

## Faithful Praise Adoration

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By Mary Ann Schumann

A story is circulated in the Mideast about a king who decided to test the loyalty of his people. He left his throne and disguised himself in tattered garments, a shabby straw hat, and threadbare sandals. In his poverty-stricken appearance, he claimed relationship with those he met. His plea for hospitality was often met with “We are too busy,” or “Come some other time,” or “The house is occupied.”

After some time, the king cast aside his beggar’s attire and put on his kingly robes. As he went among the same people, how changed were the responses to his requests for hospitality. Everyone wanted to be in his presence, to gaze upon his glamor, and to benefit from his greatness.

The king of kings too left his throne and disguised himself among us in four ways: the crib, the cross, a borrowed tomb, and the Eucharist. The way he disguises himself the most is in the Eucharist, where all human and divine appearance is concealed. In this disguised fashion, he challenges our faith, but in a manner that everyone rich or poor, honored or despised, can approach him in confidence and familiarity. He does not want us to be afraid of his glorious splendor, nor compelled to worship because of sight. Rather, he desires that our friendship, our hospitality, be one of choice built on faith and trust.

Hospitality, according to Webster, suggests two aspects, First, there is an open reception of a guest or stranger that begins with kind generous thoughts. This inward reception radiates outward to attentiveness; to the offering of a pleasant sustained environment.

The most unique way we can offer attentive hospitality to our disguised Lord is through participation in the Mass and reception of Holy Communion. The sacrifice of the Mass becomes stretched out – prolonged 24 hours a day- as the

sacred host is enthroned on the alter in exposition at the Divine Mercy Adoration Chapel next to Cardinal Ritter High School at 3360 W. 30th St. in Indianapolis.

When we are shown hospitality through kind deeds, words of support, or given space to process a grief or an inner struggle, new life is sparked. It has healing power; energy that radiates to others. So too, new life is experienced by adorers as they see through the eyes of faith and are receptive to the comforting presence of our Eucharistic Lord. It is often expressed as a sense of peace that prevails in the lives despite difficulties. Others note hope and happiness.

Another adorer remarked how adoration has helped her prepare for her next Mass. “Formerly,” she said, “I received Our Lord in Holy Communion passively. Now my reception is meaningful and I look forward to my next Communion.” One couple excitedly attributed the return of their son to the church after 20 years to their faithful commitment of an hour of adoration each week. One day a prayer request was submitted to the adorers on a piece of paper. It read, “Pray for a 2-year-old whose legs were mangled in a power mower and for the mother who is mentally exhausted from self-blame.” The next week the adorer wrote, “This child is healed, torn muscles regenerated, infection gone, bones knitted. The doctor stands in awe before the divine physician.”

At one point, a frequent adorer sensed the Lord asking for the sacrifice of kneeling during adoration. After bargaining with the Lord about painful arthritic knees and the need for pain medications, the response remained, “Kneel and trust.” Nine months have elapsed with no trace of arthritis.

As all natural overtures of hospitality demand a commitment—a price to be paid—so too committed time with our Lord claims a cost. A physician noted the sacrifice of rising in the very early morning hour to watch with him. “I find time to do many other things,” she stated, “so how can I not give him one special hour a week? It is privileged time and I guard it as scared.”

Another couple who moved from the area drives 45 minutes on weekends to keep their night watch. On several occasions people deemed their appointment with

God so important that they called from airports requesting a substitute adorer to cover their time.

The disguised king of kings veiled in the Eucharist continues to seek our love and our hospitality in the form of adoration, praise, thanksgiving and petition. When, in time, he bursts forth from the sacred host in the fullness of his glory, will he not proclaim something like: “When I was naked, stripped of my glory in the Blessed Sacrament, your faith sustained me. When I was imprisoned in bread and wine, sick for love of you, you visited me. When I was a stranger unknown to so many, you gave me your heart for an abode, you understood my grief and made reparation. When I was hungry and thirsty for your affection, you satisfied me with your love. Come, join me in my father’s kingdom forever and ever.”

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