EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

Meditation and Contemplation are two venerable modes of prayer that have been central to Christian spirituality for centuries. One of the wonderful things about those prayer forms is that they require no words, no texts, no particular structure other than the willingness to surrender one's self to the moment. And while contemplation or meditation can be practiced in many forms or venues, one of the most fruitful can be in the presence of Jesus' Eucharistic presence.

On the first Thursday of every month, St. Joseph's has offered that opportunity for many years, beginning with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament following the 8:30a.m. Mass and concluding with Benediction at noon. While those clearly are not the best hours for working people (myself included), I'm sure there are many in our parish who would find the peace and quiet of our beautiful church a perfect place to contemplate the loving presence of Jesus, whether for ten minutes or sixty.

At St. Celestine, where I was an associate, we had a beautifully simple, 24 hour Eucharistic Chapel (with a combination lock) where parishioners could come during the day or after a night shift to pray or simply to enjoy being in the peaceful presence of Jesus. At St. Bride, we had Eucharistic Adoration each year on the eve of Corpus Christi and New Year's Eve afternoon. At St. John Fisher, I offered Eucharistic Adoration for Peace on New Year's Eve, with Exposition following the vigil Mass and concluding with Benediction as the church bells welcomed in the New Year. And I always find the time after the evening Mass of Holy Thursday to be a great opportunity for reflection and contemplation.

So if you're free in the mornings on the first Thursday of every month, why not consider stopping into church to spend a bit of time in Jesus' presence? You don't need to bring a prayer book or a rosary, you don't need to say or do anything. All you have to do is bring **yourself** and your receptive heart to this time of quiet contemplation.

Fr. Bob