



Musings on the philosophical deficiencies of Carrot Cake and the ‘Spiritual, But Not Religious’



S o m e things just don't make sense. For me, the phenomenon which epitomizes this reality the most is carrot cake. Carrot cake doesn't make sense. Vegetables and cake don't go together. What we have here is a contradiction in terms. Why any person would contaminate perfectly good cake batter with slimy, forgotten carrots from the bottom of the refrigerator drawer is unfathomable. To make matters worse, in order to compensate for this lapse in judgment of adding shredded veggies to spongy cake, the baker is compelled to add two inches of icky-sweet cream cheese icing on top thereby doubling the caloric intake and practically guaranteeing a sugar-induced haze in the immediate aftermath.

By means of comparison, for those individuals who work in ministry carrot cake is the equivalent of the somewhat common declaration: "I'm not really religious...I'm spiritual." That just doesn't make sense. Conceived of loosely, a religion is a set of beliefs and practices concerning spiritual beings (God, gods, angels, demons), the invisible spiritual realm (Heaven,

Hell, Hades, Valhalla), and relationship of the spiritual with the human soul (peace, turmoil, morality, reward, punishment). Considering how you can't even define religion without having recourse to spiritual terms, trying to separate the two quickly becomes a house built upon sand.

In reality, most people who are "spiritual, but not religious" are really just against organized religion. Fascinatingly, if you ask one of these people what being "spiritual, but not religious" means for them, they either respond rather unsatisfactorily or begin listing a whole bunch of things that they believe in and actions that they take to "connect" to these spiritual entities. In effect, these "spiritual" people are very "religious" (they have a set of spiritual beliefs and actions), but it's a religion of their own construction and liking.

Of course, left to our own devices, we humans have always assembled religions, so there's nothing new there, but we often go off the rails pretty quickly when designing such concepts ourselves. In ages past, these religions usually consisted of idolatry, superstition, and demon worship. Today, "spiritual people" often have

recourse to crystals, communing with nature, and meditative practices that run the gamut between the benign and occultic. Either way, religions of human origin are called paganism.

Thankfully as Catholics, our religion is not of human fabrication. Catholicism is of divine origin, transmitted directly from God the Father, through the Incarnate Son Jesus Christ, to the Catholic Church guided by the Holy Spirit for 2000+ years. As believers in the one, true Faith, we need to take the recurring opportunity that the Church in her wisdom provides for us with the season of Lent to work on our spirituality. We hope this Lenten newsletter provides you with ideas and concrete actions to fortify your belief in Jesus Christ, the salvation He procured for us, and the eternal reward possible for those who persevere in faith and works.

So, eat carrot cake on Fat Tuesday if you must, but don't unwittingly think you can be a spiritual person without religion. It just doesn't make sense and will lead you into all kinds of heretical beliefs—like thinking that putting carrots in cake is a good idea!

Eucharistic Adoration: Be Present in His *Real Presence*

To better understand the what and why of Eucharistic Adoration, let's first decode these two words separately, then together, in order to reflect on their significance.

What does *Eucharistic* mean?

Eucharistic describes 'what kind' of Adoration and is made from the proper noun Eucharist and the suffix -ic. The Eucharist translates to gratitude, thanksgiving or grace. It is the source and summit of our Catholic faith [CCC1324], the Real Presence of Jesus Christ, the Eucharistic Sacrifice of his Body begun at the Last Supper. The Eucharist is Jesus' gift to us of himself in this Sacrament of love. Each time we take the Eucharist in Holy Communion we are accepting Jesus' salvific love, his gift of grace.

What does it mean to *adore*?

In our modern culture, the overuse of this word has muted its meaning. One may squeal about adoring a puppy, or a new pop-song, or even how a new outfit looks on a friend—"so adorable!" But, in its pure meaning, 'to adore' means to show deep love or respect; or to worship or venerate. If we add the suffix "tion," which means 'state of or process,' to the end of adore, we form the noun adoration: the state or process of deeply loving and respecting, or deeply worshiping or venerating.

So, *Eucharistic Adoration* then is the state or process of showing deep love, worship, and reverence to Jesus Christ, who is truly present in the Eucharist. Over centuries, the practice of meditation and prayerful devotion to this Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance (an ornate vessel in which the Eucharist can be seen) outside of Mass became more frequent. Thus, it was regarded as an extension of the Church's liturgical celebration of the Mass.

In modern times, adoring the exposed Sacrament outside of the tabernacle can occur at scheduled periods of time known as Eucharistic Adoration or as part of celebrations such as The Mass of the Lord's Supper or Corpus Christi. It can occur as part of a devotional known as the Rite of Eucharistic Exposition and Benediction, which

is the ritualistic process of exposing the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance on the altar by a priest or deacon, spending time reverently adoring, and then reposing the Blessed Sacrament at the end of the devotion. Whenever the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, someone must be present. It must never be left unattended.

Why should we go to Eucharistic Adoration?

The Blessed Sacrament is Jesus—his True Presence—exposed to us salvifically, lovingly, and intimately! Just as in Mass we are invited into Communion with Jesus through the Eucharist, so too are we invited into deeper relationship with Jesus at Eucharistic Adoration. We can gaze lovingly upon the One who first loved us. It is a

time for us to feel loved and safe, to be vulnerable and exposed, to silence all the worldly noises and to fully occupy ourselves with his Presence—give up our need for control and trust in him.

Why do I go to Eucharistic Adoration?

It's spiritual nourishment. When I go to Eucharistic Adoration, I feel fully engaged with the Triune God in the Sacrament. As I gaze upon the monstrance, I see my Heavenly Father gazing lovingly upon me. His gaze wraps

me in the warm embrace of a Father who knows me and accepts me for who I am, even in my brokenness. To him I offer prayers of gratitude and intercession and ask for forgiveness of my sins. I sit comfortably in my smallness feeling the enormity of his Greatness.

During the silence I call to Jesus, my friend and companion, my model of how to live rightly. I talk to him and share my vulnerabilities because his love is unconditional. I thank him for dying for my sins and for walking with me and never leaving my side. He gave us his Mother to be our Mother, so I often pray the Rosary and ask for her intercessions while adoring.

I also pray to the Holy Spirit who fortifies me with
see EUCHARISTIC ADORATION | continued on page 3



Lessons in prayer start in kindergarten

Is it ever too early to learn how to pray?

Mrs. Suzie Cox, St. Aloysius kindergarten teacher, doesn't think so.

Prayer is a frequent topic in Mrs. Cox's class. She shares with students that there are three kinds of prayers: "Thank you," "Please help," and "I'm sorry." God hears even silent prayers, she emphasizes.

Prayer can be described as a habit, and Mrs. Cox is instilling this habit in her students. They pray in class regularly. "When we pray, I let them pick one prayer to share aloud each day with classmates." Since prayer

involves listening as well as talking, she encourages them to pay attention to what God is telling them.

Here are some of the things her students are hearing when they pray:

Listen to my parents!

Help the people who don't have much.

Be kind to your friends.

Mrs. Cox's youngsters seem to be good listeners; they also hear God telling them that "He likes that I pray before I go to sleep" and "He is taking care of my Grandpa—he is in Heaven with God now."

We can regard prayer as a skill,

one that must be practiced to become second nature as we mature. But at the same time, the prayers of kindergartners remind us that, as Jesus said, the young can have insights that come straight from God:

"I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children." (Luke 10:21)

No matter what point we are at in our faith journey, we can imitate Mrs. Cox's students and pray straight from our hearts.

| BY CHRISTEN GIBLIN

'Being Catholic' Series

February 15: The Book of Job

presented by Fr. Art Niewiadomski
Pastor of Holy Family, North Baltimore, and of Sacred Heart, Deshler

March 1: How to Make a Good Confession

presented by Fr. Joe Poggemeyer
Pastor of St. Wendelin's, Fostoria

March 15: Eucharistic Adoration

presented by Mrs. Valerie French
Former religion teacher and principal in Norwalk Catholic Schools. She has been giving one hour a week to adoration for over 20 years

April 19: How to get More out of the Mass

presented by Fr. Phil Smith
Diocesan Director of Vocations

May 3: Topic to be announced

May 17: Topic to be announced

(One of the May dates will be a presentation about Mary, the Mother of God.)

"Being Catholic" takes place in the Davis Narthex at 6:30 p.m. Recorded versions are uploaded to our YouTube channel: St. Aloysius Catholic Church BG. Find the link on our parish website.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION | continued from page 2

the gifts of strength, wisdom, understanding, and piety. When I reflect on verses or passages from the Bible, I know that the Holy Spirit inspired these words and they give me strength, guide my daily life, and help me to trust; they reveal Truth. His Real Presence nourishes our spirits and draws us closer to him.

How Can I Go to Eucharistic Adoration?

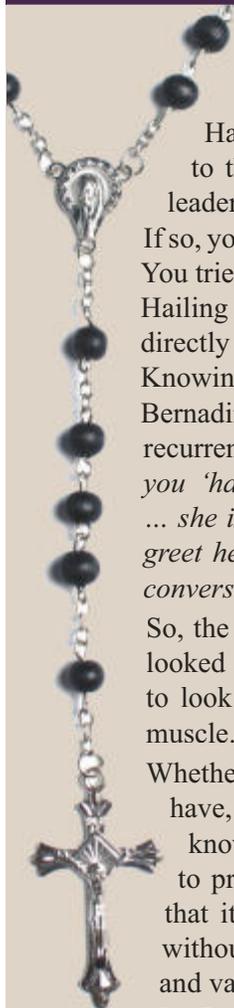
If you have never attended Eucharistic Adoration, or simply want to enrich the experience, come learn the Hows. There are many ways to venerate and prayerfully adore the Blessed Sacrament. The "Being Catholic" session on March 15 will be about Eucharistic Adoration. Come learn more and then come adore!

First Holy Communion families, there will be a special family Eucharistic Adoration learning session. Mrs. Brennan and Mrs. Simler will provide more information. All families with school age children are encouraged to spend time in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

| BY DENISE BRENNAN
DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND YOUTH FORMATION

Eucharistic Adoration

Currently in our parish, Eucharistic Adoration is on Fridays in Clare Chapel from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. We also have Eucharistic Adoration in the main church on Days of Grace, which includes the Rite of Exposition and Benediction, and have SAY Teen Eucharistic Adoration sessions in the main church monthly as announced.



Looking at the Rosary in a New Way

Have you ever hailed a cab? Sang “Hail to the Victors”? Hailed a great success or leader?

If so, you enthusiastically called out to someone. You tried to attract their attention.

Hailing a person is a wonderful act. It speaks directly to them.

Knowing this, ponder for a moment what St. Bernadine of Siena said about the Rosary’s most recurrent prayer: *“You must know that when you ‘hail’ Mary, she immediately greets you! ... she is utterly courteous and pleasant. If you greet her, she will answer you right away and converse with you!”*

So, the Hail Mary is a conversation? I’d never looked at it that way, but Lent is a good time to look at things differently. To flex our faith muscle. To work on the fundamentals.

Whether you pray the Rosary everyday or never have, we all have this much in common: we know its basic prayers. That makes it simple to pray, even for children. The downside is that it can cause us to rattle off the prayers without thinking, thus losing their meaning and value.

It’s Lent. It’s time to up our game. Let’s reflect on this ancient Rosary prayer in a new way.

Warm Up, Limber Up

Before exercise we stretch. Prior to a long drive we check under the hood. Ahead of the Rosary, we should take inventory of our hearts. It’s a time to become quiet, meditative and reflective. We slow down, rest and inspect our hearts. We have to want this and be fully ready or we won’t be able to hear God during our talking. After all, conversation is a two-way street.

Knockin’ On Heaven’s Door

Remember nagging your parents as a child and saying their names 50 times to get their attention? You call Mary’s name over and over during a Rosary – and she never tires of it! It’s like you get to knock on her front door and watch her warmly greet you over 50 times. Like a close friend, she’s all ears and ready to listen.

Sinners, Raise Your Hand

Some surveys suggest we sin 50 times a day. Others say it’s in the hundreds. While that may be difficult to quantify, there’s no doubting we all make mistakes. However, it’s been said that a church is a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints. In that vein, it’s good to hear a constant reminder through the Rosary – “pray for us sinners.” It’s not that we’re focusing on the negative, we’re aiming for humility.

It’s a Rhythm for Life

Do you ever find yourself watching others at a graduation, wedding, or funeral, and pondering your own life’s events? You can’t help but think about all the joyful, sorrowful and glorious phases you’ve encountered. The same happens when we pray the mysteries of the Rosary. We put ourselves into those scenes and start to relate to the Holy Family. In many ways, we’re not all that different – we find we’re incredibly connected through Faith and Communion.

Make Time for It

You might be thinking, “I don’t have time for a Rosary.” However, you could have more time than you think. Rosaries can be prayed on walks, commutes and anywhere in-between. Truth is, we all have 20 minutes a day. The key is to stop, sit and make time. If you can do that, you’ll find a Rosary to be like eating and sleeping – very habitual and a necessary part of your day.

| BY TOM KONECNY

PARISH RECONCILIATION SERVICES

All Saints

Wednesday, February 24
at 7 p.m.

St. Rose

Monday, March 8
at 7 p.m.

St. John XXIII

Tuesday, March 16
at 7 p.m.

St. Aloysius

DAY OF GRACE

Wednesday
March 31
8 a.m.-8 p.m.

St. Aloysius

Thursday, March 4
at 7 p.m.

St. Pat’s

Sunday, March 14
at 2 p.m.

St. Joe’s, Maumee

Wednesday, March 24
at 7 p.m.

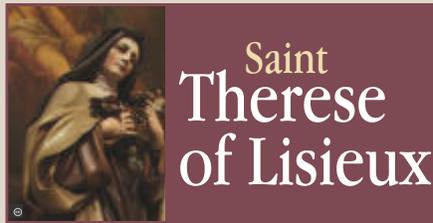
SAINTS OF THE EUCHARIST

It would be strange if a saint wasn't considered a "Saint of the Eucharist." However, there are some throughout the ages who are particularly identified as having a special devotion to the Eucharist. Some of the most intriguing are the modern-day saints. These contemporary saints are so interesting because we can identify with them on some level, whether it is their lifestyle, their clothes (including backpacks), their interests, or some other circumstance surrounding their lives. Modern thinking and social distractions could have easily challenged their devotion to the Eucharist, but did not.

| BY JULIE KISOR

How we can get closer to becoming a Saint of the Eucharist

- ① Regularly attend weekend Mass with the family.
- ② Adore the raised Body and Blood of Christ at Mass praying silently, "My Lord and my God."
- ③ Participate in Eucharistic Adoration.
- ④ Genuflect with reverence before the Blessed Sacrament.
- ⑤ Engage family in regular Scripture study and catechesis on the Eucharist.



(pronounced leez-yuh)
1873 - 1897

Teresa of Lisieux, also known as the Little Flower, was mild in demeanor, lived simply, and endured quietly through a painful illness. She became a Carmelite nun at fifteen years old. In her autobiography, she writes about a time when she felt pure joy after receiving Communion; it was a promise of the joy that was to come.

She is remembered for doing little things with great love.

What does that mean in our lives? It means that we can go about our daily work and our errands without complaining. We can even offer a prayer while we do our family's laundry, smile while shoveling the snow for a neighbor, and encourage others when they are down – little things with great love.

Feast day is October 1.



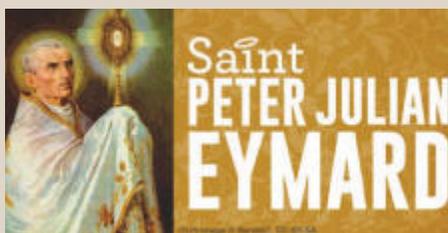
1991-2006

Blessed Carlo Acutis, not identified as a saint here on Earth yet, was born and raised in Europe. His parents weren't religious but he was drawn to the Eucharist early, asking to receive his First Holy Communion at a young age. He was just a regular teenager who played video games and spent time with friends. He had a passion for and developed a skill in computers, evident in his website where he cataloged Eucharistic miracles from around the world.

He is an example of a how we in this modern day, with modern problems and distractions, can use things for good. Carlo used the Internet to create a website for all to see God's work in this world through Eucharistic miracles.

What can you do with technology you commonly use to glorify God?

Feast day is October 12.



(pronounced A-mard) • 1811-1868

Peter Eymard knew early in his life that he was to follow Christ. On one occasion when he was a young boy, his family could not find him. After an extensive search they found him in church. As his sisters approached, they noticed he was standing on a stool with his head next to the tabernacle. When they asked him what he was doing, he said he was listening to Jesus. He was five. Maybe this Lent we can also make an effort to hear Jesus. **Feast day is August 2.**

For more stories about Saints with a special devotion to the Eucharist, search for stories about St. Thomas Aquinas, Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Alphonsus Liguori, St. Margaret Mary, St. Katharine Drexel, St. John Neumann and St. Teresa of Avila.

Have you joined *The Search*?

What is this journey in between the event we call "birth" and the one we call "death"? Is the journey taking you somewhere, or are you leading yourself to some kind of destination – a destination that could extend beyond your last breath? What do you want from your life during the in between? The questions are there. And, the answers are too.

The paragraph above is the summary of *The Search* from the FORMED website. This seven-episode series invites us to explore the questions that are common to all humans as we think about the meaning of our life, our place in the universe and what will happen after we die. Each episode is about 30-minutes long and each explores a different question.

The visual imagery is striking and the connection with science, our physical world and spirituality is thought provoking. If you joined one of the small group discussions on *The Search* that started in early January, I'm sure you have enjoyed the connection with other members of our parish and sharing thoughts and ideas that each episode evokes. If you didn't know about the groups or weren't able to participate, you can still watch the series with your family or friend group. St. Aloysius



parishioners have access to *The Search* and all the wonderful content that is available for all ages and all interests on the FORMED website and streaming services.

TO SIGN UP: Go to www.formed.org or scan the QR Code with your smartphone. Click on "Sign Up." Then, choose "Sign up as a parishioner." Enter the 43402 BG zip code and select St. Aloysius. You enter your email address and name, and then can begin watching programs on FORMED. Once you complete these steps,

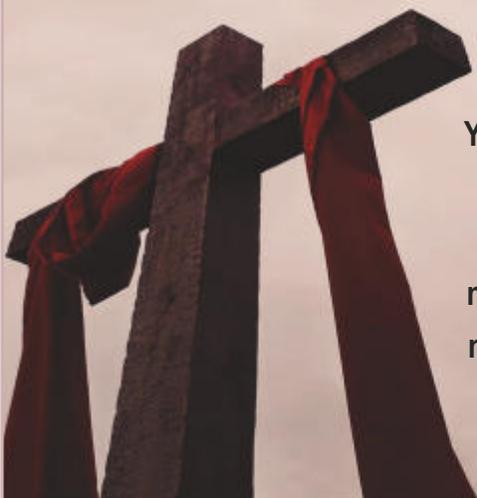
you can download and use the FORMED app for phone, tablet, and smart TV if you want. After you have created a FORMED account, you can just go to the website and click on "Sign In" for future access to the FORMED platform.



QR Code for FORMED

| BY BETH GENSON

A Lenten Prayer



Lord, I know You speak to me in countless ways. You preach through Your Scriptures, Your Church and in my life of prayer. Help me to heed Your voice and accept all You say with perfect obedience and submission. I love You, my dear Lord, and I repent of my sin. Jesus, I trust in You.
Amen.

Source of content: mycatholic.life

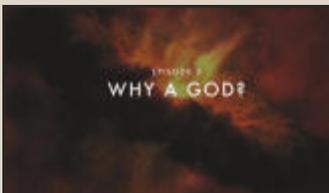


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THE SEARCH
SEVEN
EPISODES



Comments about the series from group leaders
and participants in our parish

what we thought...

“In a world that seems to be all too negative today, “The Search” seems to be so refreshing. It stresses the fact that each and every one of us mattersmade by God and in God’s likeness (body, mind and soul). It really does make you want to strive to be a better person as well as strengthen your relationship with our Lord and Savior. Knowing that you have all these people around you for support is quite a bonus but the series would be beneficial even if viewed on your own.”

JEANETTE HEINZE

“The Search” is an opportunity to grow in my faith. It is wonderful to share ideas with other members of the parish. I appreciate being able to do this virtually.”

JOANNE KESSEN

“Viewing “The Search” and then gathering as a group and discussing it enables us to look deeper at who we are from a spiritual perspective in relationship with God, and what it is we are seeking in our lives. It’s also been a way to reconnect with friends, make new connections, and help each other grow in our faith journeys.”

DAVE LITZENBERG

“2020 was rough on me both personally and professionally (as it was for many). I saw this advertised and thought it might be a good way to refocus my priorities. I reached out to my friend Nikki Miller to see if she would do it with me and she said yes! We are leading an online group and had the first Zoom this past week. I was able to meet some new people and have thought-provoking conversations. I’m looking forward to the next sessions.”

BROOKE HARRISON

“I think “The Search” is helping me to reflect on my Faith. I was surprised by how much of science came from the Church. After the past year’s troubles, I find it refreshing and renewing to look at our beliefs in another way that helps us make sense of the world and our place in it, and what is to come beyond this life.”

SONJA HAMMER



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Lenten Services

at St. Aloysius | 2021

*For a Mass of Maximum Protection:
Check the bulletin or our website closer to
Holy Week to see if a MoMP is scheduled.*

Ash Wednesday - February 17

7:30 a.m. Mass
Noon Ash service
5:30 p.m. Ash service
7 p.m. Mass of Maximum Protection

Stations of the Cross

Every Friday at 7 p.m.
from February 19 to March 26

Parish Reconciliation Service

Thursday, March 4 at 7pm

Holy Week

Palm Sunday - March 28

8 a.m., 10 a.m. and Noon Mass

Day of Grace - Wednesday March 31

8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Confessions at the top of every hour

Holy Thursday - April 1

7 p.m. Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday - April 2

Noon Good Friday Service
2 p.m. Stations of the Cross

Holy Saturday - April 3

8:30 p.m. Vigil Mass

Easter Sunday - April 4

8 a.m., 10 a.m. and Noon Masses

