



REFLECTIONS
AND PRAYERS
FOR VISITS WITH OUR
EUCHARISTIC LORD

Large Print

John J. Cardinal Carberry

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FOREWORD

In his encyclical letter, *Mysterium Fidei* (September 3, 1965), Pope Paul VI describes the graces and blessings that await those who manage to find time to visit our divine Lord in the most Blessed Sacrament:

“Christ is truly Emmanuel, that is, ‘God with us.’ Day and night, he is in our midst; he dwells with us full of grace and truth. He restores morality, nourishes virtue, consoles the afflicted, and strengthens the weak. He proposes his own example to those who come to him that they may learn to be like himself, meek and humble of heart, and to seek not their own interest, but the things of God. Anyone, therefore, who approaches this august sacrament with special devotion and endeavors to return generous love for Christ’s infinite love, experiences and fully understands, not without great spiritual joy and profit, how precious is the life hidden with Christ in God and how great is the value of converse with Christ, for there is nothing more consoling on earth, nothing more efficacious for advancing along the road to holiness.”

Many willing souls have a desire to dwell in prayer with our Eucharistic Lord, but often they are at a loss as to how to spend their time. This booklet attempts to supply thoughts as well as prayers that may prove helpful during a visit with Jesus in the most Blessed Sacrament. For over thirty years, I have gathered notes in preparation for the publication of these reflections before the tabernacle, but these remained in manuscript and were never completed. In the hope, however, that priests, religious, and laity may be helped by them, they are now submitted in this present form. The years of delay had a purpose, for now more than ever, there is a need to encourage and help souls to spend some time with our Eucharistic Lord in prayer and reflection.

It is with a spirit of admiration and gratitude that I prayerfully dedicate these pages to the Legion of One Thousand Men,* which flourishes in the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Started by Joseph Cardinal Ritter, of blessed memory and my beloved predecessor, it has continued in strength over the years.

The men of the Legion make a simple pledge, namely to visit once a week one of the three monasteries where the most Blessed Sacrament is exposed

* This group has since been expanded to include women and is now called the Legion of One Thousand Adorers. *Ed.*

daily. There is no specified time of day for the visit, nor length of time to remain. Each man signs a card with his name and parish after the visit, so that an estimate can be made weekly of how many visits have been made. Since there are three monasteries with a Legion of a Thousand Men attached to each, the actual number of weekly visits is more than four thousand and sometimes reaches five.

It has been an inspiration to me, as well as for many others, to see the constant stream of men coming and going to commune with our dear Lord in the most Blessed Sacrament. Only God knows the graces that come to them personally, to their families, and to the Archdiocese from their dedication and devotion to our Eucharistic Lord.

I humbly ask Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament to bless this effort of mine and through it to bring many to understand the strength, peace, courage, light and understanding, grace and renewal, which can be experienced through silent prayer in the presence of Jesus, who is Emmanuel, that is, “God is with us.”

PREFACE

Several years have passed since this booklet was first printed in July 1971. Over these years experience has pointed out several ways in which it might be restudied to widen its appeal. Finally, after prayer and consultation, I believe that that time has come to gather the various ideas and to present them in the present form with the hope that they will be beneficial for bringing souls more closely and more personally to our dear Lord in the most Blessed Sacrament.

It will be noted, at once, that the format has been changed to that of a large print booklet so that it can be carried easily and be more available whenever one visits our dear Lord or even wishes to use the prayers for other occasions, such as at home, or as a means of thanksgiving after Holy Communion.

A new section on visits to our Blessed Lady has been introduced. It is hoped that Mary, Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament, will be a source of inspiration, comfort, and consolation to those who use this booklet. The prayer “All through the heart of Mary in honor of the most Blessed Sacrament” summarizes

the intimate union there is between the love of Christ, our Eucharistic King, and his loving Mother Mary.

At the conclusion of each of the main divisions of the booklet, namely adoration, sorrow, thanksgiving, and petition, several verses from Sacred Scripture have been added as a source of meditation. The context from which the verse has been taken is given so that one might read the entire passage from the Word of God, if so desired. Often a simple passage of Sacred Scripture is sufficient for prayerful reflection, which over time reveals its depth and beauty more and more. The prayers in the booklet have been rearranged and additional prayers have been added.

In a spirit of humility I place this revised edition in the hands of our loving Mother Mary and ask her to awaken and deepen in the hearts of all a desire to know, love, and serve her divine son, Jesus. He is for everyone the beginning and end of all things; he is for us the God-Man; he is for us the Way, Truth, and Life.

✠ John Joseph Cardinal Carberry
Retired Archbishop of St. Louis
December 8, 1977

Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady

WAYS TO USE THIS BOOKLET

This booklet has three main divisions. The first part contains thoughts that may assist one in communing with our dear Lord in the most Blessed Sacrament, either exposed for adoration or in the tabernacle. These thoughts are chiefly centered on the themes of prayer—namely, adoration, thanksgiving, sorrow, and petition. In addition, there are reflections for the beginning and the conclusion of a visit.

It is important to note that the ideas set forth in this first part are intended to offer material that one may develop for personal prayer and reflection. *They are to be read slowly and followed with occasional pauses for meditation and application. Actually, they are intended to help one pray, rather than to be prayers in themselves.*

The second part is devoted to prayers to our dear Blessed Lady, Mother of the Savior who lives in the Eucharist. We receive God's graces through Mary's maternal intercession. The recitation of the rosary is a great help for a Eucharistic visit. As one recites the

Hail Mary, one can meditate on the mysteries of the life of Jesus, present in the Blessed Sacrament.

Another help to prayer and reflection will be found in the suggested readings from the New Testament, the inspired Word of God. These readings are found at the end of each section in Part I and Part II. While a few verses are given in this booklet, the whole passage cited can be read from a Bible. The Jesus about whom we read, whose words are echoing in our mind, is the same Jesus present before us. We are in his divine presence—this is the mystery of our faith. The words and actions of our Blessed Lord can stir up in us prayers of adoration, thanksgiving, sorrow, and petition as we read and meditate upon Sacred Scripture in his adorable presence.

The third part of the booklet contains additional prayers for devotional use, along with a wider selection of suggested readings from Sacred Scripture.

This booklet is merely an instrument, used as one may wish, beginning at the end, or in the center, or at the beginning. In the visit to the Blessed Sacrament it is not necessary to kneel all the time; rather one is free to stand or to sit. A sense of relaxation is of the greatest importance—a sense of being at home with a changeless Friend, our Lord and our God. No particular amount of time is required for the visit. That depends on circumstances. With frequent use of the

booklet it may become easy to make the visit a little longer, for it may succeed in opening new vistas of prayer and reflection. When we leave all in the loving hands of the dear Lord, he gives us the grace of understanding and communing with him.

One final word: it does not really matter how we may feel during our visit with our Savior. Feelings of joy, peace, comfort, strength, and consolation are helpful and they often come as a gift to us. What matters is that we, by our visit to him, express in word and deed our faith, our hope, and our love. We never leave him without his special blessing upon us and a particular grace of favor.

Part I

REFLECTIONS FOR VISITS

Opening Thoughts

Coming from home, business, or other concerns, my first thoughts for my visit to the most Blessed Sacrament should help me to cross the “bridge,” as it were, between the outside world and this sacred sanctuary where my Lord and God is awaiting me and in whose presence I now kneel. Therefore, to help me cross this bridge and place myself in his divine presence, the following may be useful.

Why am I here?

Jesus gives me the answer: “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28).

I have come, my Lord and King, to be with you, to call to mind the great mystery of faith: your presence, body and blood, soul and divinity, in the consecrated bread of life. Let me recall more carefully how I can realize my visit in response to your invitation—“Come to me. . . .”

I have come *to adore you, Jesus*, by acts of faith, hope, and love; to express *sorrow for my sins*; to make *reparation for the sins of the world*; to thank you *for your blessings*, so many of which I take for granted; and to present to you my needs, spiritual and temporal, as well as the needs of all who are near and dear to me and who have requested my prayers.

I have come to you with loving confidence recalling your words: “Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened” (Mt 7:7–9).

Help me, most loving Mother Mary, to spend this time of quiet prayer profitably—in the presence of Jesus.

Intentions for My Visit

During this time of prayer I want to remember especially *N. N.* To make sure that my visit is profitable, I shall pray to the Holy Spirit of light and truth, of consolation and comfort:

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your divine love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth.

Let Us Pray

O God, who has taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that by that same Holy Spirit we may become truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

I also ask our Blessed Mother, Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament, the Temple of the Holy Spirit, to be with me as I visit her divine Son. I ask her to be my companion and to help supply for my deficiencies:

O my dear Mother, behold me, your child, blessed with the grace of spending this time in prayer before your most loving and divine Son.

I turn to you with earnest prayer for help and assistance. In your life upon earth and now in heaven, your joy has ever been to spend time in his blessed company. Assist me to spend this time well in loving and prayerful devotion, to avoid distractions and worry, and to leave with my soul inflamed by the love of Jesus.

Accept my feeble thoughts and weak words of adoration, love, and sorrow. Transform them into your sentiments so that they will be acceptable in the sight of your divine Son. O Mary, my Mother, my Queen of the Most Blessed Sacrament, help me.

I am all yours, O most loving Jesus, and all I have I offer to you through Mary, your Holy Mother. Reveal

your divine Son to me, O Mary. Make me love him as you did and inspire me to live for him.

☯ Pause • Reflect • Pray ☯

A. Prayer of Adoration

In the prayer of adoration, I seek to realize the greatness of God, my Creator and my last end. When I enter into the depths of my soul and ponder who God is and who I am, almost instinctively I kneel and express sentiments of my faith in God, my hope and trust in God, and above all, my love for God.

When Christ appeared to his apostles on the Sea of Galilee after his resurrection, Saint John recognized him and said: “It is the Lord” (Jn 21:7). I ask, dear Jesus, for the grace to appreciate your presence, saying: “It is the Lord,” and in the words of Saint Peter add: “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (Mt 16:16).

In Whose Presence Am I?

I am not in an audience with our Holy Father, nor am I in the presence of a saint from heaven, nor with some distinguished personality. Before me, dear Jesus, you are present under the frail appearance of the host. With the eyes of faith I believe that you are present as my God, my Lord, my Redeemer, the Creator of

heaven and earth, my *all*. I believe, dear Jesus, that you are truly present, body and blood, soul and divinity, in the most Blessed Sacrament.

My Response

With your grace I wish to pour forth from the depths of my heart sentiments of faith, hope, and love for you, Jesus, my Eucharistic Lord. At times I may not be able to find words to express the sentiments of my heart. At times I will be distracted and perhaps feel weariness and dryness. If that happens, I will kneel in silence before you, aware that you know the innermost thoughts of my mind and the earnest desires of my heart. The thoughts and prayers of others may greatly help me in finding the words that will express my great love for you.

∞ Pause • Reflect • Pray ∞

Act of Adoration

Jesus, my God, I adore you here present in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, where you wait day and night to be our comfort while we await your unveiled presence in heaven. Jesus, my God, I adore you in all places where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, and where sins are committed against this Sacrament of love. Jesus, my God, I adore you for all

time, past, present, and future, for every soul that ever was, is, or shall be created. Jesus, my God, who for us endured hunger and cold, labor and fatigue, I adore you. Jesus, my God, who for my sake deigned to subject yourself to the humiliation of temptation, to the betrayal and defection of friends, to the scorn of your enemies, I adore you. Jesus, my God, who for us endured the buffeting of your passion, the scourging, the crowning with thorns, the heavy weight of the cross, I adore you. Jesus, my God, who, for my salvation and that of the whole human race, was cruelly nailed to the cross and hung there for three long hours in bitter agony, I adore you. Jesus, my God, who for love of us instituted this Blessed Sacrament and offered your life for the sins of the whole world, I adore you. Jesus, my God, who in Holy Communion became the food of my soul, I adore you.

Jesus, for you I live. Jesus, for you I die. Jesus, I am yours in life and death. Amen.

Act of Faith

O Christ Jesus! True God and man, of one substance, majesty, and power with the Father, with firm faith I believe and confess that you are truly and really present in this Sacrament. For you, who are Truth itself, have said, "This is my body."

Act of Hope

O God, my hope! My heart rejoices when I receive you in the Blessed Sacrament, because I clearly trust that there is nothing that you have not given us and will not give us. In you, O Lord, I trust; let me not be confounded in my hope.

Act of Love

I love you, O Christ Jesus, because in your exceeding love for me, you have come in the flesh and have loved me even to death, and in the Blessed Sacrament have given me yourself for a pledge of this love. I love you more than myself and more than all things; at least, I most earnestly desire so to love you and always to adhere to you alone. O, by the power of this sacrament may there be cemented between you and me a union of love so great that nothing may be able to separate me from the love of Christ my Savior.

A Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and I unite myself wholly to you; never permit me to be separated from you.

Prayer of Saint Thomas More

Give me the grace to long for your holy sacraments, and especially to rejoice in the presence of your Body, sweet Savior Christ, in the Holy Sacrament of the altar. Amen.

Suggested Readings from the New Testament

“ . . . We observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” [A]nd there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. (Mt 2:1–12)

[Jesus] was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. . . . Suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, “This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!” (Mt 17:1–8)

. . . And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” (Lk 2:8–20)

. . . Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach

out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” (Jn 20:24–29)

B. Prayer of Sorrow

“A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise” (Ps 51:17). These words express the meaning of prayer and sorrow. By means of it, I look at myself: I see my failings, my sins, my weaknesses. “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (1 Pt 5:5). In addition, I glance at the world around me—with its sins and forgetfulness of God. In the prayer of sorrow, I try to express my sorrow for my personal sins and to offer reparation for the sins of the world.

Jesus, My Redeemer

Beloved Jesus, may I ever be conscious of the fact that I am in your adorable presence—I am in the presence of you who by your life, death, and resurrection, paid the price of my sins and the sins of the world. May I always be open to receive this gift by a life of continual faith and love.

Sorrow for My Sins

Through sorrow for sin, expressed in the sacrament of Penance, you forgive my sins, my Eucharistic Lord. However, I want to always be conscious of that sorrow

and to renew it as often as possible without tormenting my soul. How often Saint Peter and Saint Mary Magdalene must have thought of their sins and expressed their grief to you. As I glance at my life since my last confession and examine my conscience, how many failings I can now see, which I have forgotten or overlooked. How often I fall into the same sins! And yet, there is no end to your merciful forgiveness. With all my heart and soul I express to you, my beloved Savior, sorrow for my sins and my desire to always seek purity of heart:

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Lamb of God;
you take away the sins of the world.

Through the grace of the Holy Spirit restore me
to friendship with your Father,
cleanse me from every stain of sin through the
blood you shed for me,
and raise me to new life for the glory of your
name.

Reparation for the Sins of the World

Everywhere I see evidence of sin: crime, persecutions, forgetfulness and denial of God, rebellion against the law of God. These present such a sad sight. I shall renew my personal love for you, Jesus, and rededicate my life to you. I will endeavor to accept the crosses that come into my life—sickness,

ingratitude, neglect, trials of all kinds, misunderstandings, the uncertainties of life and temptations against faith. I will endeavor to bear all my sufferings patiently, with Christian joy, and to unite my suffering with yours. My Eucharistic Jesus, I earnestly pray the following Act of Reparation that expresses the sentiments of my soul:

Eternal Father, I offer you the Holy Face of Jesus covered with blood, sweat, dust, and spittle in reparation for the sins of blasphemy, of disrespect for the Holy Name of Jesus, and for failing to honor Sunday as the Lord's day. May the most holy, most sacred, most adorable, most mysterious and unutterable name of God always be praised, blessed, loved, adored, and glorified in heaven, on earth and under the earth, by all the creatures of God. May the Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar always be praised, adored, and loved. Amen.

Suggested Readings from Sacred Scripture

... [Peter] began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly. (Mt 26:69–75)