

Evangelization Supplement

'My flesh for the life of the world' — John 6:51

Prayer's role in evangelization

By Sam Rasp

In 1973, Mother Teresa of Calcutta made a radical decision on behalf of the Missionaries of Charity. Prior to this point, the sisters would stop multiple times a day for prayer. These breaks would include Mass, Liturgy of the Hours and other devotions they were accustomed to praying. All of this was on top of the grueling work of caring for the sick and dying, to which they dedicated their lives.



Without taking out anything from their daily schedule,

Mother Teresa decided to add a holy hour, an hour spent in front of the Lord in eucharistic adoration, to the daily life of a Missionary of Charity. She modeled this hour after the hour that Jesus spent praying in the Garden of Gethsemane before his Passion and death.

This decision was quite countercultural. Many people thought then, and many still do, that with a job so difficult and demanding, it would be foolish, irresponsible and unproductive to take so much time away from the "job" to pray. To that, Mother responded, "If we don't take time to pray, we could not do this work."

After some time with this added devotion, Mother said "this hour of intimacy with Jesus is something very beautiful. I have seen a great change in our congregation from the day we started having adoration every day. Our love for Jesus is more intimate. Our love for each other is more understanding. Our love for the poor is more compassionate."

This is a great example for us as we strive to evangelize. It would be easy to think that in order to evangelize successfully, we need to spend all of our time convincing people to come or return to the Church. While this component is important, our efforts must be rooted in our prayer, just as Mother Teresa noted. Jesus himself tells us, "Apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5).

If we don't take time for prayer, it is inevitable that we will begin to rely on our own efforts instead of God's goodness and love to bring lost souls back to himself. We are only workers in God's vineyard. We can plant seeds and water the soil, but God is the one who makes sure that the seeds bear fruit.

We see in Scripture that Jesus invites his Apostles to "come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while" (Mk 6:31). The Lord also invites us to do this. He knows that it is necessary for us to spend time with our heavenly Father and rest with him in the silence.

For some of us, the thought of finding time for prayer in our busy schedules is daunting and perhaps seems impossible. Mother Teresa has a perfect response for us. She says, "If you are too busy to pray, you are too busy!" Her deep love for God allowed her to remember at all times that without him, we truly can do nothing. She deeply recognized the truth that we must put God and our relationship with him above everything else in our life.

In light of the upcoming three-year National Eucharistic Revival, in this supplement we'll focus on the role of the Eucharist—Jesus Christ living today under the appearance of bread and wine—in our prayer and evangelizations efforts.

Just as Mother Teresa did, I would like to invite you to put your relationship with God above everything else. The Lord proves every time that he is faithful and good in all things. He will take care of us, and when we give everything to him, including our time, his grace is even more evident in our lives, and in the lives of those around us.

(Sam Rasp serves as archdiocesan coordinator of evangelization and discipleship. For resources that help create a culture of evangelization in your parish, contact him at srasp@archindy.org.) †



Father Jonathan Meyer, co-pastor of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, second from left, and Deacon Robert Decker join several altar servers and other parishioners in praying before the Blessed Sacrament on March 1, 2017, the day on which the Batesville Deanery faith community's perpetual adoration chapel on its St. John the Baptist campus in Dover was inaugurated. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

Adoration chapels in archdiocese are an aid in evangelization efforts

By Sean Gallagher

Dotted across central and southern Indiana are small chapels where, at all hours of the day and night, Catholics come to pray before the Blessed Sacrament. Many people driving by these chapels might not even know they exist.

But for the people who go there to pray and the priests and other dedicated Catholics who help oversee them, they are powerhouses that fuel the Church's mission to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the Earth.



Msgr. Joseph Schaedel

Even when all the chapels were closed in the spring of 2020 during the first part of the coronavirus pandemic, Catholics came as close as they could to the Blessed Sacrament, said Msgr. Joseph Schaedel, pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, which has a perpetual adoration chapel.

"They would drive over here and sit in the parking lot and pray because they knew Christ was in the church in the tabernacle," he said. "They wanted to be close to the Real Presence. That told me what a difference eucharistic adoration made in their lives."

As difficult as the early part of the pandemic was for Catholics across central and southern Indiana, though,

the effect of adoration chapels on evangelization has not waned, said Father Jonathan Meyer, who founded adoration chapels at St. Mary Parish in North Vernon and on the St. John the Baptist Campus of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County.

He noted how earlier this year on the fifth anniversary of the opening of the chapel on the St. John the Baptist Campus, many people who are committed adorers and other parishioners started going door-to-door in the boundaries of the parish to invite people to an encounter with Christ and the Church.

"Up to date, they've knocked on 600 doors, inviting people to the Catholic Church," said Father Meyer. "That is a direct fruit of perpetual adoration in our parish."

Fr. Jonathan Meyer

Fr. Jonathan Meyer

"I'm so glad that, at the center of it, is a group of people who are spending their time on their knees in front of our Lord. You couldn't ask for a better way for something to be rooted and started ... because then you know that it's about Jesus. There's no confusion about the motive."

Msgr. Schaedel also sees the connection between eucharistic adoration and evangelization in his 11 years as

See CHAPELS, page 10

Local leaders speak of their hopes for National Eucharistic Revival

By Sean Gallagher

The three-year National Eucharistic Revival that will start in less than a month in the archdiocese and in dioceses across the country isn't happening simply to help Catholics grow in their relationship to Christ in the Eucharist.

It is hoped by the U.S. bishops who called for the revival that the deepening of this relationship will lead Catholic faithful in the U.S. to more effectively proclaim the Gospel in their daily lives.

Two archdiocesan leaders and a professor at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad reflected on this connection recently in interviews with *The Criterion*.

Sam Rasp, archdiocesan coordinator of evangelization and discipleship, said he hopes the

revival "will help revive our hearts to be in union with the Eucharist so more people will desire to be on mission for Christ."

He noted that a love for the Eucharist is closely tied to a love of God more generally in the faithful.

"If you truly love God, then you're not going to just hold that in yourself," Rasp said.

Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis, said that while evangelization can happen in many ways, it's ultimately "about helping people to have an encounter with Jesus."

"The most intimate encounter we can have with Jesus is in the holy Eucharist," Ogorek said. "So, there's a natural connection between evangelization and a focus on the Eucharist."

See REVIVAL, page 12

REVIVAL

continued from page 9

Benedictine Sister Jeana Visel, director of graduate theology programs at Saint Meinrad, emphasized the connection between encountering Christ in the Eucharist and then making efforts to bring others to him.



Sr. Jeana Visel, O.S.B.

“Once we have had our own deep encounter with Jesus, we are invited to go preach the Good News everywhere,” she said. “We aren’t simply called to deepen our own relationship with God, as important as that is. We are called to share the gift we have received with others.”

While this can be challenging for some Catholics, Sister Jeana said, it is a mission that is integral to all vocations.

“This push toward evangelization may be a new experience, or a new way of looking at our faith,” she said. “Evangelizing is itself a strengthening force for faith. The Church exists to evangelize, and to gather all people into the body of Christ.

“Individually we each have to find our own way to fulfill that calling, whether it’s teaching our children about Jesus, serving the homeless in the name of Christ or telling our co-workers about what God has done in our lives.”

In launching the revival at this time, the U.S. bishops are responding to particular challenges in the Church and the broader society.

“We have seen through research that there are many people in the Church ... that don’t know or understand the teaching on the Eucharist, that Jesus is truly present in it, body and soul,” Rasp said. “It’s important for us to help them see the truth and to have an encounter with the Eucharist.”

Ogorek noted the timeliness of the Church’s focus on the Eucharist at a time when divisions and individualism are on the increase in society.

“The Eucharist is the ultimate unifying encounter with Jesus,” he said. “In some ways, the Eucharist can be a remedy for some of the polarization we see in some realms of life.

“For a lot of people, politics has almost become their religion. So, focusing on the Eucharist at this time in our country’s history will hopefully draw people’s attention back to our loving Creator.”

Sister Jeana noted the importance of the revival happening at this time in light of the challenges faced by society recently in the coronavirus pandemic and various social tensions.

“Christ wants to unite us, and we need it for our personal and social and spiritual health,” she said. “He wants to feed us and give us what we so deeply need.

“We’ve endured some really stressful times in recent years, and we need to be nourished by the One who can heal our deepest places. I think these are issues that go beyond our own regional area, but we have to respond



Deacon Oliver Jackson, left, and Archbishop Charles C. Thompson elevate the Eucharist during an Aug. 3, 2019, Mass at St. Rita Church in Indianapolis to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of St. Rita Parish, a faith community founded to serve Black Catholics. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

to the invitation of Jesus where we are, which is here, now.”

In speaking about her hopes for the revival, Sister Jeana noted her desire for Catholics to spend more time in prayer before Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.

“Sometimes just encountering Jesus in the silence of eucharistic adoration can be a pivotal moment for those who might not otherwise feel spiritually connected,” she said. “... I think it would be a great thing if more of our parishes could have regular holy hours or perpetual adoration chapels, so as to provide more opportunities to encounter the peace of Christ in silence.

“We have to be grounded spiritually if we are to share the Good News with any authenticity and depth.”

Ogorek agreed.

“God connects dots in ways that we don’t always realize or appreciate,” he said. “Sometimes, it’s the fervent prayer of one person before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament that provides the grace for someone else’s conversion.

“It’s not all about cause and effect or tactics as we see it. We need to be prudent in our evangelization efforts. But God doesn’t always operate in the way we operate.

“If the revival causes more people to spend more time in intense prayer to Jesus Christ present in the Eucharist and people ask him to bless all of our evangelization efforts with abundant grace, then it’s going to bear fruit in ways that might not always be obvious.” †



A spotlight shines through the smoke of burning incense while Father Josh Johnson of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, La., celebrates Benediction on Nov. 22, 2019, in Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis during the National Catholic Youth Conference. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

Eucharistic Revival to begin in the archdiocese on June 19

The three-year National Eucharistic Revival in the archdiocese will begin in the archdiocese on June 19 in Indianapolis with two Masses celebrated at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., both at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St.

The 1 p.m. Mass will be primarily celebrated in English. Other languages included in the liturgy will be American Sign Language, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog and Burmese dialects spoken in the archdiocese.

The 3 p.m. Mass will be primarily celebrated in Spanish. French will also be included in this liturgy.

A Festival of Faith, Family and Service will take place from 1-4 p.m. in the parking lot of the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis. It will feature lunch, service projects, family games and music.

At about 4:15 p.m., following the conclusion of the 3 p.m. Mass, a eucharistic procession will begin

that will go from SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral to St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., in Indianapolis.

Children who have received their first Communion this year are invited to take part in the procession while accompanied by a parent, teacher or catechist.

All newly initiated Catholics, such as those received into the Church at Easter, can also take part in the procession.

Other Catholics are invited to line the procession route and bring banners, flags and other religious articles to decorate the route.

After the Blessed Sacrament arrives at St. John, a holy hour will take place that will conclude with benediction at 6:30 p.m. Men and women religious from across the archdiocese are especially encouraged to take part in the holy hour.

As more details about the June 19 event are determined, they will be posted on the archdiocesan website at eucharisticrevivalindy.org. †

El 19 de junio se iniciará en la Arquidiócesis un renacimiento eucarístico

El Renacimiento Eucarístico Nacional de tres años de duración comenzará en la Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis el 19 de junio con dos misas celebradas a la 1 p.m. y a las 3 p.m., ambas en la Catedral de San Pedro y San Pablo ubicada en 1347 N. Meridian St.

La misa de la 1 p.m. se celebrará principalmente en inglés. En la liturgia se incluirán otros idiomas que se hablan en la Arquidiócesis tales como coreano, vietnamita, tagalo y birmano, así como lenguaje de señas americano.

La misa de las 3 p.m. se celebrará principalmente en español. También se incluirá francés en esta liturgia.

El Festival de la Fe, la Familia y el Servicio se celebrará de 1 a 4 p.m. en el estacionamiento del Centro Católico Arzobispo Edward T. O’Meara ubicado en 1400 N. Meridian St., en Indianapolis. Habrá almuerzo, proyectos de servicio, juegos familiares y música.

Al terminar la misa de las 3 p.m., aproximadamente a las 4:15 p.m., se iniciará una procesión eucarística que irá desde la Catedral de San Pedro y San Pablo hacia la Iglesia de San Juan

Evangelista en 126 W. Georgia St., en Indianapolis.

Se invita a los niños que hayan recibido la primera comunión este año a participar en la procesión acompañados de uno de sus padres, un maestro o un catequista.

Todos los católicos iniciados este año, como los que pasaron a formar parte de la Iglesia en Semana Santa, también pueden participar en la procesión.

Se invita a todos los católicos a recorrer el itinerario de la procesión y a llevar pancartas, banderas y otros artículos religiosos para decorar el recorrido.

Tras la llegada del Santísimo Sacramento a San Juan Evangelista, se celebrará una hora santa que concluirá con la bendición a las 6:30 p.m. Se anima especialmente a los hombres y mujeres religiosos de toda la Arquidiócesis a participar en esta.

A medida que se definen más detalles sobre el evento del 19 de junio, se publicarán en el sitio web de la Arquidiócesis en eucharisticrevivalindy.org. †

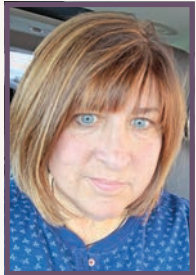
Eucharistic adoration draws people closer to the presence of God in their lives

(Editor's note: The Criterion invited people to share their stories of how their participation in eucharistic adoration has touched their lives and deepened their relationship with Jesus. Here are three of their stories.)

By John Shaughnessy

Lightning flashed through the stained-glass windows and thunder crashed all around the adoration chapel, leaving Lisa Marie Taylor feeling scared as she began her holy hour all alone at 10 o'clock on that night.

Trying to calm her nerves in the raging storm, Taylor picked up a book of hymns and began singing aloud her favorites, eventually turning to the page for "How Can I Keep from Singing?" which includes these lyrics:



Lisa Marie Taylor

No storm can shake my inmost calm,

While to that rock I'm clinging. Since love is lord of heaven and Earth

How can I keep from singing? "Suddenly, the storm stopped.

It was completely silent," recalls

Taylor of that moment in the adoration chapel of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. "I stood in that chapel knowing that God was with me and heard my prayer. It just stopped. I couldn't believe it. To this day when storms pass through my life, I cling to the Lord and keep singing."

That faith in God helped her through one of the most heartbreaking times of her life.

"One particular storm was in 2013, with my mom's diagnosis of stage 4 liver cancer," says Taylor, who is a teacher at St. Barnabas School. "My parents had just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary when we heard the devastating news. My parents and I would gather in the chapel on Saturday evenings. I remember one evening when I watched my mom with her eyes closed, holding her rosary beads, knowing that she was praying for a miracle.

"I had to turn away as I felt the urge to weep, thinking about losing her. I was trying to be strong. I didn't want her to see my tears."

Taylor adds about her mother, Madonna Smith, "We didn't get that miracle. She died on the evening of Jan. 31, 2014."

In the midst of her heartbreak, Taylor found some comfort in the adoration chapel on the morning after her mother died.

"Her church friends from St. Barnabas had planned a rosary in the chapel for the following morning not knowing that she would die the evening before. I wasn't sure I wanted to go. I was so full of grief, and it was so late when the funeral home took her that night. However, I knew that's where I needed to be. I was not prepared for what I found in that little chapel.

"So many friends had gathered there. Even a few of my second graders were there. I felt the love of a community, I heard the words of Mary's prayers, and I knew my mom was wrapping her arms around me from heaven."

Taylor still feels her mother's presence today when she enters the adoration chapel.

"I still see her sitting in that chapel praying the rosary."

She also feels the presence of God.

"Kneeling in the adoration chapel before the presence of God, I feel at peace. It is in believing in the miracle of the Eucharist and spending time with my Lord in adoration that I can continue to get through the storms of this life and feel the love of our Lord surrounding me."

'Lord, I need you'

The questions kept haunting Josephine "Josie" Wolfe.

Even while growing up in the Catholic faith, the teenager seldom felt the presence of God in her life, leaving her to wonder, "What if God is not real? What if we are living a lie?"

"As I tried to find these answers, it pushed me into a deeper hole," noted Josie, a freshman at Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg. "I continued to feel the ache in my heart. Searching for the pure happiness that I truly desired, I was lonely."

While dealing with these feelings, she heard about the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in Indianapolis and decided to attend so she could be with her friends, never expecting the dramatic impact it would have on her.

"When the first day of NCYC arrived, we participated



Voluntas Dei Father Leo Patalinghug kneels in worship during an evening of eucharistic adoration in Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on Nov. 19, 2021, during the National Catholic Youth Conference. (File photo by Natalie Hoefler)

in various events," she says. "I was going through the motions, having fun with my friends but not really feeling God's presence."

Yet all that changed on the last day of the conference, an experience she wrote about for the 2022 Serra Club Essay Contest.



Josephine Wolfe

"On the last evening of the conference, God was calling me to open my heart and give everything to him: my thoughts, my worries, my everything," Josie wrote. "I began by going to reconciliation in order to have a fresh start, a clean slate. An immense weight was lifted off my shoulders; I was ready to give my heart to God. My friends and I then rushed to adoration.

"I sat and simply stared at Jesus in the monstrance, begging God to let me in, pleading that he would enter my heart. I knelt down, opened my hands, and reached out to him. Only seeing darkness with my eyes softly closed, I begged, *Lord, I need you*. Out of nowhere, WHAM! Tears gushing down my cheeks, his merciful love entered my heart; I was drowning in his love and forgiveness; my heart was being put back together, piece by piece."

In that moment, the member of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County finally felt God's presence.

"My personal encounter with Jesus filled me with God's mercy. The Holy Spirit grabbed me, took me to true peace, where nothing else mattered; it was only God and me as I rested in his presence, feeling his warmth racing through my veins.

"Experiencing his true presence changed me. How I see life now is through a completely different lens. My doubts, fears and questions were answered. Adoration changed my life forever."

'I feel so close to Jesus there'

Nancy Beyer's involvement in eucharistic adoration didn't begin in a thunder-struck moment. Instead, it came in an "every day" moment of running errands. And still the impact on her life and her faith has been profound.

"One year during Advent, the priest in town started leaving the church open during the day, and when I ran my errands, I would stop in for a few minutes to say the rosary," Beyer recalls about her experience at St. Joseph Church in Shelbyville. "I found out that every day from noon until one, there was adoration. I started saving all my errands so I could go to that church during that holy hour.

"On Mondays, confession was also available during that hour. After several weeks, that special

hour was my favorite of the day. I said Catholic prayers at first, but several times I would remember past times when I had hurt people by my actions and words. The Holy Spirit spoke to me. Many sins came to my mind. I wrote them all down and took them to confession on Mondays."

Just as adoration drew her closer to Christ, so did her embrace of the sacrament of reconciliation.

"I had always gone to confession once or twice a year, never really remembering specific sins, just general ones," she says. "There was sorrow, joy, lots of tears, love, acceptance, forgiveness and more at the end of my confession. I started to make a confession once a month. Believe me, it was easier and more meaningful than once or twice a year."

Yet just as Beyer had that perfect situation in her life, it changed after a year.

"The beautiful, expansive, sedate, inspirational church was locked during the day, and a tiny room for six people opened as the perpetual adoration chapel," she recalls. "Parishioners we're so happy, but I was so sad and scared that my special hour with Jesus was over. My first visit during my usual time left me uncomfortable, insecure, and I left in tears. I didn't give up though.

"I kept trying until I found some times when there was only one other person in there. I discovered that one of those times was an hour from noon to one, like before, and the other person was a high school classmate of mine. I would talk to him a little as we were walking out together. Later in that year, he was in a freak accident at his home and he died a few days after one of those holy hours. I made a commitment to take his holy hour."

She has continued that commitment at St. Joseph's adoration chapel. She has also extended her devotion to a holy hour at St. Mary Church in Rushville, where she and her husband of 52 years, Stephen, are members.

"I'm usually a very busy person, but when I go to adoration, I try to listen to God and not focus on what I want," she says. "I try to focus on what God wants me to do.

"Spending time in adoration is a time to give thanks and praise to God for all the gifts he has given to us, but it also is a time to discern and listen to God speaking, too. I really wish I could talk everybody into doing this. I feel so close to Jesus there."

(More stories of how eucharistic adoration has touched the lives and faith of people will be featured in the May 27 issue of The Criterion). †