

“O Come Let Us Adore Him, Christ the Lord” - Eucharistic Adoration

In Fr. Benedict Groeschel's little book *Praying in the Presence of Our Lord*, he relates a story about Saint Teresa of Avila. When she heard people say they wished they had lived when Christ walked on this earth, she would smile to herself, for she knew that we have Him as truly with us in the Most Holy Sacrament as people had Him then, and wonder what more they could possibly want.

Catholics have always believed that Christ is truly present, soul, body and divinity in the Eucharist. The Church believes Christ fulfills His promise to “be with us always” through His presence in the Eucharist. Therefore it is not an unreasonable leap in logic to adore Him in the Eucharist. This devotion called Eucharistic Adoration developed in the early church sometime after the fifth century. St. Augustine said that not to adore Christ in the Eucharist with some external sign of reverence was a sin!

Some folks will say, “where is Eucharistic Adoration” in the Bible? Well, it isn't, however the theology for it is. Christ said, “**This is my body**” as he held out the bread to His disciples at the Last Supper. It is important to note that He didn't say “this **represents** my body.” At this point, the twelve disciples around the table may have been calling to mind his sermon a year earlier when He told them they must eat His body and drink His blood. (Jn 6)

When the Eucharist is confectioned by the priest, Christ's sacrifice is again made present on the altar. He is not re-crucified. (For more on this, go to this link by Baptist-turned Catholic Steve Ray <http://www.catholic-convert.com/Portals/0/Documents/MassReCrucify.doc>)

He is literally *made present* as the Greek word *anamnesis* denotes. Believing he is present in the Eucharist allows us to worship Him . We are not worshipping a piece of bread . If I worshipped a piece of bread it would be idol worship! However in Eucharistic adoration, the consecrated Host is reverently placed in an ornate container called a Monstrance. This is then placed in a suitable place for the faithful to pray, worship and be close to their Lord. Many churches have a procession where the monstrance containing our Lord is publically and reverently displayed for all to worship.

What does this all mean for us as Christians who desire to be as close to Jesus as possible? It means that I can go to any Catholic Church and worship Him, pray to Him, listen to Him. He resides in the tabernacle (small elegant locked chamber) of every church so we can kneel before the tabernacle and tell Jesus what is on our hearts. Many churches have a chapel of perpetual adoration where the Eucharist is exposed in a monstrance and 24/7 worship can occur outside of the Mass. Wow! Is this a strange and obscure custom of the Catholic Church? No actually, most saints through the ages have persevered in prayer before our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and have received much grace,

consolation and joy through this practice. Yesterday, I was visiting the [National Shrine of our Lady of Lourdes](#) in Emmitsburg, Maryland. As I walked into the chapel, I was greeted by a priest who gently whispered to me, "enjoy your visit with us today, the Lord is present in the tabernacle" as he motioned to the front of the beautiful chapel. It is such a joy for me to have Jesus so present to me not only in His Word, His people, but in the most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist! In my old non-denominational church, folks would sometimes kneel on the floor as beautiful songs of worship were sung. My heart's desire is for all Christians to experience Christ's real presence in the Eucharist so together we can "Come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our God, our Maker." (Maranatha Music 1980) You don't have to be Catholic to be blessed by Eucharistic Adoration. Try it you might like it!

If you would like to learn more about Eucharistic Adoration please visit this site:

<http://www.therealpresence.org/eucharst/a.html>