

ISSUE 12

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PERPETUAL  
EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



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Come Holy Spirit

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2022. What a first quarter of the year it has been with COVID widespread throughout the country—more about that below. I do hope you are well and I want to especially welcome all the adorers that have signed up in the last few months and are reading this newsletter for the first time. We have been greatly blessed with a number of new adorers and we thank God for answering our prayers.

As mentioned above, COVID hit the country fully a couple of months ago and a number of adorers have contracted the virus. Through it all, we have managed to keep the chapel open. This is due to many of you covering extra hours when people were sick or isolating. Thank you so much. I also want to make particular mention of adorers who asked friends and family to sub. We had a number of people volunteer who were not on the roster or usual subs. I know that many have communicated to me their thanks that the chapel has remained open. As I write this, it seems that the peak has passed.

I want to acknowledge our Sunday Day Leader Lyn Fahey who is retiring from the role at Easter. Lyn has been a day leader since the chapel opened and has been so dedicated, often filling in on Sundays herself when adorers could not make it. Thankyou Lyn for many years of dedicated and generous service, we are so grateful for you help and support. I also want to acknowledge Mike Doolan, our Friday day leader, who retired in January after a number of years service. Mike was also a very dedicated day leader and we thank him for his service. Please keep Mike in your prayers as he battles health issues.

Our day leaders play an important role in the life of the chapel. They are the first point of call for adorers and we have been so blessed to have outstanding day leaders over the years. We have had a couple of new day leaders join the team over the past few months. Megan Emery is looking after Thursday's and Chris Watkins is looking after Friday's. We will announce a new day leader for Sunday soon. Thank you for your continued support and generosity in being a rostered adorer of the chapel. We thank God so much for all the blessings and fruits that have come from having a Perpetual Adoration Chapel in the Diocese.

**- Matt O'Connell**

# THE IMPACT OF THE 40 HOUR DEVOTION

INSPIRING

Over the years that the Adoration Chapel has been open, I have been promoting the 40-hour Eucharist Devotion. Quite a number of parishes have run this devotion and also St Bede's College. One parishioner in one parish said that it was the "most powerful prayer experience she had been a part of in 40 years".

Recently I came across a very powerful story from Sherry Weddell about the 40-hour devotion and the impact this devotion had on the 17<sup>th</sup> Century revival in France. Read the story below (it has been slightly edited):

"(Recently), I stumbled across an example of an incredible year of corporate intercessory prayer and resulting massive revival. I knew about the great "Generation of Saints and the 17th century revival in France that affected the whole Catholic world but I'd never made the connection.

(You) have heard of the idea of the "Forty Hours" - 40 hours or two days of round the clock prayer in front of the exposed Blessed Sacrament? It was a devotional practice that emerged in 16th century Milan as part of the Catholic renewal there and then spread around Europe and was practiced by saints like St. Philip Neri, Frances de Sales, and Charles Borremeo.

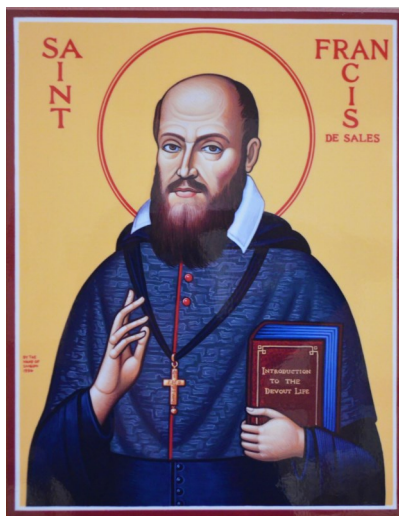
In times of great need, there was an intercessory city-wide or diocesan-wide version of the Forty Hours that involved all the churches of the area and lasted a year. The idea was that there would be intense prayer before the risen, glorified Jesus 24/7 for two days in say, St. Pius parish, and just as that was ending, another Forty Hours would begin in the next parish and as that was ending, another Forty Hours would begin in a third parish, etc. it was a progressive intercessory prayer meeting that moved around from church to church throughout the city for the whole year.

In November 1592, Pope Clement was gravely concerned about the conflict within the Church, \*especially in France\*, where there had been a religiously-based civil war for 32 years in which millions of people had died. So the Pope issued a proclamation asking for a year of Forty Hour intercessory prayer for the conflict in the Church - especially in France - before the Blessed Sacrament to move from church to church around the city of Rome for one year. If the year of prayer had begun quickly, say in December, it would have ended in December of 1593. **P.T.O**



# IMPACT OF THE 40 HOUR DEVOTION CONT

Nine months after that year of intercession ended, a young newly ordained Francis De Sales walked into a part of alpine France on a one-man evangelizing mission. His goal was to restore the Catholic faith in a place where every church had been destroyed and where 60,000 people had left the Church and only about 100 Catholics remained. In four years of intense evangelical ministry, he brought 40,000 back to the Church and then they made him bishop of the region that he had personally re-evangelized. It turned out to be the first great chapter in what became a missionary revival that transformed the Catholic Church in France and then brought the faith to other parts of the world like Canada and Vietnam.



Whoah. A year of intercessory prayer before the glorified Lord Jesus, whom the Church calls the "One Intercessor" for the shattered Church in France and then a revival begins that impacts the nation of France for 150 years . . .

Praised be Jesus Christ!

I've told the story of the Generation of Saints in France and St. Francis de Sales' evangelization of the Savoy region for years and I should have guessed, should have known that breakthroughs like that don't "just happen" without intense intercessory prayer! But no history ever mentioned the year of papal mandated prayer held in Rome for France that had begun less than two years before . . .

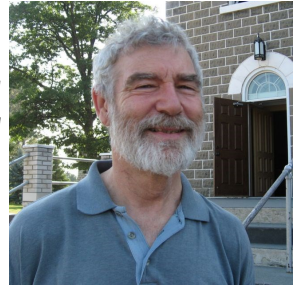
There is no reason that 40 hour, two day concerts of intense, focused intercessory prayer before the Blessed Sacrament for the spiritual renewal of our communities can't be integrated into our disciple-making efforts at the parish or region or diocesan level!!"

**If anyone is interested in running a 40-hour devotion in your parish please contact me.**



# AN OPEN LETTER BY MICHAEL O'BRIEN

*I have long been a fan of the work of Michael O'Brien, a Catholic Author and Artist, who lives and works in Canada. His books in particular have been of huge benefit to me spiritually. I came across this open letter he wrote recently to writers and artists. However, such is the spiritual nature and power of the letter with universal themes of vocation, discernment and trust in God, that I have edited it and reproduced it below for you.*



Dear Friends,

"I began to paint full-time for Christ in 1976. Though I had been practicing as an artist since 1970, when I had my first one-man exhibition at a gallery, I had not until then made a commitment to overtly Christian themes, nor was I pursuing my art as a vocation. To a certain extent I was drifting and dabbling with the idea, but rather daunted by the seeming impossibility of it. Then I made a consecration prayer on the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker, May 1, 1976, quit my job, and threw myself off a cliff so to speak.

As a married man, I have always strived to put the needs of my family first. From the beginning, my wife and I have remained of one mind and heart regarding our life's sacrifice of giving everything for the service of Our Lord and the Church. Without this unity it would have been impossible, and surely would have collapsed in the early stages and at any point along the way. In fact, it was she who, shortly after we were married, first urged me to consider this way of life, and it is she who has never complained about the hardships involved, and she who has buoyed me up whenever our situation looked scary and hopeless.

By putting one's family first I do not mean for a moment that a distinct calling from God should be rejected because the life of a Christian artist in these times probably means material insecurity. **Part of accepting the call, for most people, will demand an ever-deepening trust in divine providence. While divine providence never promises us a comfortable life, it promises us all that we truly need to accomplish our missions in life.**

The way of Christian art as a full-time vocation demands sacrifice, and with sacrifice comes stresses and testing, which are increased when one's family responsibilities are great. That is why it is important for married couples to discern very clearly, together, before launching with full commitment into this vocation. They must understand that their first vocation is always the sacrament of marriage, and the call to art a subsidiary vocation. **P.T.O**

Many of you who have written to me are not married, and yet the essential task remains the same for you: **to seek the will of the Father and the guidance of the Holy Spirit with your whole hearts.** A life of prayer and sacraments—of union with our living savior Jesus—is absolutely essential, if we hope to bear good fruit in the world.

There is always a mystery regarding each person's vocation in the works of the Lord. His creation is not a machine but rather a vast work of art. He is the Father-Creator. "We are God's work of art," says St. Paul. Growth in the vocation is usually a series of countless small steps of faith, usually blind steps, **because what God wants to accomplish most in us is the increase of absolute trust in him,** not so much successes, not even successful works done for his Kingdom. Of course he desires to do this also, but I believe his primary will is accomplished and is always more fruitful, to the degree that we have agreed to be very little instruments in his hands—like children, toddlers, trusting to the point of rashness in his merciful love.

He is a true Father. This means you must go step by step, hand in hand with him, even when you can't feel his hand, asking for each day's graces, and for the specific graces needed for each of your works. Allow him to expand your heart. Allow him to create with the material of your life. **Allow him to make of you more than you think you are.** This long process will contain some sufferings and numerous unexpected joys. Offer every suffering for the restoration of the Church and for the fruitfulness of your work—fruitfulness in the sense of good for other souls.

On a practical level, I can offer you no more advice than this: For more than 30 years as a Christian artist, I have lived in relative poverty, trying to raise our six children on nearly nothing. There were many dark years of testing, yet in hindsight **I see how much God accomplished in my weakness. In any labors of the Lord we need to abandon ourselves into his hands, work hard, pray continuously. Anyone can do this.** What is needed is not cleverness and worldly connections, but the willingness to give everything, even to the point of complete failure.

"Where everything is given, nothing is lacking," wrote St. Bernard of Clairvaux.

**During the most difficult periods of my life God taught me to trust that he was and is doing something through and in me**—even when it seemed hopeless and radically insecure (which was most of the time). In fact those are the times when he can bring about the best growth in us, if we continually renew our willingness to undergo this discipleship of trust. So in all of this, my advice for your work, and your soul, is that you ask for the grace to be perfectly docile to the Holy Spirit, and ask continually for everything you need, both spiritually and materially. Then the doors will open. Not by our will, but by His. (See Philippians 4:12 and 4:19-20. And also Proverbs 3:5-6.) **P.T.O**

**An important leap forward in my growth as a writer and painter** occurred several years ago when I came upon a passage in St. Thomas Aquinas' Summa, in a section on the holy angels. I'm paraphrasing it, but in essence he says that if a work of art is to glorify God and advance the Kingdom, he will send an angel of inspiration to help with the creation of the work.

**But we must ask God for this. He will force nothing upon us.** When I conceived the idea of my first published novel, Father Elijah, I went to our local parish church and consecrated the "impossible, unpublishable" dream to the will of God. I prayed before the Blessed Sacrament every day during the eight months I wrote it. I asked daily for the Holy Spirit, and for an angel of inspiration. I don't think I missed a single day during that period. Strange to say (though not so strange really) the book was the easiest thing I ever wrote. Usually, writing is a hard labor for me. Painting is too, though it's not so complicated a medium as writing.

**Go to the very source. Go to Christ and ask for all that you need,** ask for growth in skill, for the spirit of perseverance, for faith and courage and love. Ask for a spirit of discernment in order to find your way through the fog of our times. Ask for humility and faithfulness, and for the ability to incarnate Truth in beautiful forms. Be a servant of the One who is the source of all Beauty. Be his beloved. Be very little, and trust in this absolutely.

**Avoid at all costs anything in your thoughts or impulses that tends in the direction of ambition** (even disguised as ambition "for the sake of God's kingdom"), self-promotion, manipulation, climbing the ladder of success. "Success" in worldly terms may or may not be what God has in mind for your life, but He surely desires that we each be blessed with the only real success, which is to bear the fruit He desires us to bear. It is not your task to make it happen in worldly terms. It is your task to respond to grace and create works of art that will enrich and bless the lives of others. He will do the rest, according to His holy will.

I live in something of a backwater up here in Canada, and being a non-networking sort of personality, I am fairly ignorant about how to be a practical success. Any "success" that I may appear to have is purely a gift from the Lord. I didn't make a particle of it happen. I had no connections or skills in this regard. It appeared as a great surprise, years ago after decades of trudging blindly across the desert. The desert of this age. I still trudge. I'm still blind. The daily challenge is still to trust Him in all circumstances.

As a dear priest-friend of mine likes to say, "The Lord is a lamp unto my feet, he is not a floodlight illuminating a mile ahead."

**Step by step. Only enough manna for one day at a time. Trust Him. He is with you.**

Michael D. O'Brien



# WITNESSING TO OUR FAITH AT MASS

DIOCESAN LITURGICAL COMMISSION CHRISTCHURCH NEWSLETTER No.12 - MAY 1994

## **Why Do We Come to Mass?**

We come to give worship, praise, and thanksgiving to God who is the creator of all that is, to acknowledge God as our creator and redeemer, on whom we are totally dependent, to worship God who is beyond our comprehension, who made us out of a love beyond our imagining but who wants us to know him and to respond to his love and to enter into the most intimately loving encounter possible to us. We are privileged to be called to come to Mass. it is our duty, our responsibility to God and other people to respond to this call. It is no ordinary, everyday thing we do when we come to Mass. We come to take part in a sacred mystery.

## **Believing And Doing**

We come to Mass because we have FAITH that we are to encounter God in Christ, really present amongst us. At Mass we need to manifest that faith, at all times, by reverence. What we believe and what we do affect each other. When faith is made visible by actions it is strengthened in ourselves, and by our witness in those around us. Following commonly accepted ways of behaving helps us to be conscious of who we are, a sacramental people in union with Christ: and what we are doing, celebrating the passion and death of Christ who is risen, and comes to dwell amongst us.

## **Preparing For Mass**

We should pray for the grace to participate with all our minds and hearts. If we are going to receive Holy Communion, be fasting for one hour. When We Arrive in Church we should show reverence to the Blessed Sacrament by genuflecting, and to the Altar by bowing, greet each other warmly, but quietly, kneel, and begin to collect our thoughts. prepare ourselves to enter into the sacred action that is about to happen.

## **Throughout Mass**

We take part, in bodily movement and gesture and praying aloud, in all that God's faithful people are called upon to say and do. We listen to what God is saying to us in the Scripture readings. We profess our faith, solemnly, in the Creed. We prepare the gifts of bread and wine and associate ourselves with them. God has given us all we have and are, we now give all this back to him to be used in his service. To participate means to be attentive and recollected. It means to allow ourselves to be caught up into awareness of what God in Christ is doing for us. When we participate well, we help those around us to do so; we support each other's concentration.

## **At the Eucharistic Prayer**

We know that Christ has already been present in the worshipping community, in the Scripture readings, in the person of his ordained minister. But now we wait in silent anticipation as the priest invokes the power of the Holy Spirit upon the bread and wine so that they become the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

# WITNESSING TO OUR FAITH AT MASS

Now, after the words of Consecration, Christ comes amongst us with unique fullness and power under the appearances of bread and wine. The once and for all sacrifice of Calvary is re-presented so each of us may appropriate the salvation Christ won for us. Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ we offer our worship to the Father.

## **At The Communion Rite**

During the Communion Rite we are specially called upon to show what we believe by our prayerful recitation of the prayer Jesus himself gave us, by the serious and attentive way we exchange the sign of peace and by the way we participate in the sharing of Communion.

## **Receiving Communion**

This is the moment when each one of us enters into the fullest and most intimate encounter with Christ. It is the time when we are called upon to show in our whole demeanour that we are aware of the wonder and solemnity of what is happening. We need to move deliberately and prayerfully towards the altar. Those of us receiving Communion in the hand need to ... make a throne with our hands on which to receive the King of Kings. When the priest or extraordinary minister says, The Body of Christ, and holds up the host, we must respond AMEN, clearly and firmly. It is our response of faith, our assent that we indeed know this is the Body of Christ. Our whole bearing must reflect the faith and reverence with which we receive this Bread which nourishes us to eternal life.



The words and the reply, "The Body of Christ, the Blood of Christ - Amen" are an exchange of profession of faith. It is good to make some sign of reverence before or after we receive Communion, such as the sign of the Cross. Returning to our places, it should be clear to anyone observing us that we are deeply recollected and conscious that we carry within us the Lord of all things.

## **After Communion**

Sometime of silent prayer should follow Communion. Christ is objectively and really present within us. But how fully we appropriate the love and transforming grace he offers depends on how earnestly we desire his healing and love. This time when we each pray silently to the Lord in our hearts is also a time when we are truly close to all his other faithful people gathered around us, all united to each other in him. There is nothing more bonding than the silent sharing of love.

## **Reverent to the End**

As we began, so we should end. Reverence - for the presence of Christ within us, for the miracle in which we have participated, for the Lord's own house - should mark our bearing and behaviour until we leave the church. Acting with reverence at Mass increases our own faith and deepens our awareness that we are taking part in a sacred mystery. It is also a witness of faith we are all called to give to each other.

# COME HOLY SPIRIT

ARTICLE

Over the past two years many in the Diocese have been praying the prayer to the Holy Spirit.

**Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.**

In December 2020, Archbishop Paul gave the Diocese of Christchurch three priorities: Growing in Holiness, Strengthening our Faith, and Proclaiming the Good News. In this brief article I would like to explore the first priority, Growing in Holiness, and how the Holy Spirit can help us.

A French Priest, Fr Jacques Philippe, wrote a small book entitled "In the School of the Holy Spirit". In it he writes that "Holiness is the work of the Holy Spirit", that we cannot attain Holiness on our own or through our efforts. Our effort is to be "directed to the right end ... (striving) to let God act in us without putting up any resistance to him". This is simple and difficult at the same time. Fr Jacques, quoting St Faustina, states that "shortest road" to holiness is "faithfulness to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit". This is about hearing and discerning "the inner promptings (and movements) of the Holy Spirit" and responding. He goes on to talk about how the Lord will lead us from very small things to much bigger things if we are faithful.

The rest of his book goes into detail about how we might "foster these inspirations" and how we know if they come from God. Fr Jacques gives us 10 ways in his book and these are listed below:

**Practice Praise and Thanksgiving, Desire God's inspiration and ask for them, Resolve to refuse God nothing, Practice Filial and Trusting Obedience, Practice Abandonment, Practice Detachment, Practice Silence and Peace, Persevere Faithfully in Prayer, Examine the Movements of Our Hearts, Open our hearts to a Spiritual Director**

The Church and the World will be renewed by Men and Women striving to grow in Holiness. At Masses for Holy Men and Women the Church prays:

"You renew the Church in every age by raising up men and women outstanding in holiness, living witnesses of Your unchanging love. They inspire us by their heroic lives, and help us by their constant prayers to be the living sign of Your saving power.

I encourage you to read this powerful little book which is available from the Beatitudes Community at Leithfield and I encourage you to go deeper in your prayer life so that the Holy Spirit indeed "may renew the face of the earth".

# CAN YOU HELP?

Currently we have over 250 adorers signed up to Adore Jesus every week at the Perpetual Adoration Chapel. However we still have many hours during the week where there is only one adorer rostered on, especially overnight. We always try to ensure that we have a minimum of two per hour so if something happens there is at least one person in the chapel. Although we have lots of visitors, we don't know how long they stay and how regular they are. On occasions people have forgotten, had a flat tyre or been sick and people have had to stay for an extra hour.

If you feel that you could sign up to adore once a week it would be greatly appreciated. Please fill out the form below and send/email it to the address provided.

The hours that require adorers include:

Sundays (12am-5am, 7am-10am, 12pm, 2pm, 5pm, 6pm, 10pm, 11pm),  
Mondays (2am, 7am, 9am, 12pm, 1pm - 4pm, 9pm, 11pm), Tuesdays (12am-11am, 1pm, 10pm, 11pm), Wednesdays (12am-6am, 9am, 2pm, 5pm, 7pm, 11pm), Thursdays (12am-5am, 9am, 10am, 12pm, 3pm-6pm, 11pm), Fridays (12am-3am, 5am, 7am-10am, 11am-2pm, 7pm, 10pm, 11pm) and Saturdays (2-4am, 7am-2pm), 6pm, 7pm)



## ADORER SIGN UP FORM

NAME: ..... PHONE: .....

E-MAIL: ..... MOBILE: .....

ADDRESS: .....

What day would you like to adore? .....

What time would you like to adore? .....

Are you also available to be a substitute? .....

Please return the completed form to:

Perpetual Adoration, PO Box 4544, Christchurch 8140 or e-mail to [chchadoration@gmail.com](mailto:chchadoration@gmail.com)