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PERPETUAL
EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



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Greetings. Welcome to the first newsletter of 2023. I hope and pray that you have had a blessed and peaceful break and the new year has started well for you. A special thanks to all those who helped out in the chapel over the Christmas break.

2023 will be a big year with the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Adoration Chapel on June 30th. There will be Mass and Adoration with Bishop Michael Gielen that night at St Gregory's and a gala dinner the next night on Saturday July 1st. Our annual retreat will be held on Saturday April 1st at Christ the King Parish Centre.

With Ash Wednesday this year on February 22nd, the theme of this newsletter is Lent. There are two short reflections from Dame Betty O'Dowd that I have found very moving. We also have a further reflection from Dame Betty on Participating in the Mass.

We still have a number of gaps in our roster, especially over night. Last year I wrote an article about why people would be crazy enough to get up at night and pray. Check it out at <https://perpetualadoration.chchcatholic.nz/2022/06/praying-in-the-middle-of-the-night-why/>

Thank you to everyone for your continued dedication as we approach our 10th anniversary. I look forward to seeing you in 2023.

Matt O'Connell

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“The Lord is calling us to deepen our commitment to become missionaries of the Gospel, (and) he is also calling us to deepen our commitment to adoration of the Blessed Sacrament ... be proud of our faith, and, by our witness, promote a culture of the Eucharist so that it would serve to nourish, strengthen and renew the life of all Christians and people in this Diocese” .

Bishop James Conley

THE ROAD TO JERUSALEM

Article

This article from Dame Betty O'Dowd was written for the Christchurch Diocesan INFORM magazine, Issue 44, March 2001.

There is a refreshing bluntness about the way we are greeted in the liturgy of Ash Wednesday at the beginning of every Lenten Season – “remember you are dust and unto dust you will return”! Hopefully, it helps to launch us into the work of Lent, that serious six-week-long re-appraisal of our lives, of our relationship with God, leading us to radical conversion.

According to St Pope John Paul II in his writings about Lent, radical conversion means to grow in love. And that involves responding to the invitation of the Lord to accompany him when he says “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem” (Mk 10:33). It is surely a primary purpose of Lent to remind us that if we want to be his disciples we cannot escape this journey. As we all know well enough, the traditional means for embarking on this journey are still the authentic ones - “prayer, fasting and penance, as well as almsgiving, that is, sharing what we have with the needy”.

But it is only prayer that will make the rest possible, that will bring about the growth in love, the radical conversion. Prayer will bring us face to face with the crucified Lord and allow those sorrowful, loving eyes to look deep into our own hearts. “After having contemplated the face of the crucified Lord how can we not then recognize him and serve him in the sorrowful and abandoned?” (St John Paul II). This he sees as a measure of our growth in love, that we cease to be able to close our eyes in the face of individuals and peoples burdened by suffering and poverty. The urgency of this is underlined by his reminder that from the prophet Amos to the Apostle Paul, the Scriptures make it clear that God refuses “worship isolated from life, liturgy separated from justice, prayer detached from daily efforts, faith devoid of works”. The absolute necessity of forgiveness and reconciliation is key for real personal and social renewal. Forgiveness is one of the highest and most painful forms of charity. We have to be willing to be reconciled in love with those who have hurt or offended us, it is an indispensable condition of radical conversion. “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you” applies also to the smaller wrongs and petty injustices we perceive ourselves to suffer in our ordinary, day-to-day lives. Only a heart reconciled with Christ and our neighbour is able to take upon itself the misery present in the world and enter into his universal love and compassion for it. This is what the Lenten journey on the road to Jerusalem is about.

RECOVERING OUR IDENTITY THIS LENT

This article from Dame Betty O'Dowd was written for the INFORM magazine, Issue 60, March 2005. It was written in the middle of the Year of the Eucharist.

Article

Amongst other things, Lent is a time to reflect on what matters in our lives in the light of our Catholic faith. What better way to do this than to think about why St Pope John Paul II dedicated 2004/2005 as the Year of the Eucharist, and what response we need to make? Doing this involves us in going to the roots of our identity as Catholics. It is the Eucharist that makes the Church, the Eucharist that is the sacramental presence of the risen Christ among us, sharing his life with us, the reason for the Church's existence.

It is a matter of common observation that in the western world at least, our sense of Catholic identity has been seriously eroded, most importantly by the atrophying of our sense of sacramentality. God's sacramental presence in the Church, in Christ, is bringing about the new creation, in which all things will be restored to the Father. The sacraments of the Church, above all the Eucharist, are God's masterpieces, the gift of his Holy Spirit to the Church. They make Christ present in a unique way.

It was to focus our attention on the wonder of the Eucharist that St Pope John Paul II proclaimed the Year of the Eucharist. He had already addressed this in his encyclical THE CHURCH OF THE EUCHARIST, in 2003. In it he also spoke of the shadows that had obscured our understanding of the most holy Eucharist and the need to dispel these if we are to realise our identity and fulfil our mission as Catholics, who are the people of the Eucharist.

As St Pope John Paul II said, the reality of the Eucharist should fill us with awe. We should be overwhelmed with gratitude that we have been enabled by our baptism to enter into this sacred mystery of Christ's presence with us. We could then want to exclaim with the psalmist, "too wonderful for me this knowledge, too high beyond my reach".

Instead, too often we trivialise and "domesticate" what happens at Mass. We reduce it in our understanding and behaviour to what we can feel comfortable and cosy with, as if it were a community-building exercise. St John Paul II described this particular "shadow" by saying: "At times one encounters an extremely reductive understanding of the Eucharistic mystery. Stripped of its sacrificial meaning, it is celebrated as if it were simply a fraternal banquet".

What follows from this? First, as the Pope reminded us, we must recover our sense of awe at what happens at Mass. We must recall that we come to Mass to offer WORSHIP to God, our creator and the creator of all that is, to give thanks to him for our existence and the salvation He is offering us in His love. We know by our faith that a sacred mystery, not of our making and beyond our grasp, is taking place, and that we are privileged to participate in it.

Remembering all this, surely it matters to give witness to our faith, in our body language, in manifesting recollection and reverence for what we are about when we come to Mass. It could be a practical way of responding to the Holy Father's urging to remember the transcendent mystery being celebrated.

REFLECTION

ST PATRICK

The feast of St Patrick always happens in the middle of Lent. Last year I wrote a small reflection which I share with you now below.

Over the years St Patrick's day has become known as a day to celebrate all things Irish with a pint of Guinness, a full Irish breakfast, wearing something green, Irish dancing and much more. And rightly so but it is also good for us to reflect on and celebrate the life of St Patrick and what God was able to accomplish in and through one man who gave his life to Jesus Christ.

Pope Benedict XVI once said that the **true reformers of society throughout history have been the Saints**. When we reflect on the person of St Patrick, we realise that the source of all he did was Jesus Christ. In fact, St Patrick himself wrote that **"who am I Lord, that you worked through me with such divine power"**? The real genius of St Patrick, then, was that he responded to the call of Jesus on his life, he trusted God deeply and he continued to strive, throughout his whole life, to remain close to Jesus and to let God work in and through him unhindered.

This one life has borne abundant fruit: the evangelisation of Ireland, the sending of countless missionaries around the world, the raising up of many Irish saints, and so much more. That fruit continues still today. Here in New Zealand, we think of the many priests from Ireland who left their homeland to come to New Zealand and minister to our forebears. St Patrick anticipated this when he wrote **"he gave me the great grace that through me many peoples should be reborn in God"**. On this great day let us ask St Patrick for his intercession that we too might respond as he did to the call of the Lord upon our lives.

REFLECTION BY SHERRY WEDDELL

REFLECTION

"In Adoration I have pondering the crucial role of the living, saving, Presence of the glorified Jesus Christ in the midst of all our Catholic communities should make right now at this time in the Church's history. So many of our baptized people have no sense of a personal God and are leaving in droves and yet the risen Lord himself is substantially present 24/7 in our midst on the altar in our Perpetual Adoration chapel, and in tabernacles in our churches around the diocese – active and interceding, pouring out his graces, and his Spirit, ready to love, heal, inspire, and guide all who approach him.



Even the majority of "practicing" Catholics behave as though His living, saving Presence is an optional footnote at best, an outdated "devotion" suitable for a few of us hyper-pious lay people. The Lord Jesus is always the living centre and source of all redemptive responses to the Church's problems. No genuine long-term solutions ever emerge when we minimize Jesus in our imagination, lives, pastoral vision, and practice.

Right now, God is raising up the apostles and saints of the 21st century whom He will use to respond to the challenges of our difficult time in ways you and I can't even imagine.

Many of them are invisible to us and to their families and friends right now. Their destiny and ultimate impact of their obedience is probably hidden even from themselves and will only be revealed one step at a time as they walk in obedience to Jesus in the midst of his Church.

But they are among us now and some are adorers in our Adoration chapel. It is entirely possible for each and every baptized person who has been anointed for mission by Jesus Christ himself – in different ways - to become one of those seminal agents of spiritual awakening. But only if we each personally seek union with Jesus and to walk in the obedience of faith. The question is always: Will we become the "generation of saints" for this time, in this place, among these people?

The beginning of a New Year is a great time to spend some time with our Eucharistic Lord and offer yourself and 2023 to him, daring to ask him to do great things in you and through you for His Kingdom. **It is our response to God's grace, our openness, love, obedience, and spiritual daring that will determine whether or not 2023 will not turn out to be a pivotal turning point in the life of the Church".**

PARTICIPATING IN THE MASS

ARTICLE

This article below was written by Dame Betty for the Christchurch Diocesan Liturgical Commission Newsletter (21) and was published in July 2001.

The liturgical changes proposed by the Council Fathers at Vatican II had only one purpose – to deepen the participation in mind and heart of all the faithful in the Church's liturgy and particularly in the celebration of Sunday Mass. (Sixty) years on, some things have been achieved. Lay people are audibly active in the celebration through their responses and visibly through the ministry of some as readers and others as extraordinary ministers, when required, to help distribute Holy Communion. But it is far from clear that deepened understanding of mind and heart has taken place.

Given the nature of the sacred mystery we are engaged in at Sunday Mass, the encounter between the risen Christ and his people, it is not surprising that the task of understanding better, to participate more fully, is and always will be, ongoing.

What can we do to help ourselves to participate more fully?

1. Regain our awareness of the sacred

When we gather for Sunday Mass we do so as members of a worshipping community to give God our Father and Creator the praise and gratitude that belongs to him. Christ's offering of himself is made present so we can associate ourselves with it and receive the salvation it offers us. The risen Christ himself becomes sacramentally present when the bread and wine are consecrated to become his body and blood. It is this real presence of Christ we receive in Holy Communion to increase the share in his life we were given at our Baptism. A miracle takes place, something beyond human power to bring about. The assembly at Sunday Mass is thus different in kind from a gathering of the same people for a parish meeting.

This should be evident in our body language, in the tone of our prayed responses, in the depth of our silences. For example:

- we genuflect to the Lord in the reserved sacrament in the tabernacle when we enter,
- all those who minister are recollected and reverent in their movements.

Our body language reflects our faith and witnesses it to those around us.

This remains true when there may be numbers of non-Catholics present as at funerals; we continue to evidence our awareness of the sacred.

2. Remember the unique nature of the liturgy

It is given to us. The action at Mass is God's action. It is a gift we receive from God through Christ in the Church. It does not belong to us and we cannot adapt it to suit some perceived local need or sense of relevance. We need to adapt to it, allow ourselves to be caught up into the love Christ shares with his Father and their Spirit, for us and all his people.

The Church is the source and guardian of our Sunday liturgy. The liturgical rites of the Church exist to serve the sacred mysteries actualised in the liturgy. Neither priests nor people have the power to change them in words or actions. To do so distracts the attention of the assembly and deprives them of what rightfully belongs to them, God's gift to them. This is why, for example:

- we cannot rightfully use any lectionary that has not been approved by the Holy See for use in the liturgy,
- a talk or reflection by a lay person should not be given at the time that belongs to the homily,
- the second Rite of Reconciliation needs to take place separately from Sunday Mass.

3. Maintain the distinction between Priest and people

This is crucial to our understanding of what happens at Mass and therefore to our participation. All the baptised share in the one priesthood of Christ. All are called to unite their lives with him, to serve him in others, to spread the Good News he brought. To empower us to do this, Christ promised to be with us always, to stay with us, not to leave us orphans. He fulfils this promise above all in the Mass when he becomes sacramentally present to us.

PARTICIPATING IN THE MASS

ARTICLE

The ordained priest has been given the power to bring this about. No lay person can do this. We cannot keep a clear grasp of what it means to have and receive the Real Presence of Christ among us at Mass unless we hold fast to this vital, distinctive power of the ordained minister. It is a sacred power given for the service of the baptised who are in the front line of the Church's life. To blur the distinction is to distort our respective identities. So we need to remember for example:

- the Minister of the Eucharist is the priest, who is also the Ordinary Minister of Holy Communion. Lay people should only help to distribute Holy Communion in the absence of ordained ministers to do this or when there are such large numbers of the faithful present the Eucharistic celebration would be unduly prolonged. When they do so they become Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion,
- Extraordinary Ministers should thus receive Holy Communion after the Priest, like the rest of the faithful, not along with him.
- only the celebrating priest(s) can pronounce any part of the Eucharistic Prayer including the Doxology at its conclusion.

Of its nature, the Liturgy is a sacred ritual bringing about a divine intervention, which gives our lives a dimension we could not attain by our own power. Our part is to accept what is given humbly, joyfully, gratefully – to choose to allow ourselves to be lifted up. This is the necessary condition of participation.



DATES FOR 2023

As I mentioned in the editorial, 2023 is the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Perpetual Adoration Chapel. Here are our planned events to celebrate this anniversary.

Annual Retreat Day - Saturday April 1st

Our annual retreat day for adorers is going to be held on the above date at Christ the King Parish Centre. The day will start with Mass at 9am. There will be four speakers during the day speaking on various aspects of Prayer and Holy Week. These speakers include Sr Lauren Butler from Carmel, Marianne Daly and Alex Chia from the Diocesan Office. Lunch will be included and the cost for the day will be \$25. The Second Hand Catholic Bookshop will also be open all day. Register by contacting Matt on chchadoration@gmail.com

Anniversary Mass and Adoration - Friday June 30th

The Perpetual Adoration Chapel opened on Sunday June 30th after the 5pm Mass. To celebrate 10 years, we will join Bishop Michael for Mass at St Gregory's at 7pm on Friday 30th. This will be followed by Adoration in the Church until 11pm.

Gala Dinner - Saturday July 1st

We will have a dinner at Addington Race Course to celebrate 10 years. It will be a chance for all adorers who have been part of the roster over the past 10 years to come along for a time of connection and celebration. Bishop Barry's brother, Fr Allan Jones SM, will offer some words of reflection and it is hoped that Bishop Michael will also be in attendance. Tickets will be approx. \$60 and include a two course dinner. Please contact me for tickets and more details.



CAN YOU HELP?

Currently we have over 240 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-6am, 7am-10am, 12pm, 2pm, 9pm-11pm), Mondays (12am, -6am, 7am, 9am, 12pm, 1pm - 6pm, 9pm), Tuesdays (12am-10am, 1pm, 9pm-11pm), Wednesdays (12am-6am, 9am, 10pm-11pm), Thursdays (12am -5am, 8am-12pm, 3pm), Fridays (12am-5am, 7am-10am, 11am-5pm, 10pm, 11pm) and Saturdays (2-4am, 7am-2pm), 5pm-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