**教宗若望保祿二世**

**活於感恩祭的教會 (Ecclesia de Eucharistia)**

**二零零三年四月十七日**

**致主教、神父、執事度奉獻生活的 男士、女士、所有平信徒**

**論感恩聖祭與教會的關係**

**２５ 在彌撒以外的時間朝拜聖體 ，對教會生活有不可估量的價值。 朝拜聖體與感恩祭的舉行有很緊密的關係。基督臨在於彌撒後所保存的餅酒形下－－而且只要餅酒形存留不變，基督尌一直臨在－－這臨在是源自聖祭的舉行，並且是為了供人實領聖體或神領聖體。神職牧者有責任鼓勵信友朝拜聖體，並要以身作則，特別是明供聖體，並在臨在於餅酒形下的基督前祈禱。**

**能與耶穌共處、像祂所愛的那位門徒一樣，靠在耶穌懷裡（參若十三 25），並感受到祂心中對我們無窮的愛，是一件幸福的事。 如果對現代基督徒的首要要求是祈禱，那麼，在臨在於至聖聖體中的基督前，我們怎會不再度感覺到需要與祂做心靈上的交談、安靜地朝拜祂、衷心地愛祂呢？親愛的弟兄姊妹，你們知道我曾多次經驗到這些，且由其中得到力量、安慰和支持嗎!**

**教會訓導一再稱揚並推薦這項敬禮，許多聖人也如此身體力行：在 這方面最傑出的聖人尌是聖雅風（St. Alphonsus Liguori），他寫道： 「在一切敬禮中，朝拜至聖聖體內的耶穌，是僅次於各個聖事的最重要的敬禮，是天主最珍愛的，也是對我們最有幫助的一種敬禮」。聖體聖事是一個無價的寶藏：不僅藉著舉行感恩聖事，而且彌撒時間之外藉著在聖體前祈禱，我們都能與這恩寵的泉源接觸。基督徒團體若能以我在《新千年的開始》及《童貞瑪利亞玫瑰經》這二份宗座牧函中所提出的精神，渴望瞻想基督的面容，必會培養出對聖體的敬禮，而這又能延長和增加我們在主之體血內共融所結的果實。**

Pope St. John Paul II’s encyclical on "Ecclesia de Eucharistia"

"25. The worship of the Eucharist outside of the Mass is of inestimable value for the life of the Church. This worship is strictly linked to the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The presence of Christ under the sacred species reserved after Mass — a presence which lasts as long as the species of bread and of wine remain — derives from the celebration of the sacrifice and is directed towards communion, both sacramental and spiritual. It is the responsibility of Pastors to encourage, also by their personal witness, the practice of Eucharistic adoration, and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in particular, as well as prayer of adoration before Christ present under the Eucharistic species.

"It is pleasant to spend time with him, to lie close to his breast like the Beloved Disciple (cf. *Jn* 13:25) and to feel the infinite love present in his heart. If in our time Christians must be distinguished above all by the 'art of prayer,' how can we not feel a renewed need to spend time in spiritual converse, in silent adoration, in heartfelt love before Christ present in the Most Holy Sacrament? How often, dear brother and sisters, have I experienced this, and drawn from it strength, consolation and support!

"This practice, repeatedly praised and recommended by the Magisterium, is supported by the example of many saints. Particularly outstanding in this regard was Saint Alphonsus Liguori, who wrote: 'Of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest after the sacraments, the one dearest to God and the one most helpful to us.' The Eucharist is a priceless treasure: by not only celebrating it but also by praying before it outside of Mass we are enabled to make contact with the very wellspring of grace. A Christian community desirous of contemplating the face of Christ in the spirit which I proposed in the Apostolic Letters *Novo Millennio Ineunte* and *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* cannot fail also to develop this aspect of Eucharistic worship, which prolongs and increases the fruits of our communion in the body and blood of the Lord.

"In the course of the day the faithful should not omit visiting the Blessed Sacrament, which in accordance with liturgical law must be reserved in churches with great reverence in a prominent place. Such visits are a sign of gratitude, an expression of love and an acknowledgment of the Lord's presence."