



### **Eucharistic Adoration: A Privileged Place of Encountering Jesus**

Spending time in prayer with Jesus, Who is present in the tabernacle in a Catholic Church, is different than praying prayers at home. The reason is that we are with Jesus in a more intimate and real way because He is truly present in the Holy Eucharist.

A great way to begin this practice of spending time with Jesus in church is by stopping in to “make a visit” and spending 5 to 10 minutes just as we would stop by to see a family member. Being in the presence of Jesus Himself is an incredible opportunity and gift. When we make a simple visit to the Blessed Sacrament – another name for the Eucharist – we can bring to Jesus our concerns and joys. We want to express to Him in our own words our struggles, sorrows and joys. The Eucharist is Jesus; He is right there. The experience of being with Christ brings peace as He helps to calm any state of preoccupation, worries or discouragement and gives us a new perspective. When we walk out of church, it is amazing to realize how we leave with a quieted heart.

We want to thank Him for listening to us, helping us to “work things out” and giving us His peace. We also want to thank Jesus for His presence there and to know that He really wants us to spend time with Him.

Most people feel that they don’t have time to make such a visit even for a short duration. However, once we make the effort to spend time with the God of the Universe we will find that the Lord begins to “free up time” from what appeared to be a full schedule. Gradually, we will start to see how He arranges things, guiding us in our lives to resolve problems. It will also become noticeable that with our responsibilities of life, time is saved rather than lost as different possibilities are opened. Eventually we will grow in our desire to spend time with Him even if there is no pressing problem. We value Him for Himself and not just as a problem-solver for us, although He is always there to help us. As our friendship grows, we want to be in His presence more often.

It is best to start slowly in making these visits. Over time, making a regular visit such as once a week will become a habit. As time goes on, perhaps you will want to make the visit longer. Some people spend 30 minutes to an hour with our Lord. Each of us has different responsibilities, so it is wise to start with what is doable, possible and sustainable, such as stopping by once a week for ten minutes.

Catholic Churches are open during the day and so it is possible to “make a visit” to Jesus in the tabernacle when it is convenient. Many parishes have specific times set aside during the week for Eucharistic Adoration, where the Eucharist is exposed in a vessel called a monstrance. People are most welcome to “make a visit” anytime the church is open. What matters is that we have the desire and intention to be with Jesus, to deepen our walk with Him and experience His presence in our life in this special and perhaps new way. Keep making visits!

#### *Questions for reflection:*

1. What day and time might be convenient for you to stop by church and “make a visit”?  
What amount of time is doable for you? Taking your children along may be necessary.
2. What do you think will be the effects of spending time with your Savior – Jesus Christ?

#### *Ideas:*

1. To ward off distractions, suggested reading resources to use during your visit are *The Divine Encounter* by Mark Hart or *Searching for and Maintaining Peace* by Fr. Jacques Phillip.
2. Ask Jesus for the grace to strengthen your faith that He is truly present in the Eucharist.

By Ann Lankford, Director of the Office for Catechesis & Evangelization



## **Who is 15-year-old Blessed Carlo Acutis who planned and developed the International “Eucharistic Miracles” Exhibit?**

Carlo Acutis was an Italian teenager like most of the youth of our day. He was known as a computer whiz, who liked to play soccer, video games, and the saxophone. He enjoyed spending time with his many friends. Carlo was cheerful, outgoing and fun-loving.

What set Carlo apart was that he loved God and made Jesus and Mary the center of his life. Beginning at an early age, he developed a deep devotion to the Eucharist and attended Mass every day, being realistic about the times in which he lived and realizing he needed this grace to overcome temptations, sin and the various struggles of life. He also loved to frequent Eucharistic adoration. Carlo called the Holy Eucharist his “highway to Heaven.” This teen believed that if Catholics recognized the Eucharistic Presence of Jesus, their lives would be transformed.

Carlo was committed to teaching the Faith at the parish and serving in soup kitchens. He also went around the city giving money to homeless people. “This was Carlo’s secret: He had a constant, intimate friendship with Jesus. He wanted everyone he encountered to have this kind of relationship [with Christ] like he did.” (by Carlo’s mother)

Carlo became interested and adept at computer programming and video making. With these interests and fascination with the potential for the profound good that social media could bring, he began creating a website of all of the Eucharistic Miracles of the world. Carlo and his family traveled to many of these Eucharistic Miracle sites and photographed them to develop a virtual exhibit that would display these incredible “gifts” from God in order to help strengthen the faith of people.

As a teenager Carlo was diagnosed suddenly with leukemia and died in 2006 at the age of 15. Carlo has already passed two of three required steps for canonization - the path to sainthood: 1) “Venerable” recognizes a person has lived a heroically virtuous life. 2) They are recognized as “Blessed” when a miracle has been attributed to their intercession. 3) “Canonization” requires a second miracle after being declared blessed. The second and third steps each require a miracle through the intercession of this person and are seen as God’s confirmation that this person is indeed in Heaven with Him.

### *Questions for reflection:*

“The principal fruit of receiving the Eucharist in Holy Communion is an intimate union with Christ Jesus.” “The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers adoration to the Sacrament of the Eucharist, not only during Mass, but also outside of it,... for the solemn veneration of the faithful...” (Catechism, paragraphs 1391, 1378)

1. In what way does the life of Blessed Carlo Acutis inspire you?
2. “To always be close to Jesus, that’s my life plan.” (Quote of Blessed Carlo Acutis) What is a phrase that captures your life plan that you might say to yourself often?
3. How realistically can you add the practice of Eucharistic Adoration to your life, in a simple way?

### *Ideas:*

1. Attend the Eucharistic Miracles Exhibit, which presents a selection of the main Miracles of the Eucharist approved by the Catholic Church. The Exhibit was planned and developed by Blessed Carlo Acutis.

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