

Mother Teresa Loved the Eucharist

On August 28, in a debate with Bill Donohue, militant atheist Christopher Hitchens said on the MSNBC show, "Hardball," that "Mother Teresa did not believe that Jesus was present in the Eucharist...." Donohue denied this was true.

Hitchens was relying on a *Time* magazine article of August 23 wherein it said that "for the last nearly half-century of her life she [Mother Teresa] *felt no presence of God whatsoever.*" (Our emphasis.) The claim was said to be supported by Rev. Brian Kolodiejchuk, the editor of the newly released book, *Mother Teresa: The Private Writings of the "Saint of Calcutta."*

We called Father Brian last week in San Diego and was told by a nun (he was traveling) what we thought was the case: there is a profound difference between "feeling" and "believing." Did Mother Teresa not always feel the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist? Yes. Did she therefore not believe in the Real Presence? Nonsense.

On p. 213 of the new book, it talks about Mother Teresa's "early love of the Eucharist." She shared her thoughts about this matter with Father Joseph Neuner, who wrote, "Though she no longer felt Jesus' presence, she 'would not miss Holy Com. [Communion] for anything.'"

On the same page are the reflections of a senior sister in her order, the Missionaries of Charity. Here is what she said:

"Mother received Holy Communion with tremendous devotion. If there happened to be a second Mass celebrated in Mother House on a given day, she would always try to assist at it, even if she were very busy. I would hear her say on such occasions, 'How beautiful to have received Jesus twice today.' Mother's

deep, deep reverence for the Blessed Sacrament was a sign of her profound faith in the Real Presence of Jesus under the appearances of bread and wine. Her adoring attitude, gestures such as genuflections—even on both knees in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed, and that well into old age—her postures such as kneeling and joining hands, her preference for receiving Holy Communion on the tongue all bespoke her faith in the Eucharist.”

Looks like Hitchens got it wrong again. Mother Teresa loved the Eucharist and passionately believed in the Real Presence.