

## **Adoration and Mother Teresa**

I had the great privilege and honor to know Mother Teresa, now Saint Teresa of Calcutta. Many of you are aware I have two children who are adopted.... my son was adopted from her orphanage in Calcutta, India and my daughter came from a Home for Unwed Mothers in California. I spent many days with the Missionaries of Charity in the Bronx, and the Mother Teresa Aids House in Greenwich Village. I would see Mother every time she visited New York or New Jersey; she always spent some time with my family. One thing I distinctly remember about Mother is she was always found in front of the Blessed Sacrament ALWAYS!

Most of the world knows that Saint Teresa's sisters devote their lives to seeking out and caring for the poorest of the poor, the sick and the homeless; however, I doubt that many know about the prayer life of their community. Each day, before they go out into the streets to minister to the sick and the dying, Mother Teresa's sisters spend two to three hours in prayer, assisting at Mass, and in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Once someone asked Mother Teresa how she could justify her sisters' spending so much time in private prayer instead of using that time to serve the sick and the poor. Mother Teresa replied, "If my sisters did not spend so much time in prayer, they could not serve the sick and the poor at all". Their prayer before the Holy Eucharist is the source of the strength and all that is needed to carry out their extremely difficult apostolate.

We as Catholics believe that Jesus gave us His own body and blood in the sacrament of Holy Eucharist. We believe that Jesus is really present in this sacrament! For us, the Holy Eucharist is not just a symbol; it is not just a memory, it is not just a promise. It truly is Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God. This is what we mean by the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. This is why we call the Holy Eucharist "the Blessed Sacrament". Why do we believe this? Not because some theologians say so, not even because the Church says so. We believe this for only one reason, because Jesus Christ says so, and Jesus cannot lie.

The love of God must be expressed and strengthened through prayer then and only then are we truly capable to reach out in the difficult task of loving and serving our neighbor. Charity flows from love which is why Eucharistic Adoration is so important.

Written by Mary Ann Gurliaccio