



From the Pastor
2nd Sunday of Advent - A
December 4, 2022

ORATIONS: EUCHARISTIC ADORATION. In part 17 of my series on *The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church* US Bishops' document, I'm reflecting on the 1st of the 7 prayers used to end *Benediction*. Past articles on this *Revival*, the whole document, and a free study guide, are on our Parish

website: easeton.net; click on *National Eucharistic Revival Bulletin Articles*.

Eucharistic Adoration - Closing Prayer #1 of 7

*Lord Jesus Christ, you gave us the Eucharist
as the memorial of your suffering and death.
May our worship of this sacrament
of your body and blood help us
to experience the salvation you won for us
and the peace of the kingdom
where you live with the Father and the
Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

HOW CAN WE 'WORSHIP' A SACRAMENT?

Contrary to the charge often leveled against *Catholics*, that we 'worship' *Angels* and *Saints*, statues and icons, and the 'Queen of Heaven' who was a pagan fertility goddess to whom ancient Israelites offered sacrifice and worshipped [Jeremiah 7:18] - we **ONLY worship God**. However, we do revere, honor, and respect our *Blessed Mother*, [her title, 'Queen of Heaven,' has NOTHING to do with a pagan goddess!], the *Angels* and *Saints*. And while we celebrate *Sacraments*, we **DO WORSHIP** one: the *Most Blessed Sacrament*, because it is *Christ's Real Presence* par excellence! A timely analogy may help explain how this is true.

Christmas customs can deeply touch us. Some serenely smile and get teary-eyed as the *Christ Child's statue* is carried to the *Crèche*, as is our Parish custom, in a *Candlelight Procession* during *Christmas Mass*. Stony hearts melt as children piously play their parts in our *Epiphany Pageant*. Some are even moved by *The Radio City Christmas Spectacular's* live *Nativity Scene*. However, if our hearts and minds are *more* moved by *Jesus* represented in a resin or plastic, ceramic, wood or golden statue - or in a roleplay - than by His *Real Presence*, in the form of bread and wine, in the *Eucharist* - something is terribly wrong!

When the *Risen Lord* called the then-fanatical *Pharisee Saul*, who was hellbent on destroying the infant *Church*, Jesus said, "*Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?*" He said, "*Who are you, sir?*" The reply came, "*I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.*" [Acts 9:4-5] Then *Saul*, whose name was changed to *Paul, Saint Paul*, was baptized and came to understand how the *Church* is the *Body of Christ* present in the world. And, in time, he came to believe that the *Bread* and *Wine*, blessed, broken and shared, is also *Christ's Body* and *Blood*. The *National Eucharistic Revival* seeks to help *us* capture or re-capture, discover or re-discover, understand or better understand, the mystery of *Christ's Real Presence* in the *Eucharist*.

Again, as I said in a previous bulletin article, when we go to a museum or art show, we miss out on so much - unless we have a knowledgeable guide with a trained eye who can help us 'see' the 'whole picture.' The same is true of the *Church's Sacraments, Rites, and dogmas*. To help us 'see' more deeply into the full meaning of the *Eucharist*, the *Church* did our 'homework' for us! She scoured *Sacred Scripture* for every reference to the *Blessed Sacrament* - how it was *prefigured* in the *Old Testament* - *lived out* in the *New Testament* - *developed* into our 2,000-year-old *Tradition*. However, we must now do our 'homework' - by studying, reflecting on, and actively partaking in the *Sacraments* and other *Rites* - to reap their tremendous blessings.

This one oration summarizes almost every aspect of our *Eucharistic* theology. It references it as: a *Memorial* of *Christ's suffering* and *death*; as the *True, Real Presence* of His *Sacred Body* and *Precious Blood*; as the source of *Salvation* or the saving grace by which *God* redeems us from our sins; as the bond of *Peace* that can unite all those who receive it into one *Body* and one *Spirit*; and as the safest, surest road into the *Kingdom* where we will be forever joined to the *Most Blessed Trinity*: the *Father, Son* and *Holy Spirit*.

As we prepare in this *Advent* time to welcome or re-welcome *Christ* into our minds and hearts, our homes and activities, make receiving and visiting Him in the *Eucharist* a priority. And don't confuse 'representations' of *Christ* to His *Real Presence*!

In His holy Name,

Rev. Thomas J. Serafin, KCHS