**September Chaplain’s Report**

***O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine…***

Growing up, I always looked forward to September. There was a certain excitement that came with the beginning of a new school year and the mystery that accompanied it. So too, there are the normal holidays we look forward too officially or unofficially, like: the NFL Season Opener, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas to name a few.

In the seminary, a new feast was added to these for me namely, All Saints Day. All Saints Day at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary marked the time of year wherein we celebrate Forty Hours Eucharistic Devotions leading up to the celebration of St. Charles Borromeo’s Feast Day on November 4th.

I had attended Forty Hours devotions almost every year in grade school, when we’d be brought across the school yard to the Church at Holy Innocents to spend time before our Lord but I never quite appreciated the full meaning of that special time with our Lord in Eucharistic Adoration.

While in my sophomore year I attended a Student Leadership Conference with others from the same Newman Center hosted by FOCUS. While there, we had the opportunity to take part in adoration with 3,000 other college students. It was there I was struck for the first time that before me was Jesus Christ, living and present. I came back from that encounter different. Many things still needed to be worked out in my life and yet I knew if I ever needed Him…He was only a short drive way.

In the Eucharist, Jesus Christ makes himself present to us really and truly under the forms of bread and wine. In the month of August, we spent several weeks of Sunday Masses unpacking the sixth chapter of John’s Gospel often called the “Bread of Life” discourse. In that chapter Jesus reveals to his disciples: ***“I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.” [[1]](#footnote-1)***

At the Last Supper, Jesus literally hands himself over to his disciples when he says: ***“This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me.”[[2]](#footnote-2)*** To this day, as Catholics, we carry out his command to **“do *this* in memory of me”** every time we gather to celebrate the Eucharist. Because we believe he is so truly present the following the consecration we do not discard the host as common bread rather we reserve it so that those not able to be with us might partake of it and know his loving presence too. Further he remains there for us to visit him and beg him at any hour, making good on his promise: ***“behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”[[3]](#footnote-3)***

The annual Forty Hours Eucharistic Devotions are a time for our parishes to demonstrate our love for Jesus who graciously makes himself available to us whenever and wherever we need him. The time may be seen as a little retreat in the midst of an otherwise busy schedule; a special time set aside to grow closer to our Lord in prayer and devotion. This last piece is especially important. These acts of devotion serve to increase devotion in our lives. In the spiritual life, ***devotion*** is the promptness of the will in the service of God. It’s that ***devotion*** that makes our works of mercy as Catholic men even more fruitful than they’d be by our own efforts alone.

As Knights of Columbus we ought to know better each year the truth of Jesus’ words in the Gospel of John: ***“Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.”[[4]](#footnote-4)*** The Forty Hours Devotions at St. Robert Bellarmine this September and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel this November provide excellent opportunities to grow in our love for the Lord, offer reparation for sins against the Blessed Sacrament, which are many, and be agents of repentance, reform, and rebuilding in the Church today.

**Practical Tips:**

***1) Take time to view the series on FORMED (available through St. Robert’s) called: Presence. All about Eucharistic Devotion.***

***2) Pray before the Exposed Blessed Sacrament in Adoration when available at Church. In the same vein, make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle (same Jesus is there either way!)***

***3) Sign up for a time of adoration during Forty Hours Devotions at St. Robert’s or Our Lady of Mt. Carmel***

***4) Read up on the Sacrament of the Eucharist in the Catechism (CCC 1322-1499) available here:*** [***http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\_INDEX.HTM***](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM)

**Coming Up:**

***September***

* Silver Rose Program – Sunday, 9/9/2018
  + Our Lady of Mt. Carmel at 1:00PM
  + Hour of Prayer for Life
* Feast of St. Robert Bellarmine – Monday, 9/17/2018
  + Feast will be transferred to Sunday in Parish of St. Robert’s
* St. Robert Bellarmine Parish Forty Hours, 9/16-9/18
  + Eucharistic Devotions each night at 7:00PM preceded by Rosary of Reparation for Sins of Sex Abuse Scandal at 6:30PM
* Triduum of St. Terese of Lisieux at Carmel in Philadelphia, 9/28-10/1
  + Mass and Devotions 6:30PM

1. [*New American Bible*](https://ref.ly/logosres/nabre?ref=BibleNABRE.Jn6.51&off=3&ctx=%E2%80%A2it+and+not+die.+51%C2%A0~I+am+the+living+brea). (2011). (Revised Edition, Jn 6:51). Washington, DC: The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid., Lk 22:19. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid., Mt 28:20). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [*New American Bible*](https://ref.ly/logosres/nabre?ref=BibleNABRE.Jn15.5&off=39&ctx=u+are+the+branches.+~Whoever+remains+in+m). (2011). (Revised Edition, Jn 15:5). Washington, DC: The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)