

# Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration

## *International Apostolate*

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## Perpetual Adoration of the Holy Eucharist

*By His Holiness Pope John Paul II*

*Originally Delivered in Spanish at the 45th International Eucharistic Congress - June 1993 - Seville, Spain*

Adoremus in aeternum Sanctissimum Sacramentum!

United to the angels and to the saints of the celestial church, we adore the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. Prostrated, we adore such a grand Mystery, that encloses the new and definitive Alliance of God with men in Christ.

1. Beloved priests, religious men and women, most beloved brothers and sisters.

It is for me a motive of special joy to prostrate myself with you before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, in an act of humble and fervent adoration, of praise to the merciful God, of thanksgiving to the Giver of all that is good, of supplication to Him Who is always alive to intercede for us (cf. Heb, 25).

"*Remain in Me and I in you*" (Jn 15,4) we have just finished listening in the evangelical reading on the allegory of the grapevine and the branches: How well is that page understood from the mystery of the living presence and life-giving of Christ in the Eucharist!

Christ is the grapevine, planted in a chosen vineyard that is the People of God, the Church. Through the mystery of the Eucharistic Bread, the Lord can say to each one of us: "He who eats my body and drinks my blood lives in Me and I in him". His life flows through us just like the living sap of the grapevine flows through its branches so that they live and produce fruit. Without a Real union in Christ - in whom we believe and on whom we nourish ourselves - there can be no supernatural life in us nor can we bear fruit.

2. Perpetual Adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament has been a connection thread of all the acts of the International Congress. For this reason I express my congratulations and my gratefulness to those, who with so much pastoral dedication and apostolic zeal, have carried out the responsibility of this Congress. In fact, perpetual adoration - held in so many churches of the city in several of them held even during the night, has been an enriching feature and characteristic of this Congress. *I hope that this form of perpetual adoration, with permanent exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, will continue into the future. Specifically, **I hope that the fruit of this Congress results in the establishment of perpetual Eucharistic adoration in all parishes and Christian communities throughout the world.***

*Here in Seville it is important to remember him who was a priest of the Archdiocese, the archpriest of Huelva, and much later Bishop of Malaga and of Palencia successively: Don Manuel Gonzalez, Bishop of the abandoned tabernacles. He vigorously dedicated himself to reminding all of the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle, a message to which at times, we so weakly respond. By his word and by his example he never ceased to repeat that in the tabernacle of each church we possess a light beacon, in contact with whom our lives can be illuminated and transformed.*

3. Yes, beloved brothers and sisters, it is important that we live and teach how to live the total mystery of the Eucharist: the Sacrament of Sacrifice, of the Banquet and of the permanent Presence of Jesus Christ the Savior. And you well know that several forms of worship to the Most Holy Eucharist are an extension and, at the same time, a preparation for the Sacrifice of the Mass and Communion. Will it be necessary to insist again on the deep spiritual and theological motivations of worship to the Most Holy Sacrament of the celebration of the Mass? It is true that the reservation of the Sacrament was made, from the beginning, in order to be able to take Communion to the sick and to those absent from the celebration.

But, as the Catechism of the Catholic Church says, "*for the deepening of the faith in the real presence of Christ in his Eucharist, the Church became aware of the meaning of the silent adoration of the Lord present under the Eucharistic species*" (n. 1,379).

4. "*Know that I am with you all days until the end of the world*" (Mt. 28, 20). These are the words of Christ Resurrected before ascending into heaven on the day of His Ascension. Jesus Christ is indeed the Emmanuel, God-with-us, from His Incarnation until the end of time. And He is in an especially intensive and close way in the mystery of His permanent presence in the Eucharist. What power, what consolation, what firm hope does the contemplation of the Eucharistic mystery produce. It is God with us that makes us participants of His life and launches us into the world to evangelize it, to sanctify it.

Eucharist and Evangelization has been the topic of the XLV International Eucharistic Congress of Seville. On this matter you have intensely reflected in these days and during its long preparation. "The Eucharist is indeed the source and summit of all evangelization" (Presbyterorum Ordinis, N.5); is the horizon and goal of all the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ. We are always guided toward the Eucharist by the word of truth, by the proclamation of the message of Salvation. Therefore, all liturgical celebration of the Eucharist, lived according to the spirit and norms of the Church, has a great evangelizing force. In effect, the Eucharistic celebration develops an essential and effective pedagogy of the Christian mystery: the believing community is summoned and gathered as the family and the People of God, Body of Christ; it is fed in the double table of the Word and of the Eucharistic sacrificial Banquet; it is sent as an instrument of salvation in the middle of the world. All this in praise and thanksgiving to the Father.

Pray with me to Jesus Christ, the Lord, who died for our sins and resurrected for our salvation, that, after this Eucharistic Congress, the whole Church will come out strengthened for the new evangelization that the entire world needs: new, also for the explicit and deep reference to the Eucharist, as the center and root of the Christian life, as a sowing and requirement of fraternity, of justice, of service to all men, beginning with those most in need

in their bodies and spirits. Evangelization for the Eucharist, in the Eucharist and from the Eucharist; are three inseparable aspects of *how* the Church lives the mystery of Christ and fulfills its mission of communicating it to all men.

**5.** May God grant that through the intimacy with Christ in the Eucharist may emerge many vocations of apostle, missionaries, to carry this gospel of salvation onto the ends of the world. The commemorations to the Spanish priests and religious that - depending on the needs and circumstances of the current times - that you be willing, as in other times, to serve fraternally the sister churches of Latin America in the urgent effort of evangelization, to the tenor of the spirit and the reflections of the IV General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate, celebrated last October in Santo Domingo. Today the Church is demanding a new missionary talent, a vibrant spirit of evangelization "*new in its ardor, in its methods and in its expressions.*"

**6.** "*The hour is coming, and now is here, when true worshippers will worship the Father in the spirit and truth*" (Jn 4, 23), Jesus had said to the samaritan woman at the well of Sicar. The adoration of the Eucharist "*is the contemplation and recognition of the real presence of Christ, in the sacred species, outside of the celebration of the Mass (...)* It is a real dialogical encounter by means of which (...) we open our-selves to the experience of God (...) It is equally a gesture of solidarity with the needs and with the needy of the entire world" (Documentbase of the Congress, n. 25) And this Eucharistic adoration, by its own spiritual dynamic, must lead to the service of love and justice for the faithful.

Before the real and mysterious presence of Christ in the Eucharist - a "veiled" presence, since it is seen only with the eyes of the faith - we understand with new meaning the word of the Apostle John who knew so much of the love of Christ: "*He who does not love his brother whom he sees, cannot love God whom he does not see*" (1 Jn 4, 20). For this reason, it has been desired that this Congress have a clear evangelizing projection (plan) and testimonial, that should be made present in all walks of life and of society. I have the firm hope that the evangelization zeal shall rise in Christians a sincere coherence between faith and life, and shall lead to a greater commitment of justice and charity, to the promotion of some more equitable relationships among men and among peoples. From this Congress must be born - especially for the Church in Spain - a strengthening of the Christian life, on the basis of renewed education in the faith. How important it is, in the middle of the current social environment progressively secularized, to promote the renovation of the celebration of the Sunday Eucharist and the Christian life on Sunday! The commemoration of the Resurrection of the Lord and the celebration of the Eucharist should fill Sunday with religious content, that is truly humanizing. Rest from work on Sunday, caring of the family, cultivating spiritual values, and the participation in the life of the Christian community, will contribute to making a better world, more rich in moral values, more solid and less consummative.

**7.** May the Lord, the Light of the people, grant - that these days He is sowing with hands full the seeds of the Truth in so many hearts - the multiplication with His divine fertility of the fruits of this Congress. And one of them, perhaps the most important, shall be the increase of vocations. Let us ask the Master of the harvest that he send workers for his harvest. (cf Mt 9, 38): there is a lack of many priestly and religious vocations, And each one of us, by word and examples of generous surrender, must convert himself into an "*apostle of apostles*", into a promoter of vocations. From the Eucharist Christ today insistently calls so many young persons: "*Come with Me, and I will make you fishers of men*" (Mt 4, 19): be priests, be religious men and be religious women, spokesmen, joyous and convincing voices, of that call of the Lord.

That the Virgin Mary, that in Seville and in this Holy Cathedral Church is honored with the title of Our Lady of the Kings, impel us and guide us to meeting with her Son in the Eucharistic mystery. She, who was the true Ark of the Covenant, living Tabernacle of the Incarnate God, teach us to care with the purity, humility and fervent devotion her son, Jesus Christ, present in the Tabernacle. She, who is the "*Star of Evangelization*", supports us in our pilgrimage of faith to carry the Light of Christ to all men, to all peoples. *So be it.*

# A FORGOTTEN SOURCE OF BLESSINGS

## SOLEMN EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

BY ST. PETER JULIAN EYMARD

We can rightly call the 19th century the great century of the Holy Eucharist, just as it has been styled the century of Mary. Never in all the past ages has the cult of the Blessed Sacrament flourished so conspicuously.

Solemn Exposition was rare even in the ages of Faith. Perhaps there was some sort of misapprehension for the respect and majesty of the Sacrament of love, were it to be exposed too often to the piety of the faithful.

There was, then, no special need of this excellent means of salvation, the last, perhaps, which is now offered to Christian society. But today, Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is the grace and need of our times.

Exposition is the sovereign grace, the life-blood of the Church and the faithful.

In 1810, when Rome, the city of the Prince of the Apostles, mourned over the exile and enslavement of her Pastor, and found no hope except in God, a few men found in Faith a thought which restored courage and confidence. "We will save Rome by the grace of adoration," they said; "by this help we will bring back in triumph our beloved Pontiff." This thought stirred men to the quick; they grouped together around the altar; the ecclesiastical authorities blessed and approved this work and it went into motion. Exposition began, and in November, 1810, this heavenly flame was lit, never to be extinguished. It became a powerful protection, a burning furnace; and Pius VII re-entered Rome in triumph, as would also, in later years, his worthy successor, Pope Pius IX.

How can things be otherwise. Jesus Christ, the eternal Pontiff, possessed a throne surrounded with love and veneration in the old city of the Popes, and His Vicar on earth would moan in exile! No, no, these two thrones, that of the Savior and that of His august representative, must stand side by side; the one must raise or sustain the other. You see how powerful is the work of perpetual adoration.

In 1848, once more, Rome was trampled under foot by hatred and impiety. Monsignor Palmer was murdered at the very feet of the Pope, though it was at the Pontiff that the blow was aimed, The Quirinal was set on fire, churches desecrated, religious Orders were persecuted. The revolution had triumphed and dispossessed the Pope of his lands, and the Pope took the road into exile. But those fiends had forgotten something. They forgot to put out the fire which would consume and exterminate them - the fire of perpetual adoration. The Divine Host of propitiation had remained exposed in the heart of Rome, to protect and defend the city, and prepare the triumphal entry of Pius XI to Saint Peter's.

Indeed, all the malice, all the cleverness, all the treachery of the impious and of the revolutionaries, who at this very moment are leagued against the eternal city, will crumble at the foot of the Eucharistic throne on which reigns the omnipotent Master Who said to the sea: "Peace, be still."

Exposition has also proved the salvation of Paris and France. How sad and gloomy were the days of the Revolution, when the king and his servants were liquidated and the Tuileries, the Treasury, and the government were seized. What would be the fate of disrupted France? Who would check the flood waters which have been pent up for so long? Who could prevent wholesale pillage and murder? The furies of '93 and its impiety are let loose ... and no hope of salvation looming on the horizon. But a timely thought inspires a few pious souls: they would save France by perpetual adoration. Jesus must be adored day and night, He must have a throne of

salvation and reparation. At this thought hope is re-kindled. People unite, enroll themselves, spare no efforts, and on December 6, 1848, Exposition and Adoration are inaugurated in Notre-Dame des Victories. This great work, the solemn manifestation of Jesus-Hostia, accomplished - Paris and France were saved.

Paris was saved by Perpetual Adoration, whatever others might say to the contrary. For neither the eloquence of any man, or the common sense of the people, or the wisdom of the government could extricate the nation. No, no; neither soldiers, nor leaders, nor learned men could achieve such a feat. Only a few modest men, who copied the gesture of Moses on the mountain, could work such a miracle. They constituted themselves victims of adoration and propitiation for their brethren, for the Church, and the world, at the feet of Him Who holds in His hands the balance of peace and of war, of pardon and of justice; and so long as Paris will have the devotion her thrones of perpetual exposition, she will never bow to her enemies. Where the King is, there is the capital; and its bulwarks, its strength, its glory spring from His residing there. Now, our Lord Jesus Christ is the King of Kings. As long as He resides on the altar-throne, He wants reign, to pardon, and to save. If no longer He had adorers, then, oh! yes, we needs must tremble and take to flight, for the fatal hour will have struck, the hour of the prince of darkness.

From Paris perpetual adoration spread far and wide; the devotion has been instituted in nearly every diocese of France, and those which have not yet organized this royal service of Jesus are preparing to do so, and what is more remarkable is the fact that it is the more remote and poor parishes which first fall in line with this eucharistic movement.

I am not afraid to say it: the cult of Solemn Exposition is the great need of our times; this public and solemn profession of faith in the divinity of Christ and in the reality of His Sacramental Presence is a necessity. It is the best refutation which can be leveled at the renegades, the apostates, the impious and the indifferent. It will crush them like a mountain of fire, but a fire of love and goodness.

This solemn cult of exposition is also necessary to arouse the slumbering faith of many good people who have forgotten Jesus Christ, because they have lost sight of the fact that He is their Neighbor, their Friend, and their God.

This cult is needed to stimulate true piety, alas, so long held up at the gates of the sanctuary where Jesus is always ready to bless us and open His Heart to us.

It is needed to save society. For society is dying out, because it no longer has a vital principle of truth and charity, no family spirit.

Each one shifts for himself, becomes self-centered and self-sufficient. So dissolution is at hand. But society will revive when all its members group themselves around our Emmanuel.

Our judgement will naturally become healthy if it is inspired by a common principle; the bonds of true friendship will be tightened by a common love; the beautiful days of the Cenacle, the family feast, the banquet of the great King, will be re-lived. These are the effects of the devotion on Christian peoples.

A devout French Bishop used to say: "Ever since the devotion has been established in my diocese, religion has flourished again; three days of adoration are worth a mission. Besides, and this, especially, is what rejoices me,, the good effected is more lasting." Behold the best proof of the power of adoration.

Zealous priests in many a parish easily get discouraged, because priests are regarded merely as professionals, and the Church as a sort of religious townhall. The house of God is often deserted, even on Sundays, and men seem to have lost the way to church. How attract them to the priest, to the church, to Jesus Christ Himself? In many countries the only way is through Solemn Exposition, with its grandiose religious exercises and its torrents of graces.

Even if success seems at first imperceptible, hope must continue to flicker; it is already very much that our Lord has deigned to visit His people and mount His throne of mercy. When He comes a second or third time, hearts will become more docile. It takes time before an arid land can yield an abundant harvest. As with all living things, so, too, souls must expand their vitality by degrees before reaching full maturity.

There is even a stronger reason for establishing solemn exposition as a real means of salvation: it is the impotency of secondary means for saving the world. It is unfortunately too true that Christian societies are dissolving into religious individualism. And yet there are still many priests, zealous and learned; good books abound in our shops; Catholic organizations are to be found wherever some good may be achieved; Catholic charities reach out far and wide. Whence, then, comes this indifference, incredulity, hostility? Whence, the foul air? Whence the moral epidemic which rages and weakens so many souls?

Missioners can't understand why their spiritual exercises, even the most consoling, merely streak the sky like a brilliant meteor, or, like torrential rains, flow over hard soil without sinking in; or, like a bolt of lightning, flash and disappear; in a word, why the thermometer of piety soon falls to its former level.

Formerly a good book could work up a revolution in the minds of men; today, men barely cast a fleeting glance at one. A new movement of grace produced salutary effects in whole nations; today we are afraid of the supernatural and start out with feelings of apprehension or aversion in everything we do.

In the past, whenever our Christian civilization was going on the rocks, you could always find some lighthouse of safety; these beacons were certain saints, who were showing the way to perplexed souls or guiding religious works. But, at present, few are to be found. Now, there is nothing astonishing about this, for the planets cease to reflect light when the sun is eclipsed. Devotion to saints has a meaning only when it spells glory for Jesus Christ, in Whom it must terminate. When a King is without court, his ministers have no prestige, and when a sovereign is insulted, so also all his subjects are humiliated.

The great evil of the day lies in the fact that we don't go to Jesus as to a Savior and a God. We abandon the only basis, the only law, the only grace of salvation. The trouble about empty piety is that it fails to spring from Jesus Christ, or terminate in Him. People stop or loiter on the way. A divine love which does not derive its fervor, its center, in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, lacks the essential conditions of power: it will soon die out like the hearth without fuel. This love will soon become merely human.

What then, must we do? Go back to the source of life which is Jesus. But we must cease viewing Jesus only in His earthly Life, or in the glory of Heaven; we must see Him especially in the Holy Eucharist. We must take Him from the back seat and place Him at the head of our Christian civilization, which He will guide and bring to safety. We must rebuild His palace, a royal throne, a court of devoted servants, a family of friends, a people of adorers.

Behold the mission and the glory of our age; that will make it the greatest and holiest of centuries.

Let us never forget that an age prospers or dwindles in proportion to its devotion to the Holy Eucharist. This is the measure of its spiritual life and its faith, of its charity and its virtue.

May the glorious kingdom of Jesus Eucharistic come! Too long, much too long, have impiety and ingratitude ruled the earth.

Adveniat regnum tuum!



PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM  
PRO LAICIS  
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## DECREE

**With a lively appreciation** of the purpose of the "Association of Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration", as an association of the faithful dedicated to promoting Eucharistic worship and devotion, and having as "a particular character of its apostolate of prayer that of perpetual adoration before the exposed Blessed Sacrament" (Statutes: Preamble);

**Bearing in mind** that the said Association has already promoted, over a considerable number of years, experiences of "Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration" in numerous parishes and dioceses of various countries, always with due respect for the liturgical directives of the Catholic Church and in communion with the Diocesan Ordinaries and the parish priests concerned;

**Considering** also that the said Association intends to develop communication and cooperation with other approved associations of Christ's faithful that pursue similar purposes;

**After receiving** the testimony of Bishops of various countries who know, appreciate and encourage the "Association of Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration";

**After having studied and revised** the statutes of the Association and having found them to be in harmony with the doctrine and discipline of the Catholic Church;

**Observing that** "competent ecclesiastical authority alone has the right to erect associations of the Christian faithful which set out to teach Christian doctrine in the name of the Church or to promote public worship or which aim at other ends whose pursuit by their nature is reserved to the same ecclesiastical authority." (CIC Can. 301, 1).

## THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE LAITY

## DECREES

The erection of the Association of Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration as a universal and international public association of the faithful, with juridic personality, in accordance with Book II, Part I, Title V of the Code of Canon Law, and the approval of its *Statutes*, the original text of which has been deposited in the Archives of the Pontifical Council for the Laity.



*PAUL. J. CORDES* \_\_\_\_\_ Vice-President

*EDUARDO CARD. PIRONIO* \_\_\_\_\_ President

From the Vatican, June 2, 1991, Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ

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