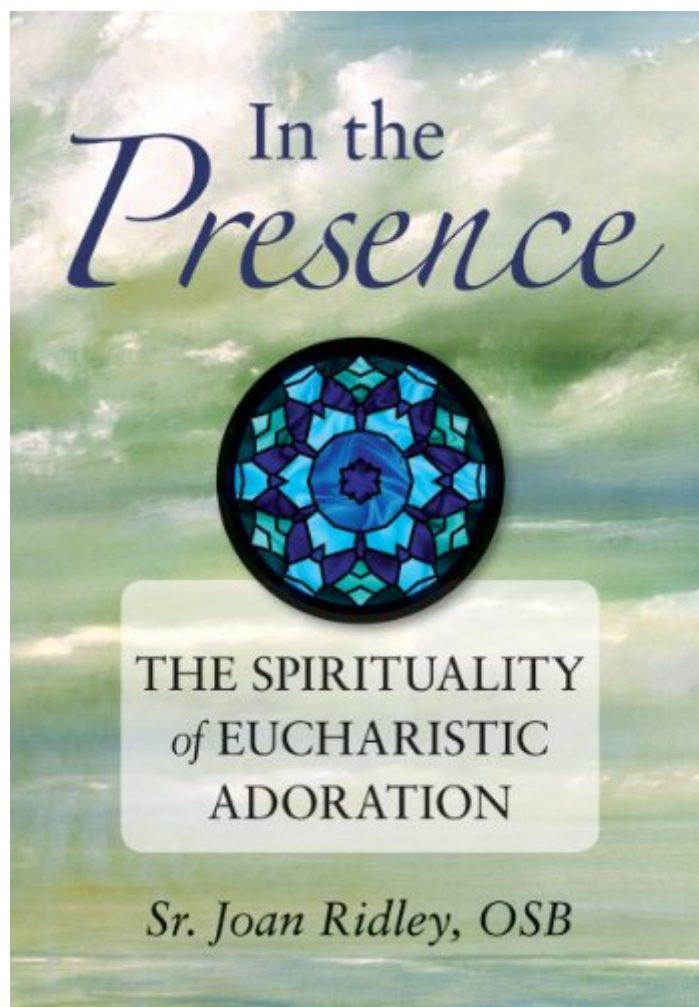


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In The Presence: The Spirituality Of Eucharistic Adoration



Synopsis

With the ancient practice of Eucharistic Adoration being rediscovered in today's modern parishes, *In The Presence* provides the perfect guide to the history, practice, and meaning of this tradition. In a series of brief, accessible, and theologically rich essays, Sr. Joan Ridley connects the private devotion of Eucharistic Adoration to eucharistic spirituality and common worship, combining traditional significance with the best in contemporary theology.

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Customer Reviews

IN THE PRESENCE: THE SPIRITUALITY OF EUCHARISTIC ADORATION is a real gift to all of us. This short, 80-page, easily understandable book is poised nicely between academic treatments of eucharistic adoration and devotional adoration prayer manuals. Sister Joan gives a concise history of the practice of eucharistic adoration and what led to its virtual demise after Vatican II. In the more recent past the practice has arisen again within the Church from the grassroots faithful requesting it and the encouragement of the Popes and Bishops. We find adoration that is communal and liturgical being practiced in parish churches throughout the world and Pope Benedict XVI has

recently included it in his celebration of Solemn Vespers in St. Peter's with thousands of worshippers and televised to millions more. The book can be a boon to people who regularly practice adoration giving them a solid theological grounding in the practice. While it is not a devotional manual, nevertheless, many a paragraph can be used as a prayer starter during adoration. Students will find it to be a good primer on the subject and the bibliography can lead them to many other sources to deepen their knowledge. Clergy and professional pastoral personnel who were educated in the years between 1970 and 1990, when eucharistic adoration was strongly criticized and discouraged, will benefit from this book. Many find their parishioners requesting the practice and CCD students and RCIA candidates need to be properly instructed on it; this book can be a real answer to a prayer. Finally, non-Catholics can find a comprehensive and accessible explanation of this very Roman Catholic practice. Our noisy, frenetic culture has almost no time or space for contemplation these days. Eucharistic adoration can provide that and lead to the development of a genuine contemplative prayer life for both clergy and laity - to the good of all.

The small size of this book belies the richness of its content. Succinctly Sr. Joan lays out the fluctuating history of adoration of the Eucharist outside of Mass, as well as the theology underlying this currently growing practice. "Eucharistic exposition and adoration are nothing else than the action of the Mass held in contemplation," said Benedictine liturgist, Godfrey Diekmann, and quotes like this invite expansion in the reader's mind and heart. For example, we learn to appreciate the significant movement from a former emphasis on the quantity of hours spent before the exposed Sacrament, and on the solemnity of ritual surrounding exposition and requiring the presence of a priest. Now the focus is on the adorers and the quality of their adoration. Pope Benedict XVI points out that "Adoration outside Mass prolongs and intensifies all that takes place during the liturgical celebration itself....and strengthens the social mission contained in the Eucharist..." "Far from being a privatized, ethereal devotion....Adoration must surely give rise to the service of neighbor..." Throughout this book we are reminded that "adoration must be anchored in the spirit of the paschal mystery to link it with the celebration" of Eucharist, and the revised ritual for exposition reinforces this principle. Adoration both flows from and prepares for Communion. Through this form of contemplative prayer, "we learn to gaze lovingly and be gazed upon. God looks on us with mercy and gentle kindness. To adore means to raise a 'hymn of silence' to God." Sr. Lenora Black, OSB.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book and have ordered copies for several Church libraries. Sister Joan writes in a way that is easy to understand and not in such deep theological terms that one drowns in

unfamiliar English and Latin words! She brings us the unfolding history of Adoration, and explains changes that have been made through the centuries. She quotes from Church documents, scripture and writings of recent Popes. Sister makes it interesting and you sense the love she carries for her Lord. She invites the reader to draw closer to His Presence -- but not to stop there! His love is meant to flow through us to others as we leave the Adoration Chapel and return to our own corner of the world!

Sr. Joan brings a refreshing new look to an age-old practice in the Catholic Church. She speaks to the centrality of the Eucharist in our lives and how we contemplate it. This is a wonderful text for parishes who engage in or are interested in Eucharistic adoration. It is perfect also for group study. The theology and history are presented in a way that helps to make sense of a practice that has evolved over the centuries. It is also a rich spiritual text as it challenges each person to deepen his or her prayer life through Eucharistic adoration. Finally, Sr. Joan ups the ante on adoration as she takes it out of the exclusive realm of privacy and shows that it has a place in the faith and social communities we share with all persons in our lives and ministries.

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