

## ADORATION 101

### THE SACRAMENT OF CHARITY:

#### *The Eucharist, Beauty and the Liturgy*

We enter now into the second part of Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI's Apostolic Exhortation "The Sacrament of Charity" (¶ 34-35) and begin our journey into learning the relationship between the Holy Eucharist and Its celebration.

Pope Benedict starts by showing us that the Eucharistic celebration is where our faith meets reason. It is precisely during the Eucharistic celebration where we take our intellectual (theological) understanding of the sacrifice made by Christ on Calvary, and connect it with the mystery which our faith tells us happens on the altar. We're reminded that both aspects of our belief as Catholics (faith and reason) have their source in the same Person, Christ Himself.

Consequently, when this connection is fully made, the true beauty of God manifests itself. Pope Benedict tells us, "*The truest beauty is the love of God, who definitively revealed Himself to us in the Pascal Mystery.*" The liturgy itself reflects the glory and beauty of God. It is where heaven kisses the earth and makes present to us the source of God's love. Christ calls us to Himself, encounters us, attracts us and delights us. It "... enables us to emerge from ourselves and draws us towards our true vocation, which is love."

The beauty of God is revealed first in creation, in the beauty and harmony of the universe and everything created here on earth. All throughout the Old Testament God shows forth His wonder and beauty over and through creation to His Chosen people. In the New Testament, the epiphany of beauty is fulfilled in God's revelation in Jesus Christ. Christ is the full manifestation of the glory of God and it is during the liturgy where He communicates this glory to us. Beauty is not simply a proportion of harmony and form, as in something delightful to look at, but as Scripture tells us when prophesying about Jesus in the Psalms, "*the fairest of the sons of men* (Ps. 45:3)", also said He, "*had no form or comeliness that we should look at Him, and no beauty that we should desire Him* (Isa. 53:2)".

It is through the eyes of faith and reason that we can have this encounter with Jesus, with true beauty, and with His gift of love. These considerations serve to show us the delicate care that needs to be taken for the Eucharistic liturgical celebration. It is never something to be taken lightly. NEXT WEEK: The Eucharistic celebration is the *Totus Christus* (the total Christ). – Paul A. Ray