Main Thing, ruin everything. Career and money are good things, but when we idolize them, they always demand sacrifices- family, health, etc. Only God is fit to be worshipped, so in your time in prayer ask our Lord to reveal the big and little idols that dwell in your own heart, mind, and life in order to be uprooted and destroyed. This process is called "repentance and conversion" and is always at the heart of Lent and of any progress in the Christian life.

*Give Up*

*Offer Up*

### Non-Water Beverages

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us that "God thirsts that we may thirst for him." Every time that you reach for that Coke, tea, or coffee, ask Jesus to deepen your thirst and desire to know, love, and serve Him.

### My Idols

Only God is worthy of our worship. What are the things in your life that have become idols? Hint: where do you spend your time, money, and attention? As a parish, let's pray that God might be the only One we worship.

