

How to Adore the Eucharist?



Dear pilgrims,

Tonight, at the **bivouac in Gas**, Eucharistic adoration will be offered to the pilgrims. This is undoubtedly **one of the most important moments of our pilgrimage**:

The **Lord comes to visit our camp**—He will be **truly present among our chapters, throughout the entire night**, patiently waiting for His children to come to Him.

So, even if we are **very tired tonight**, even if we **rightfully desire to spend time with our friends**, let us **not go to bed before visiting the Lord**, present in the **monstrance**, to **adore Him**.

But what is adoration?

The purpose of this talk is to **rediscover this central act of faith**, which is often confused with many other things.

What is adoration?

First of all, know that **"to adore" is not exactly the same as "to pray"**.

Or rather, **adoration is a very special form of prayer**:

It is the **first and greatest** of the **four acts of prayer**, which are:

1. **Adoration**
2. **Thanksgiving**
3. **Asking for forgiveness**
4. **Petition (asking for graces)**

The mistake we sometimes make...

The mistake we sometimes make when we come to **adoration** is to start our prayer by **talking about ourselves**—our difficulties, our requests, our regrets...

I am **not saying that this is wrong**, of course! But **this is not what adoration is about**.

To be "**true worshipers in spirit and in truth**", the first thing to do is **not to look at ourselves**, but to **look at God**.

Thus, adoration is **not, in itself, a prayer of petition**.

Adoration is a **selfless act, entirely "for God"**, and this is what makes it so profound:

By **adoring**, man **fulfills his greatest vocation**, which is **to honor the Lord and glorify His name**.

We often tell children who love chocolate a little too much: "**We only adore God**."

And indeed, **adoration is an intimate act reserved for God alone**.

Only **He deserves adoration**, because **He alone is Lord**:

"Tu solus Dominus", we say in the **Gloria**.

To adore is **simply to recognize**, with our **intelligence**, that **God is Lord**, that **He is our Creator and our Master**, and that **we are completely dependent on Him for all things**—and to **rejoice in this truth within our hearts**.

So, how do we adore?

I suggest remembering the **two key stages of adoration**, as taught by **the great saints**, the "**masters**" of adoration.

The first step of adoration: Contemplating the greatness of God

The **first step** is to **look only at God**.

This is actually a **matter of simple courtesy**:

When we **meet a friend**, we first **ask how they are doing** before **talking about our own lives and troubles**...

In the same way, **to adore properly**, we must first **place ourselves in God's presence** and **focus only on Him**—without looking at **ourselves**.

If we could do this well, if, for just a moment, we could **grasp who is before us in this humble Host—the Eternal God, the Creator, so Great and Mysterious!**

God is God, and He is here, present!

This is what the **Wise Men** experienced when they came to the manger:

"They entered the house, saw the child with Mary, His mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped Him."

This is what **Saint Thomas** understood when he believed in the **resurrection of Christ** and exclaimed:

"My Lord and my God!"

This is what the **angels of Heaven** constantly do:

"They worship God, saying: Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and strength be to our God forever and ever! Amen!"

In **all three of these scenes, no request is made to God.**

No **benefit is asked for humanity.**

Only **the cry of adoration** arises.

A Dominican once said:

"Adoration is the spontaneous reaction of the soul that perceives the greatness of God."

There is a word to describe this **greatness of God: His transcendence.**

Unfortunately, this idea is **often neglected today.**

Certainly, **God is also a friend, someone close to us**—as we will see shortly—but above all, **He is God!**

This **deep awareness** that **God is present** will bring us **joy, a very pure joy.**

Have you ever experienced this joy, this happiness of realizing:

"It is truly wonderful that God exists!"

And yet, this is **precisely what the Mass seeks to awaken in us**, in the **exaltation of the prayers of the Gloria, the Sanctus, or in the Preface.**

Let us begin our adoration with this simple gaze upon God

Let us **forget ourselves for a moment.**

We can **help ourselves by reading the Gloria, a psalm, or the first part of the Our Father** (the first **three petitions**, which are all directed toward God).

The second step of adoration: Recognizing ourselves as humble creatures

After **this simple gaze upon God**, adoration leads us to **turn our gaze upon ourselves.**

"Who am I in relation to God?"

The answer is simple: **I am a creature.**

We must remind ourselves of this often!

Otherwise, we risk **falling into pride.**

If I am alive right now, if I can breathe, speak, pray, if I am able to make this **Chartres pilgrimage**, it is because **God, this Great, Exalted, and Mysterious God, thinks of me, loves me, and at this very moment, gives me life.**

Catechism teachers often tell children:

"If God stopped thinking of you for just a moment, you would cease to exist."

This is **so true!**

The idea that must arise in this **second step** is our **total dependence on God.**

We exist only because God loves us and grants us existence.

And not just existence—**not just an initial spark of life**—but at **every moment**, God **sustains us, upholds us, gives us life, and even more—His gifts, His graces, His blessings.**

We are **constantly connected to God.**

The Meaning of Religion: A Relationship with God

This is, in fact, the origin of the word **religion**, from the Latin "*religare*", which means "**to bind or connect**".

To **adore** is to **recognize and love this connection**—it is trying to **perceive the invisible bond that constantly links us to God.**

And from this awareness arises **a new joy:**

"Lord, I am happy to be Your child. I rejoice in my dependence on You."

This is the **joy of the Magnificat**, the joy of **the Virgin Mary**, who recognizes herself as **the humble servant of the Lord** and **embraces this humble position with love.**

This **pure joy** is the **opposite attitude of the sinner**, who, on the contrary, **refuses to be dependent, refuses to receive, and wants to control his own life.**

It is **the cry of Satan: "I will not serve!"**

Finding Peace in Adoration

The **joy of receiving everything from God** can sometimes, **it is true**, be **difficult to attain** when facing **life's trials and sorrows.**

But **adoration** helps us see that, **even when God allows difficulties, His hand is always with us, supporting us, and He can bring great good out of them.**

Our **future is in God's hands**, and **because God is good**, we can be certain that **He will take care of us.**

Adoration **helps our soul find peace and consolation**, like a child who, when in pain, finds comfort in the arms of their parents.

The Next Steps in Prayer

Once these **two stages of adoration** have been completed, our conversation with God can continue with the **other three acts of prayer**:

1. **Thanking Him for the graces received.**
2. **Asking forgiveness for our sins.**
3. **Asking for graces (petitionary prayer).**

And in fact, **our prayer will be more fervent and sincere** if we have **first taken the time to adore God properly**.

The Effort of Adoration: Courage and Perseverance!

Adoring God is **one of the greatest actions we can do on Earth**, as well as in Heaven.

It is first and foremost **an act of justice**:

We are **creatures**, and ultimately, **we were created to glorify God**, to **recognize His greatness and our dependence on Him**.

And what is truly amazing is that **by fulfilling this mission of being "adorers," we find our own happiness and salvation**.

Because the **God we turn to in adoration** is also the **God who fulfills our hearts**.

A Struggle Against the Current

But adoration is **not an easy act**.

If life were **like a river**, adoring would be like **trying to swim against the current, returning to our source, which is God**.

This is what **Saint Augustine** expressed in his famous words:

"You have made us for Yourself, O my God, and our heart is restless until it rests in You."

This **return to God**—which is **the goal of our entire life**—will **fill us with happiness**, but it requires **true effort, recollection, regularity, and perseverance**.

Every day, we must **return to the source through adoration**.

So, take courage, dear pilgrims!

To help you, you will find **many spiritual texts** in the **pilgrim's booklet** to **nourish your prayer of adoration**.

The Gestures of Adoration

Adoration is an **interior prayer**, but because we are **both body and soul**, certain bodily gestures can help us **better adore**.

Here are some of these gestures:

- **Genuflection** – Upon entering a church, in the presence of the **Real Presence**, the liturgy asks us to **genuflect**. Through this gesture, **our whole body bows down before God's Presence**; we recognize **His greatness** and that we owe Him **homage and respect**.

Traditionally, when the **Blessed Sacrament is exposed in the monstrance**, we perform a **double-knee genuflection** accompanied by a **profound bow**.

- **Praying on our knees** expresses the **same idea** as genuflection, but for a longer duration, **manifesting our desire to remain humble and small before the Lord**.
- **Hands joined** – This comes from an **ancient medieval tradition**: when a **vassal swore loyalty** to his lord, he **knelt before him with his hands joined**, and the lord would place his hands **around those of the vassal**.

This gesture symbolizes that **we place our entire being in God's hands**, and in return, **God assures us of His protection**.

Some Reference Books

- **Catechism of the Catholic Church**, Nos. **2083 to 2141** (Chapter on the **First Commandment**).
- **Saint John Paul II**, *Encyclical Letter Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, Éd. Pierre Téqui.
- **Benedict XVI**, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, Éd. Pierre Téqui.
- *Prayers of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, Presses de Sainte Radegonde.
- *The Imitation of Christ*, Books III and IV, Éd. Foi Vivante.
- **Father Philipon OP**, *The Spiritual Doctrine of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity*, Éd. Desclée de Brouwer.
- **Edith Stein**, *Path to Inner Silence*, Éd. Parole et Silence.
- **Father Bernadot OP**, *From the Eucharist to the Trinity*, Éd. Foi Vivante.
- **Cardinal Journet**, *The Seven Words of Christ on the Cross*, Éd. Foi Vivante.
- **Father Caffarel**, *One Hundred Letters on Prayer*, Éd. du Feu Nouveau.

Citations H - How to Adore the Eucharist?

"If you pass by a church, enter to greet Our Lord. Would you pass by the door of a friend without saying hello?"

— *Saint Curé of Ars*

"Every act of reverence, every genuflection you make before the Blessed Sacrament is important, because it is an act of faith in Christ, an act of love for Christ."

— *Saint John Paul II*

******"Strange little bows have replaced the biblical prostration of our Eastern brothers or the medieval genuflection, as if, among us, the love of Christ had been affected by rheumatism.

What a great privilege we have: there is Someone before whom we can kneel."******

— *Father Bernard Bro, OP*