



*This is a sample chapter
from Pocket Guide to Adoration,
a new book by Fr. Josh Johnson
and Ascension that is coming soon.*

CHAPTER 1

AN INVITATION TO ADORATION

Archbishop Fulton Sheen was once asked which saint motivated him to commit so much of his time to Jesus Christ in Eucharistic Adoration. He responded that his inspiration was an unnamed Chinese martyr.

Like Poland, Mexico, and many other places around the world, China was infiltrated by Communist soldiers in the early twentieth century. In a small village in northern China was a devout community of faithful Catholics. The local villagers were uneasy with the arrival of the Communist soldiers. However, after living among them for a few months, they began to believe that the soldiers' presence would pose minimal threat to the village.

Then one day everything changed. The Communist soldiers stormed into the local Catholic school and began to destroy all of the sacred artwork, crucifixes, and statues. They ordered the children to throw away all of their religious objects, including their rosaries, medals, and holy cards. All of the children submitted to their demands except one.

In the back of the classroom, a young girl peacefully protested their unjust demands by remaining calmly in her seat. Enraged by her defiance, the soldiers commanded that she be brought to the local Catholic church along with her father so they could make an example out of her family in front of the whole community. The locals filed into the small church as the young girl and her father were forced to the front of the church. The soldiers asked the girl's father if he really believed that the Eucharist was the true and substantial presence of Jesus Christ. Unashamed of Christ, the man boldly proclaimed his belief in the words of Jesus about the Bread of Life: "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life" (John 6:54). Almost immediately after he stated his faith, he was taken away from the church by the soldiers. Most likely, the girl's father was never seen again.

The soldiers began to desecrate the Eucharistic Communion hosts in the tabernacle. They threw the Blessed Sacrament onto the ground and began to stomp on the sacramental Body of Christ. They also imprisoned the parish priest inside the church. Communist soldiers with deadly weapons prowled around.

Confined to his makeshift prison cell in the church, the priest was stunned when he noticed the return of the young girl whose father had been taken away. The little child sneaked past the guards and reverently made her

way to the sanctuary where the Eucharistic Communion hosts were scattered all over the floor. The priest gazed at the child as she knelt down in adoration before the desecrated Eucharistic hosts. After she spent time adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, she leaned toward the Eucharist and received Holy Communion directly from the floor onto her tongue.* Upon eating the Body and Blood of Jesus in the Eucharistic host, she spent a few moments in thanksgiving prayer and then stealthily left the church without being noticed by the soldiers.

The next day, the village priest noticed the young girl sneak into the church again. As before, she spent time on her knees in silent adoration of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. She looked at our Lord with love in her eyes, and then with utmost reverence she received into her mouth another desecrated Eucharistic host from the floor of the sanctuary.

This child continued her practice every day for the next month. After she had spent more than thirty days cultivating her relationship with Jesus under these dangerous circumstances, the priest witnessed

* This is a very extraordinary way of receiving Holy Communion. Under normal circumstances, it is not permissible for lay persons to receive the Eucharist by themselves. The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* 160 reads in part, "It is not permitted for the faithful to take the consecrated Bread or the sacred chalice by themselves and, still less, to hand them on from one to another" (uscgb.org/).

a horrific scene in the church. As the young girl approached the sanctuary, she accidentally made a noise loud enough for the soldiers to hear. A soldier rushed into the church, armed with a gun, and fatally wounded her. Though she was dying, she still managed to crawl to the last remaining Eucharistic Communion host that was on the floor and received the Lord into her body as she took her last breath in the sanctuary.

Fulton Sheen reflected that if this young Chinese martyr could dedicate consistent time with Jesus Christ in Eucharistic Adoration under those dangerous circumstances, then how could he not spend intentional time with Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament as well?¹

Like Fulton Sheen, I too have been inspired by this young girl's witness to cultivate an authentic relationship with Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. My first encounter with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration was on June 26, 2004, at a charismatic youth conference, Steubenville South. I remember my experience as if it were yesterday. It was around 8:00 PM, and I was surrounded by thousands of other teenagers who were praising God at the top of their lungs. Some were on their knees crying, and others were lying prostrate with their faces on the floor. This was a unique experience for me because up until this point, I thought that the Eucharist was just a symbol of Jesus—not the true, real, and substantial presence of Christ.

The Catholic Church teaches that the Eucharistic Communion host, the Blessed Sacrament, is the actual Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ. Even though the appearance of bread and wine remain, the substance is sacramentally changed into the real and true presence of Christ. In the Sacred Scriptures, Jesus preached to his disciples and said to them,

I am the bread of life. ... If any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh. ... Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life. ... My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. (John 6:35, 51, 53-56)

Eucharistic Adoration is an extended period of prayer with Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. In his encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, St. John Paul II wrote,

It is pleasant to spend time with him, to lie close to his breast like the Beloved Disciple ... and to feel the infinite love present in his heart. If in our time Christians must be distinguished above all by the “art of prayer,” how can we not feel a renewed need to spend time ... in silent adoration, in heartfelt love before Christ present in the Most Holy Sacrament?²

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is more than a private devotion; it is a liturgical action. The liturgy is never focused on ourselves. Liturgical prayer is always

oriented toward God, so Eucharistic Adoration should draw those who adore Christ in the Blessed Sacrament outside of themselves and toward the face of Christ. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is an extension of the Mass and is meant to direct our devotion back toward the Mass as the “source and summit” of our faith.³

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI describes Adoration as a tangible experience of love because we are spending intentional time embracing God with a kiss, mouth to mouth.⁴ I like to use a slightly different analogy, the analogy of going to a nice restaurant and ordering a juicy, sizzling, buttery steak. Imagine the waiter placing the steak on the table right in front of you. The more you look at the steak, the more you want to experience its taste in your mouth. The same applies to Eucharistic Adoration. The more time we spend face-to-face with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, the more we will long for a deeper intimacy with our Lord in Holy Communion at Mass. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is an invitation from our Lord for us to experience a spiritual union and a sacramental communion with Christ.⁵

This was certainly the case for me. At the Steubenville conference, the bishop processed through the crowd of thousands of teenagers with the Eucharist in a monstrance. He was flanked by two altar servers carrying candles to shine light on the presence of Christ. Another altar server carried a thurible, a tool

that permeates the air with the smoke and smell of incense in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. As the bishop came closer to me, I praised God with the thousands of teenagers and worship leaders. During this time of prayer, I recognized Jesus in the Eucharistic Communion host for the first time in my life. I can only explain my belief in the true, real, and substantial presence of Christ in the Eucharist as a gift from God.

In the midst of worshipping the Eucharistic Jesus, I felt God drawing me to himself, gently transforming me. I knelt down and began to worship Christ because I realized that Jesus was the One for whom I had been searching to satisfy the empty ache in my heart. This recognition was immediate, as if a spiritual light had been turned on: Jesus was the One who would fulfill my deepest desires and quench my thirst. In Adoration, I realized that Jesus had been patiently waiting for me in the Eucharist—patiently waiting while I thrashed around in all directions, “lookin’ for love in all the wrong places,” as the lyrics of the old song put it.⁶ This, in fact, was the first glimpse I had of the love of Christ—unconditional and unending in its patience.

At this moment of true spiritual awakening, I asked him what his will was for my life. Expecting a life plan or specific instructions, what in fact I perceived were the words “I love you”—not “I used to love you before you began to live a life of sin.” Nor did I perceive Jesus saying, “I will love

you again once you get your stuff together.” In this very moment, in all of my shame, pain, hurts, wounds, sins, and imperfections, the first words I perceived from Jesus were “I love you.” These words parallel those of St. John in the Bible where he proclaims, “He first loved us” (1 John 4:19).

At the core of the human heart, we all desire to be loved unconditionally. After this initial experience of love, I knew that I wanted more. Like the young Chinese martyr, I decided I would go back to visit Jesus in the Eucharist over and over again. I would spend intentional and consistent time with him in the Blessed Sacrament.

After the conference, I researched and located a perpetual Adoration chapel in my diocese. I was filled with excitement as I planned my first visit with our Lord in Adoration following the conference. Upon my arrival at this local chapel, I noticed a number of stark differences between this sacred place and my encounter with our Lord at the Steubenville conference. At Steubenville we experienced Adoration late at night, and the lights were dimly set. When I went to adore Jesus at the local chapel, it was early in the afternoon. The sun was shining, and the chapel was bright with fluorescent lights. At Steubenville there were thousands of teenagers singing praises to God. In this chapel there were two elderly ladies sitting in complete stillness before the Eucharist. At Steubenville a powerful smell of incense permeated my senses from the thurible. In this local chapel I smelled cheap perfume.

Nonetheless, Jesus was still Jesus whether he was at the youth conference or in this small chapel, and I was not going to let anything stop me from spending time with the love of my life—that is, until I knelt down and realized I did not know what I was supposed to do during Adoration. There was no manual on what to do or how much time I should spend with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. I tried to focus my attention on the Eucharistic host, but my thoughts were all over the place. Sometimes my thoughts were on my knees, which were hurting from kneeling so much, and other times my mind was fixed on the elderly person who was sitting in the first chair in front of the Blessed Sacrament. When my mind wasn't on my pain or the other people in the chapel, it was fixed on the clock. I recall counting, "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten." After my mind wandered all over the place, I left the chapel feeling disappointed.

Was I supposed to perceive God's voice as I did in my experience in Eucharistic Adoration at the youth conference? Was there something wrong with me? Was I not praying right? Did I stay too long or leave too early? Why did I think about myself in that short period of time? Why was I so concerned with the prayer life of the other people in the chapel? What's the point of Adoration? How does God want me to spend my time when I am in the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament?

As I have continued this practice of Eucharistic Adoration, I have come to realize that the time we spend with Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament is less about methods and techniques and more about cultivating our relationship with the Lord. We cultivate that relationship by focusing on ourselves less and intentionally focusing on the sanctification of the human race through the liturgical action of exposition. However, there may be seasons when methods of prayer can be helpful aids for our relationship with Jesus, and this is why I am presenting this pocket guide to Adoration to you.

In our human experience, we cultivate our most meaningful relationships when we are intentional and consistent with the time and the attention we give to the other person. It is common for human relationships to begin with seasons of speaking and listening. We begin by telling others about ourselves, and then we ask others questions about their thoughts, feelings, and desires. We ponder and chew on what the other person shares with us, like the Blessed Virgin who “kept all these things, pondering them in her heart” (Luke 2:19). This is what our Faith commonly refers to as meditation. While the goal of non-Christian meditation may be to enter deeper into our own self or reach nothingness, Christian meditation involves the use of our thoughts, imagination, emotions, and desire in our quest for God (CCC 2708).

As our relationships grow, there will be times when words are no longer necessary. We simply enjoy being in the presence of the ones we love. Couples who have been married for over seventy years witness to this reality. They have the ability to sit at a restaurant, sip soup with each other, and occasionally gaze at each other. They sit face-to-face without saying any words before they resume the sipping of their soup. Likewise, as we mature in our relationship with God, our prayer transitions into seasons of simply looking at God as the Divine gazes at us. This is what the spiritual masters call contemplative prayer. St. Teresa of Avila says, “Contemplative prayer ... is nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us” (CCC 2709).

Just as there is progression in human relationships, there ought to be progression in our relationship with Jesus Christ. In the beginning, we are prone to a lot of speaking. We share with God our thoughts, feelings, and desires through the gestures we make, the songs we sing, the prayers we recite, and the words we write. Hopefully, we also spend time trying to listen to the voice of the lover of our souls. Without speaking *and* listening, it would be difficult to mature in any relationship.

Archbishop Fulton Sheen encouraged people to bring the Sacred Scriptures with them when they spent time with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration. In our prayer

before the Blessed Sacrament, we are able to look at the real, true, and substantial presence of Christ, face-to-face. When we bring the written Word, the Sacred Scriptures, with us to Adoration, we are able to see his face in the Blessed Sacrament and also to listen well to his voice in the Holy Bible.

The Catholic Church highlights *lectio divina* as a normative model for approaching the Word of God. It's important to note that all of the biblical text is the inspired Word of God that opens us to God's self-revelation. The Second Vatican Council's document *Dei Verbum* states,

For in the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven meets His children with great love and speaks with them; and the force and power in the word of God is so great that it stands as the support and energy of the Church, the strength of faith for her sons, the food of the soul, the pure and everlasting source of spiritual life.⁷

In the twelfth century, Guigo II, a Carthusian monk, wrote a letter to another monk on how to practice *lectio divina*. *Lectio divina* means "divine reading." Guigo's work is about praying the Scriptures and is based on the vision of Jacob's ladder in Genesis 28:10-17. Guigo titled his letter "The Ladder from Earth to Heaven."⁸

Guigo teaches that there are four steps to *lectio divina*: read, meditate, pray, and contemplate. I have found it helpful to add a fifth step, called "resolve." This is based on the

writings of some of the Doctors of the Church. It is a call to action after our prayer.

In my experience, the steps of *lectio divina* also illuminate the standard human experience of cultivating a healthy relationship through listening, speaking, and attentively gazing at the face of the one we love as the beloved delightfully gazes into our eyes.

Here is a basic introduction:

1. **Read:** What does the Scripture text say in and of itself?
2. **Meditate:** What does the Scripture say to me?
3. **Pray:** Converse with the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ about what the Scriptures are saying to me. Acknowledge my thoughts, feelings, and desires about what the Scriptures are saying to me and relate them to God. If the Scriptures bring to mind a particular person or an event, share that with God.
4. **Contemplate:** Allow myself to be in the stillness of the gaze of Christ as I look at him.
5. **Resolve:** What concrete action will I take in my daily life in response to *lectio divina*?

Our time in prayer isn't just about saying a bunch of words out loud or writing them on paper in vain. In our time of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, we need to be aware whom we are speaking with and what we are talking about. When we are in an Adoration chapel, we are in the presence of a real person, Jesus Christ. Therefore, when we are speaking with our Lord, we need to be aware of what we are saying to him. St. Teresa of Avila, a Doctor of the Church, advised us not to address our words to God while we are thinking of something else.⁹ The spiritual tradition of the Church encourages us to pray with attention and intention.

When I was a young child, my mother used to always say to me, "Boy, you better look at me when I am talking to you." She said this because she knew that if I was not focused on her face, then I was not listening to her voice. Vocal prayer can help us remain attentive to the one we are communicating with during our time in Adoration with the Sacred Scriptures.

Vocal prayer is what many of the monks practiced in the early Church. They spoke out loud when they read the Scriptures, meditated on the Word of God, and shared their thoughts, feelings, and desires with Christ in prayer. This practice of praying out loud helps us to remain focused on God. In the beginning of our spiritual life, if we start our prayer time in silence, we can often drift off into daydreaming or thinking of the concerns of our day.

Before we know it, our entire period of prayer slips away, spent in the presence of God but not present to God.

Praying out loud can certainly be a helpful tool for the person who is attempting to be present to God while in the presence of the Eucharistic Lord. However, it is not advisable to pray out loud in an Adoration chapel if other people are also there. Your audible prayer may be a gift for you in your relationship with Jesus, but it would be an unnecessary distraction for the other people in the chapel.

Yet vocal prayer is encouraged during the first three steps of *lectio divina*. Vocal prayer can be spoken out loud or written on paper.¹⁰ If it is not suitable to pray out loud during these stages, then try practicing vocal prayer through writing. This means that as we read from the Word of God, we literally write down on paper the passage that stuck out for us, our meditation, and the thoughts, feelings, and desires we share with God. This practice is not the same as prayer journaling, which involves analyzing our conversation with God. Writing down our meditations is simply meant to help us remain attentive to the face of Jesus while in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

Following the period of vocal prayer, whether audible or written, the adorer is invited to simply gaze at the face of Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration as Jesus gazes at the adorer's face. If we feel strong emotions arise in

our heart for the lover of our soul during this time, that is beautiful. We may find ourselves uttering ejaculatory prayers like “Jesus, my Lord and my God” or “Jesus, I trust in you” or “Jesus, I love you so much.”

What if we don’t feel anything during prayer before the Blessed Sacrament? If we feel nothing at all during this time of prayer and it is dry, that is also beautiful. The goal is to adore Jesus and not to be concerned with what we perceive to be happening or not happening.

If, during this period of simply gazing at each other, we find that our mind is wandering off into occasional distractions, then we are encouraged to return to the vocal prayer of reading, meditating, and praying out loud or on paper.

If the Holy Spirit is drawing us to meditate or to contemplate and we try to force ourselves to pray a different way, we can open ourselves up to distractions. It may be best to pause during our time of prayer and ask the Holy Spirit for guidance on how he wants us to spend our time with Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Depending on what is best for our sanctification, the Spirit of God may draw us to different seasons of prayer. Some seasons may be dominated by vocal prayer and minimal contemplative prayer, and others may be dominated by the contemplative experience and not the meditative practices. The way we discern where we are being invited to rest in prayer is by paying attention

to the interior peace we feel while meditating or gazing. We also discern by examining the virtues that are being cultivated in our thoughts, words, and actions outside of our time spent in prayer.

It is important to note that some distractions in prayer are inevitable, but we can take concrete steps to avoid a number of the people, places, and things that may vie for our attention while we spend time with Christ. Reorienting all of the lesser goods to the greatest good, God, is what the saints did who preceded us in our walk toward eternity.

St. Bernard was once asked by a farmer why he wasn't looking at the beautiful countryside. He told the farmer he was trying to avoid distractions in prayer. The farmer informed Bernard that he never experienced distractions in prayer. Bernard told him, "I don't believe it. Now let me make a bargain with you. If you can say the 'Our Father' without one distraction, I'll give you this mule I'm riding. But if you don't succeed, you must come with me and be a monk." The farmer consented and recited: 'Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name...' then he stopped praying and asked Bernard, "Does that include the saddle and the bridle too?"¹¹

It is important for us to be aware of the many avoidable distractions that may arise during our time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

In our effort to show Jesus proper reverence in the Eucharist, we are invited to kneel down before him if our body permits us. However, we need to be aware of our body's ability to kneel and for how long, which is unique for each one of us. Kneeling down before the Blessed Sacrament is a liturgical posture of worship and a beautiful gesture of our love for Jesus. It is also an ascetical practice that can help us remember what we are doing and who we are speaking with in Adoration. (Ascetical practices are spiritual exercises of self-denial to aid disciples in their growth in virtue.) However, if we notice that we are becoming too focused on the discomfort of kneeling, it is a good sign that we are being invited to sit down or lie prostrate for a while during prayer.

On the other hand, it may be difficult to remain focused on our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament if we are *too* comfortable. So while it could be helpful to sit down in a chair or lie prostrate, if we are too comfortable then we may do what happens normally when we are comfortable: daydream or fall asleep.

Being attentive to our location could also be helpful. Some find sitting or kneeling toward the front of the chapel more conducive to gazing on the face of Christ in the Eucharist and to listening to the voice of Christ in the Sacred Scriptures. Quite often when we sit behind other people in an Adoration chapel, we might be tempted to take our attention away from God and reorient it toward them. Before

we know it, we are comparing our experience in prayer to what we perceive theirs to be. To avoid comparison, we can find a location in the Adoration chapel that helps us cultivate uninterrupted intimacy with Christ.

Another near occasion of distraction during our time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is not a person but a thing. This thing is often a lot closer to us than most people are. If we lose this thing, we may be tempted to lose our cool. Of course I am speaking about our cell phones. For some, bringing their phone to the Adoration chapel might be a “near occasion of grace.” In other words, it might be a bridge for them to grow closer to Christ, as it can provide them with passages from Scripture, reflections from saints, devotional prayers, and sacred music. However, if the phone is not in airplane mode or set on “do not disturb,” it might receive phone calls, emails, and text messages that can certainly interrupt the intimacy between Jesus and the adorer. Just as texting while driving can hinder us from reaching our final destination, so too can texting while praying affect our capacity to remain attentive to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

It is important to note that near occasions of distraction do not always come from outside ourselves. Sometimes they are found within our own minds. It can happen that we begin prayer by acknowledging our thoughts, feelings, and desires, but instead of relating them to God, we share them with ourselves. This can lead to an interior conversation

with the self. Before we know it, our prayer time is over and we never invited God into the dialogue.

Dwelling inwardly on ourselves is called navel-gazing. This unhealthy conversation can look something like this: “How well am I praying? Why haven’t I been healed of this wound or that vice? How come I don’t feel anything right now?”

If we find that we are dwelling on ourselves during Adoration instead of focusing on Jesus, we need not fret. There is hope for us to get out of this pattern.

Speaking to the lay mystic Gabrielle Bossis, Jesus once asked her in a locution (the experience of hearing the voice of God interiorly or audibly in prayer), “Who is your God, you or I?” She knew that Jesus was her God. Our Lord followed up by asking, “Then why don’t you think of Me more than of yourself?”¹² Though it is of the utmost importance to discuss our thoughts and feelings with our spiritual director or a holy friend, it’s not possible for a lot of growth to happen in any relationship if we are only focused on ourselves.

Likewise, our prayer can also become too focused on other people, places, and activities, which can include our occupations and ministries. Instead of actually being intimate with the Body of Christ directly in front of us in the Blessed Sacrament, we spend time dwelling on everything and everyone else. St. Caesarius of Arles states, “A person worships whatever captivates his mind during prayer.

Whoever in his prayers thinks of public affairs, or the house he is building, worships them rather than God.”¹³

I am certainly not suggesting that we should not pray about our relationships, jobs, ministries, and health. However, I am suggesting that we be more intentional about relating these gifts of God back into our primary relationship with God. We must remember that our time of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament is God-focused, and our energy should be directed at being present to God.

The good news is that God wants us to share everything with him, including our relationships, jobs, ministries, hopes, fears, and struggles. We can share them with him in the form of a heart-to-heart conversation or through prayers of intercession. Our prayers of intercession for others can include devotional prayers like the Rosary, novenas, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, or the Stations of the Cross, to name a few. We can also intercede through liturgical prayers like the Liturgy of the Hours or through spontaneous prayers from the heart. However, it's important to transition from sharing our prayers of intercession to receiving from Christ in his Word at some point. When people came into St. Thérèse of Lisieux's mind during prayer, she would offer prayers of intercession to God for them and then focus her attention back on the face of Christ. Again, this is why vocal prayer, whether spoken out loud or written on paper, can be so helpful to the adorer. It helps us be aware of what we are talking

about and who we are talking to in Adoration. Rather than remaining stuck on ourselves or others during Adoration, we are drawn back to Jesus' face in the Blessed Sacrament and his Word in the Sacred Scriptures.

At the conclusion of our time with Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, we are invited to engage in the final step of *lectio divina*. This final step is making a resolution with Jesus based on our time of reading, meditating, praying, and contemplating his face and voice. If we want any relationship to grow, it is good to be intentional and consistent with the other person by respecting his or her calendar. The resolution we commit to with Jesus can be as simple as discerning with the Holy Spirit the next time we can visit the Adoration chapel. Once we come to a time that works best for us, which can be the morning, afternoon, evening, or night, we can pencil the date in our calendar. As the maxim of the Desert Fathers teaches, to pray always we must "pray at specific times" and pray often (CCC 2697).

To facilitate the resolution, I propose a method I wrote about in my book *Broken and Blessed*, called the "Five Ws." This stands for *when, where, what, who, and why*. I offer this method as a suggestion. It is not a divine mandate or a rule you have to follow. It is simply an invitation that works for me and has also helped other people in their relationship with Christ.

The Five Ws can be applied to the calendar as follows:

When will I spend time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament next? I will commit to daily, weekly, or monthly visits with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for fifteen minutes, thirty minutes, or an hour.

Where will I try to sit the next time he and I spend time together in the Adoration chapel? I will intentionally plan on a location that is most conducive for me to grow in intimacy with Christ, but I will not be offended if someone else is in that spot the next time I go to Adoration.

What will help me focus on the face of my God?

What will I bring with me to Adoration? I will bring my Bible, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, this pocket guide, and my journal and rosary.

What will I do with my cell phone during my time with Jesus in Adoration? I will turn on airplane mode or “do not disturb,” or I will leave it in my car.

Who will hold me accountable for spending time with Jesus next week? I will invite a friend to call, text, email, or visit with me on a weekly or monthly basis to help me remain committed to Christ in Adoration.

Why am I spending time with Jesus in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament next week? Once I discern my reason for cultivating a relationship with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, I will write it down on a sticky note

and place it on my refrigerator, my bathroom mirror, or my dashboard to remind me of the reason I want to prioritize my relationship with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration.

Remember the goal of abiding together with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The goal is to cultivate a deeper intimacy in our relationship with Christ and to imitate the one we spend time with in Adoration throughout the rest of our day.

Again, we may find that these tools are beneficial in our relationship with Christ or we may not. In the end, as long as we spend time with Jesus in Adoration, he will give us graces that will transform our lives, whether we are aware of them in this life or in heaven.

In the following chapters, we will spend time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament while practicing *lectio divina* with the Bible, the Rosary, the *Catechism*, and the lives of the saints who have preceded us in our walk toward eternity. I will describe my prayer for each way as an example. I am certainly not advising you, the reader, to mimic my experience of prayer. The examples are simply meant to show how a structured and disciplined method of prayer can yield very specific fruits in one's own life. The story of a Eucharistic miracle follows each chapter, inviting you to know and love Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Come, let us adore him!

Eucharistic Miracle



APRIL 28, 2001

**ST. MARY'S CHURCH
CHIRATTAKONAM, INDIA**

At St. Mary's Church, the priest and people began Adoration before the exposed Blessed Sacrament. Almost at once, the priest perceived three red dots on the host. Since the Gospel reading when the miracle occurred recounted the story of St. Thomas (John 20:29), some think that the three dots point to Our Lord's three wounds that St. Thomas was invited to touch as proof of the Resurrection. Later, the priest found that the host, which had been in the tabernacle, now bore the image of a face with a thorn crown. This Eucharistic host is still visible.¹⁴



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