

## FR. JUSTO LOFEUDO

One of the Founders of the Missionaries of the Most Holy Eucharist

### *Renewal of parishes and dioceses through Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration*



#### *Overview*

Recent history: During the so called “normal times” the secularization of society has been so extended, that most of people lived as if God did not exist, and in many places, families were beset by the same states which were supposed to protect them not to mention that the families also suffered from internal crises everywhere. “Normal times” were the times when the faith of the majorities was on a continuous declining while apostasy became just a sign of the times. For those reasons and more, St. John Paul II had claimed for a new evangelization. The focus of the New Evangelization was aimed to all Catholics to be evangelized and then go forth to evangelize others.

In a special way, the New Evangelization is centred on “re-proposing” the Gospel to those who have experienced a crisis of faith. Pope Benedict XVI called for the re-proposing of the Gospel “*to those regions awaiting the first evangelization and to those regions where the roots of Christianity are deep but who have experienced a serious crisis of faith due to secularization.*”

The New Evangelization invited each Catholic to renew their relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church. Thanks to this concept of new evangelization (new in methods, in zeal, fervor, in expressions, but maintaining the same permanent content of the faith) where it has been applied good results were found.

Nowadays: As you may have noticed, I’m referring all those facts as belonging to the past because all that has happened before the corona virus phenomena began, before the lockdowns and all other restrictions;

when churches were still opened. Since then the situation has further deteriorated.

Since decades we were already observing dramatic decreases on faithful attendance to the Sunday masses in the parishes and decline continued year after year. Same thing has happened to the vocations fall to consecrated life, almost everywhere (and I'm talking before the forced lockdowns came out with all the other restrictions we know). If this was the scenario less than two years ago, we are now in a much worse situation. In majority of places we live a doom and gloom situation. Many churches keep closed and many of those open are seen with very few faithful inside, less than the restricted number allowed by the capacity imposed by civil authorities. In many, many places we face a truly bleak outlook.

### *What to do*

What to do under these circumstances? Is the Mass on stream and the web-camera focusing the exposed Blessed Sacrament a solution? How to make sure that remaining faith does not end up being lost this way? Where and how to apply the correct therapy to reverse the situation? The answer cannot be other than to turn to the Lord. You could reply, but isn't that what we in the Church are trying to do? What we should do, "yes", but sadly, we don't always do or have done what we should have to do. If we do not go back to the Lord, that is, if He is not the center of everyone's life, of parish life, of our entire Church, then things will get even worse, because nobody but the Lord can stop the downfall trend.

I can tell you about an experience that, for sure, many of you may also had. I have seen terrified people entering the temple as if they were entering into a very dangerous infection area. We should wonder: What kind of message have we given to these people, to faithful? The temple as a highly insecure place and the Eucharist as a potential transmission carrier? Those same people could later be seen without fear chatting outside the church or sitting outside in a bar. Needless to say that if we are not capable of conveying faith in the Eucharist, on the real, live, true presence of the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament to the faithful any other

effort to change the situation will be worthless. That's why Eucharist adoration must be established in each single parish. Adoration is a vital need to the survival of faith. Not only survival but reinforcement too. "*Adoration is not a luxury but a priority*", Pope BXVI said.

*Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration (PEA), the solution*

Wherever be possible (and the measure of the possible is given by our faith, because I have seen that the Lord made the impossible become true reality) that adoration should be perpetual, that is, without any interruption at all. Day and night, ever.

In other words, the only possibility to reverse the current situation is through a strong faith revival and in this regard Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration (PEA) is the most suitable means. We have the evidence that when the Lord is adored without any interruption, day and night, the renewal of the Church takes place, and not only dioceses, but families and individuals as well, are being deeply transformed.

In fact, PEA is a concrete and extremely effective means to make the Lord becomes the center of the life of the Church and of society.

We call PEA to the uninterrupted adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, exposed in a monstrance, day and night all year long. Ceaseless adoration has been known and practiced since many centuries but inside religious congregations.

However, since the 60's there is a new reality, namely the PEA chapels carried out primarily by laypersons.

Urgent call for a Eucharist Revival: It's necessary to increase the number of parishes which their pastoral life be rooted in and nurtured by the Eucharist celebrated and adored on a continuous basis. One major reason is that we have to deal with the lack of respect and reverence towards the Eucharist and it's imperative to return to the former splendor. If previously to the corona virus, Eucharist had been trivialized the situation became worse afterwards. The reason for such increase in banalization was due to the fact that safety measures unwillingly provoke the removal of any remaining sign of reverence, of respect and adoration to the Lord and caused real Mass and Blessed Sacrament adoration

replacements by false substitutes on screens. Let's remember what the holy Pope JP II had already warned us about that peril when he stated *"There are in fact places where we note an almost complete abandonment of the cult of Eucharistic adoration. To this can be added, in this or that ecclesial context, abuses which contribute to obscure right faith and Catholic doctrine concerning this admirable Sacrament. Sometimes a very reductive understanding of the Eucharistic Mystery emerges. Deprived of its sacrificial value, it is experienced as if it did not go beyond the meaning and value of a convivial and fraternal meeting"* (John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, n. 10, 2003).

For that very reason, it's extremely important to call the faithful's attention to the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament and the vital need we have to adore God in the Eucharist. We need to remind them that the Lord Jesus Christ deserves adoration because He is God, and Eucharist adoration because the Eucharist is He, the Divine Person, the Eternal Word became man in middle of us, hidden His glorious presence beneath the Eucharistic veils. Hidden to the eyes, to the senses, but to be discovered by faith.

We also recall Paul VI's "Credo of the People of God" (June 30 1968) saying: *"it is our very sweet duty to honor and adore in the blessed Host which our eyes see, the Incarnate Word whom they cannot see, and who, without leaving heaven, is made present before us"*. Let's notice that it's a duty and that duty is, as the Pope put it, sweet not bitter nor hard, nor arduous. It's a duty because implies the commandment *"It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you adore and him alone shall you serve'"* (Mt 4:10). At the same time, the duty to comply with the commandment is "sweet" as it has been written in *"Mysterium Fidei"*, the Paul VI's Encyclical devoted to the Eucharist: *"Anyone who has a special devotion to the sacred Eucharist and who tries to repay Christ's infinite love for us with an eager and unselfish love of his own, will experience and fully understand – and this will bring great delight and benefit to his soul – just how precious is a life hidden with Christ in God (69) and just how worthwhile it is to carry on a conversation with Christ, for there is nothing more consoling here on earth, nothing more efficacious for progress along the paths of holiness"* (Paul VI, Encyclical Letter, *Mysterium Fidei*, 67. 1965).

In spite of everything and even if adoring the Blessed Sacrament could turn in certain occasions a painful task or even if apparently no fruit be perceived, the Lord is worthy to be adored for Himself, for He is our Creator, our Redeemer, our Savior and He loves us with eternal love. We are not trying to find selling points for the eventual spiritual benefits (although there are many), but rather to show the importance of recognizing adoration as act of justice, and also of reparation, where God is First in our lives because He is God and we receive our lives from Him, out of His Love. He is Alpha and Omega, everything comes from Him and everything returns to Him.

And we should return to Him remaining in Him, in His love. *“Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in Me and I in him”* (Jn 6:56); *“Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing”* (Jn 15:5). Therefore, remaining in Jesus, before the Eucharist Presence of the Lord, in adoration, is the best way to have a fruitful life.

We are plenty of testimonies about the graces coming from perpetual adoration, how many fruits are when the Lord is adored day and night!

Fruits, graces coming from PEA: We could safely state that the main grace that any person, particularly those who are far from faith, perceives when entering into a chapel of perpetual adoration is peace, paschal peace. Peace that makes each PEAC an oasis of peace. Peace that comes from the Risen Christ. Peace Jesus got for us from His Passion and Death in the Cross. Peace that he left to us at the Last Supper by virtue of His sacrifice on the Cross: *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you”* (Jn 14:27). It is the peace of the Risen One of John 20,19-20: *“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side.”*

In short, the peace which we find in the PEAC comes from Jesus Christ’s glorious wounds, flow from His Sacrifice on the Cross and is made present in the Eucharist.

Just to illustrate with examples what’s being said so far regarding fruits may be worthwhile to mention – among hundreds – a few

testimonies: A woman who adored in a PEAC in Mexico and was going on vacation, asked a relative of hers to cover her Holy hour during six weeks. In total six hours, one hour per week (i.e. a month and a half). The man who had to make the replacement during the lady's vacation time consider himself a believer though he never stepped in church. Anyway, the man agreed to go to the chapel at those specified hours and days. As he knew very little or nothing about our faith he asked what he was supposed to do. The woman said, "You do nothing, just be punctual and stay there in silence." "But how's possible to do nothing?", replied the man with bewildered eyes. "Yes, just nothing. Because you will be in front of the Lord who is in the Eucharist." The man understood nothing, but anyhow faithfully complied by going at the chapel during the 6 weeks at the same hour and day. When the woman returned from her vacation, he told her that he wanted to sign up for a weekly hour because that peace reigning in the chapel he had never known before in his life. A similar case occurred, among so many, in Italy. A woman left a note in the chapel that said: *"I have not set foot in a Catholic church for more than 10 years. If I did it before, it was only for an art visit and nothing else. Now I'm here and I don't even know why I came in. But I believe in the peace that is here and I want to find it."* We know it was a woman because she signed "Maria Grazia".

Recently a psychologist publicly offered a testimony about the unique therapeutic action derived from adoring the Blessed Sacrament. He referred a case of a young man with a very strong depression and on the verge of suicide whom he asked to go to the Blessed Sacrament every day and stay, if possible for an hour. The young man at first objected but later accepted. The therapist told how quickly the young man began to come out of his depression and how now he is recovered and became a night adorer in a PEAC, in Buenos Aires.

Whoever finds peace at the end becomes, or rather the Lord makes him, a bearer of peace. Peace does not end with the person, but when he has received such grace takes peace to others, to his family, to his environment.

A chapel of PEA is a center of outreach, of irradiation of peace and many other graces as well. In fact, the Lord pours grace upon grace from the Blessed Sacrament when people stay with Him. Graces such as joy,

light, healings, and, above all, love much love. Many vocations to religious and family life were born within the PEAC.

No action may be fruitful nor effective if doesn't depart from Jesus Christ, for *"without me you can do nothing"*, says the Lord. Mother Teresa used to say *"we Missionaries of Charity first stay with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament for then spend time with Christ in the poor"*. Pope Benedict wrote: *"I would like to recall the priority of prayer over action since it is on prayer that the effectiveness of action depends. The Church's mission largely depends on each person's personal relationship with the Lord Jesus and must, therefore, be nourished by prayer: 'It is time to reaffirm the importance of prayer in the face of the activism and the growing secularism'"* (Deus Caritatis Est, n, 37).

The Lord calls everybody to come and stay with Him and the ones who respond to His call become disciples and apostles afterwards. Although each adorer is individually called to take part in the PEA, the adorer becomes member of a special Eucharist community that unfolds over time.

By means of PEA people grow spiritually in their personal relationship with Jesus and contribute to evangelize the world, that is to Church's mission to bring Christ to the world and the world to Christ. And that's exactly the purpose of the New Evangelization. Many lives change, many conversions happen for *"I am making everything new!"*, says the Lord. PEA means a life renewal, a parish life renewal, personal life renewals. Conversions, and more exactly salvation, healing, spiritual and even physical healing, vocations, protection, light in times of darkness, all come out of PEA. At the same time, adorers during their hour of adoration make reparations for all the sacrileges, outrages and indifference committed against the Blessed Sacrament.

PEA during lockdowns: Most if not all PEAC had to go through all kind of restrictions, from very reduced amount of people allowed in the chapel to curfews during the whole night. In front of the facts there are three possibilities to follow: a) simply accept resigning completely to the situation; b) try to find a way out or some kind of compromise with authorities, and c) resist at any cost, in the sense of fighting to keep the chapel from closing. The latter happened in many places with successful results. It must say that night adorers are very responsible and depend-

able. Thus, in order to cope with curfews during the night, adorer teams were formed, of 2 or 3 persons, to cover the whole night (let's say from 10 pm to 6 am). They call themselves the "heroic night" teams. One team per night. So, they could keep the PEAC running day and night with no interruption whatsoever.

### *Mission and Practical aspects*

Whether be to establish or to restart perpetual adoration and then to ensure continuity and maintenance over time, a mission is necessary. The mission is supported by two columns, one is made up of preaching to awaken to the truth of the real presence of the Lord in the Eucharist in order to attract adorers willing to spend at least one hour a week before the Blessed Sacrament. The other column is the coordination organization that ensures the Blessed Sacrament will never be left alone, that is, there will always be at least one adorer before the Lord.

It is also important to note that the mission is not only aimed at establishing perpetual adoration, but also at the devotion and respect for the Eucharist revival in all faithful, not only signed up adorers.

It's important to say that the Coordinators' organization is wholly functional and lay personnel are the coordinators.

The mission consists of preaching at all festive day Masses and on the formation of coordinators' teams.

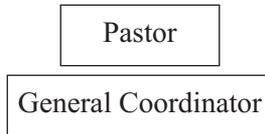
Preaching is based on the Sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church. Preaching is aimed at highlighting the fundamental truth of our faith regarding the living, real, substantial presence of our Lord in His Sacrament of Love and also reminding that the Eucharist has been given to us to be celebrated and adored, and celebration necessarily implies adoration. As Pope Benedict XVI put it: "*the act of adoration outside of Mass prolongs and intensifies all that takes place during the liturgical celebration itself*" (Sacramentum Caritatis, #66).

At the same time, people are invited to sign up for at least one weekly hour of adoration and to be part of the coordination structure. By signing

up, i.e. committing to take an hour a week, the faithful becomes a link in an unbroken chain of faith and love around Jesus in the Eucharist offering honor, gratitude and recognition to the Lord as tribute to His Divine Majesty and His Eternal Love for us.

Meetings with future adorers and coordinator candidates are held and appointed coordinators are subsequently trained. This, in short, is the mission for establishing PEA in a parish or a city.

### COORDINATING ORGANIZATION



1. Oversees the adoration program and is responsible to the pastor to ensure all aspects are correctly observed.
2. Works with the volunteer Database Manager to provide all adorers with a current Master Adoration Schedule. Likewise, the Database Manager works with the General Coordinator on a regular basis to keep the Master Adoration Schedule up-to-date.
3. The General Coordinator conducts organizational meetings.
4. The General Coordinator maintains the flow of communication at all times and disseminates information to the Shift Coordinators so that the adoration program runs smoothly.
5. Prior to start-up General Coordinator conducts weekly meetings with Division Leaders.
6. General Coordinator and the 4 Shift Coordinators constitute a task force devoted to increase the number of adorers by different means (brochures, local TV and radios, publications...)

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| Shift Coordinator<br>Night<br>12 AM – 6 AM | Shift Coordinator<br>Morning<br>6 AM – 12 Noon | Shift Coordinator<br>Afternoon<br>12 PM – 6 PM | Shift Coordinator<br>Evening<br>6 PM – 12 Midnight |
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Shift Coordinator

1. Responsible for initial scheduling process. For each Shift Coordinator the main goal is to cover the shift ( $6h \times 7 d = 42 h$  per shift).
2. General oversight of shift and schedules.
3. Maintains contact with Hourly Leaders.

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|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Hourly Leader<br>(6 total) | Hourly Leader<br>(6 total) | Hourly Leader<br>(6 total) | Hourly Leader<br>(6 total) |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|

Hourly Leader

1. Direct reference for the hourly adorers
2. Ensures the presence of at least an adorer at the hour
3. Checks the signature log on a regular basis to ensure that the hour has been covered.
4. Calls adorers whenever they do not sign in at scheduled time.
5. Ensures that each adorer has a clear understanding of the proper and effective method of finding substitutes if they are unable to keep their holy hour in a given week.
6. If the adorer is unable to get a substitute, the Hourly Leader gets a substitute.
7. Calls the gathering of their adorers before perpetual adoration begins or just after, so all can get to know each other and know what to do in case of absence.
- 8.

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|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Adorers<br>(6 teams total) | Adorers<br>(6 teams total) | Adorers<br>(6 teams total) | Adorers<br>(6 teams total) |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|

Each hourly team

1. Consists of adorers assigned to the same hour each week, e.g. 5–6 PM Sunday through Saturday
2. Fulfills their own holy hour each week or finds a substitute when necessary.

Database Manager