

## The Council Fathers Concerning The Eucharist

The Fathers of the II Vatican Council said that the Eucharist is the source and summit of the whole work of preaching the Gospel; the sign and cause of the unity of the Church, and also because the Eucharist contains Christ Himself, it therefore contains the Church's entire spiritual wealth. The Council Fathers also directed the bishops constantly to exert themselves to have the faithful know and live the paschal mystery more deeply through the Eucharist and thus become a firmly knit body in the solidarity of Christ.

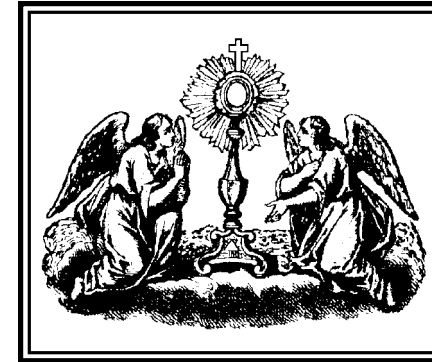
The Council Fathers remind the priests that all other sacraments as well as every ministry and every work of the apostolate are linked with the Eucharist and are directed toward it.

The Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship on June 21, 1973, issued a special instruction on the Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass. It noted that one of the purposes of the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament is the praiseworthy practice of adoration. This cult of adoration has a sound and firm foundation, especially since faith in the real presence of the Lord has as its natural consequences the outward, public manifestation of that belief.

Pope Paul VI, in his address to some American bishops on June 15, 1978 cited the importance of the Eucharist in the life of St. John Neumann, giving the example of the Saint's introduction of an organized schedule of the Forty Hours devotion. The Pope said: "Venerable Brothers, we do not hesitate today to propose to you and all your faithful the great practice of Eucharistic Adoration."

Bearing in mind the message of our Divine Lord to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, we are invited and urged to carry on a program of adoration and reparation, as a means of acknowledging the great love of our Lord for us.

(John Cardinal Krol Archbishop of Philadelphia)



The Blessed Sacrament Exposed  
Challenge: May, 1995

## The Reverence due to Christ in the Blessed Sacrament

St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom testify to having seen at the time of Mass, or when the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, many hosts of Angels in human form, clothed with white garments and standing round the altar as soldiers stand before their king. But what was their attitude and deportment? Their heads were bowed, their faces covered, their hands crossed, and the whole body so profoundly inclined as to express the deepest sense of their own unworthiness to appear before the Divine Majesty. Oh, would we but think of this! The Angels, those pure spirits, shrink before the infinite Holiness of God, and we allow vain, worldly and even sinful thoughts to insinuate themselves into our minds in His Presence!

The Angels tremble before His Greatness, and we fear not to talk and laugh in His Presence! The Angels, those princes of Heaven, are all humility and modesty, and we, the dust of the earth and miserable sinners, all impertinence and pride! The Angels veil their faces before

## **The Persistent Love of Jesus Christ Evident in Eucharistic Resurgence**

In studying Church history, it is apparent that the rejection of the love of Our Divine Savior has been going on and will go on until the end of time. Many may not realize it, but it was in periods of Eucharistic decline that the seeds of the great resurgence of Eucharistic piety were planted.

In the thirteenth century when Peter the Chanter launched his false doctrine against the Real Presence, the Church ordained that the Sacred Host be elevated after the Consecration for the faithful to adore. The Albigensian heretics sought to stifle Eucharistic devotion; and in response, beginning at Avignon, France, processions with the monstrance held high demonstrated faith in the Real Presence. At the same time, St. Julianna of Mt. Cornillon received the revelation concerning the establishment of the Feast of Corpus Christi. The abuses of the thirteenth century were answered by an age of great witnesses to the Eucharist: St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Clare, St. Anthony of Padua, and St. Bonaventure, to mention a few.

The Protestant reformation which unleashed a whole series of misinterpretations about the Eucharist (a natural consequence of throwing out the ordained priesthood and Church authority), was answered in part by the forty hours devotion. During the Age of Enlightenment, when human reason reigned supreme and the influence of the Church seemed to be in eclipse, there was a great flowering of Eucharistic devotion comparable to that of the thirteenth century. It was the age that introduced Perpetual Adoration and Nocturnal Adoration.

The nineteenth century saw more religious congregations formed with some form of Eucharistic adoration than any other period in the

## **Catechism on the Real Presence**

by St. John Vianney

Our Lord is hidden there, waiting for us to come and visit Him, and make our request to Him. See how good He is! He accommodates Himself to our weakness. In Heaven, where we shall be glorious and triumphant, we shall see him in all His glory. If He had presented Himself before us in that glory now, we should not have dared to approach Him; but He hides Himself, like a person in a prison, who might say to us, "You do not see me, but that is no matter; ask of me all you wish and I will grant it." He is there in the Sacrament of His love, sighing and interceding incessantly with His Father for sinners. To what outrages does He not expose Himself, that He may remain in the midst of us! He is there to console us; and therefore we ought often to visit Him. How pleasing to Him is the short quarter of an hour that we steal from our occupations, from something of no use, to come and pray to Him, to visit Him, to console Him for all the outrages He receives! When He sees pure souls coming eagerly to Him, He smiles upon them. They come with that simplicity which pleases Him so much, to ask His pardon for all sinners, for the outrages of so many ungrateful men. What happiness do we not feel in the presence of God, when we find ourselves alone at His feet before the holy tabernacles! "Come, my soul, redouble thy fervor; thou art alone adoring thy God. His eyes rest upon thee alone." This good Saviour is so full of love for us that He seeks us out everywhere.

Ah! If we had the eyes of angels with which to see Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is here present on this altar, and who is looking at us, how we should love Him! We should never more wish to part from Him. We should wish to remain always at His feet; it would be a foretaste of Heaven; all else would become insipid to us. But see, it is faith we want. We are poor blind people; we have a mist before our eyes. Faith alone can dispel