



## **Personal Eucharistic adoration sharing**

### **inviting people to sign-up for a weekly hour of adoration**

Through this personal sharing, I would like to invite and encourage you to seek the Lord by spending time with Him regularly in Eucharistic adoration and to make a commitment to sign-up for a weekly holy hour.

I have personally experienced the healing and transformation that encountering the person of Jesus Christ brings and Eucharistic adoration has played a large role in this. Adoration is one of the best ways to experience the peace, love and strength which only Jesus can provide...Something I believe we desperately need these days.

Growing up, I was very fortunate to be exposed to reverence and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, from saying “Hi” to Jesus in the tabernacle after Mass to spending time with my grandparents in their parish’s adoration chapel. While I may have been too young to understand the term “Real Presence,” I recognized these encounters and specific places as being set apart from everything else by a stillness and peace which transcended everything.

I felt a deep experience of the person of Christ at a Catholic summer camp I began attending at age 13. Throughout the camp there are several opportunities for Eucharistic adoration, and one of the most beautiful events of camp was the Eucharistic procession, followed by all-night adoration. This was the first time I had intentionally chosen to spend time alone in adoration with Jesus. I can still vividly recall sitting on the floor of the chapel, staring up at the monstrance illuminated by the soft candlelight and feeling a warmth, peace and safety that I hadn’t experienced before. I never wanted to leave.

My experiences of adoration at camp led to powerful encounters of Christ in the Eucharist and an understanding of His desire to have a personal relationship with me. However, after high-school, it was my time at an educational institute of faith and mission that really changed my life. During my two years there, we had daily silent adoration. I found that the more time I spent in adoration, the more I came to know the way Jesus spoke to me. I became familiar with His voice, learned how much He loved me, and over time gained great clarity and joy in the calling and mission He had created me for.

As I have navigated these turbulent last few years, Eucharistic adoration has continued to be an anchor for me as well as trying to attend daily Mass when possible. Through my personal struggles and even the experience of dryness in prayer, by God's grace I still know the importance of adoration and go as often as I possibly can. And, whenever I do, it remains a safe place to land: a place where I can encounter the peaceful, steady, and loving person of Jesus. Spending time with Jesus in this way brings incredible graces and fruits into all parts of my life, but I know that I have to **commit** to coming to adoration, even when I don't feel like it. It is easy to spend time in prayer when consolations or affirmations are frequent, but so much harder in times of dryness, desolation, and exhaustion when prayer seems futile or impossible.

I was inspired and deeply moved by the story of Cardinal Francis Van Thuan. He was a priest that was taken hostage by communists after the Vietnam war. 9 of the 13 years he was imprisoned were spent in solitary confinement. Yet during that time he continued to secretly celebrate mass with hosts and wine disguised and smuggled in by his friends. With his unwavering devotion to Christ in the Eucharist he was able to evangelize and help bring healing to many of his fellow prisoners. At night, some of the prisoners even took turns for silent adoration. Van Thuan had this to say about it: "With His silent presence, the Eucharistic Jesus helped us in unimaginable ways."

After his release, he spoke of how difficult it was to pray in the midst of the mental and physical suffering he had endured, and of how at times he was so physically exhausted that he couldn't utter any prayers at all. Here is a story he shared that helped him through this time: It is the story of a man named Jim. He would come into the church every day, stay for a few minutes, and then leave. Curious, the priest asked him one day what he did when he came. The man replied: I say "Jesus, here I am, it's Jim."

Several years later Jim was dying in the hospital. The priest came to visit him, and surprised by his joy, asked what was causing it. Jim told him that he had a visitor. When asked who came to visit him, it was revealed that it was Jesus, who would come and say "Jim, here I am, it's Jesus." Cardinal Van Thuan goes on to share how he used a simple prayer in his darkest moments: "When my strength failed and I could not even pray, I repeated: 'Jesus, here I am, it's Francis'. Joy and consolation would come to me and I experienced Jesus responding: 'Francis, here I am, it's Jesus.'"

I believe that this is key...To show up, place yourself in His Presence, and let Him be with you. You don't have to have the perfect words to say. All you have to do is come, and He will do the rest. It is through my friendship with Jesus that I have come to know how worldly distractions and comforts don't dull the uneasiness or pain I can experience when I have difficulties, worries, and doubts, or when the world around me is noisy and chaotic, or when my day-to-day feels like an unending mountain to climb.

When I show up, sit down before the Lord and spend time in His Presence it is good for my soul, and, over time, has helped me to establish and maintain a deep and lasting relationship with Him. In turn, He has brought healing and comfort to my weary heart.

Therefore, I pray that you will encounter the person of Jesus through spending time in regular daily or weekly adoration, because He loves you and desires to spend time with you.

In closing, I invite and encourage you to sign-up for a weekly holy hour!

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