

# By the Eucharist Alone

## *Eucharistic Miracles*

### **Can a person survive on Holy Communion as their only food?**

Jesus understands that it can be difficult to believe that he is truly present in Holy Communion. To help strengthen our faith, Jesus has allowed many Eucharistic miracles to happen throughout history. Some of the most common are those of miraculous nourishment, in which holy men and women have lived for months or even years with the Eucharist as their only food or drink. Of these, the most recent and best-documented is the story of Alexandrina da Costa.

### **Alexandrina was born in Portugal in 1904.**

When she was fourteen years old, she shattered her back trying to escape from an attacker. Over the next six years, she gradually lost her ability to walk. She became completely bedridden at the age of twenty, with every movement causing her great agony. Alexandrina gradually came to accept these sufferings as an opportunity to grow closer to Jesus and pray for those in need of mercy. Though she was in such pain, she continued to fall more deeply in love with Jesus.

### **At the age of 38, she began to live on the Eucharist alone.**

Beginning on Good Friday in 1942, Alexandrina could not keep down any food or drink other than the Eucharist. At first she thought it was an illness, but Jesus revealed to her that he was allowing this as a miraculous sign for others. For the next thirteen years, Alexandrina's only nourishment was a single host (wafer) of Holy Communion, brought to her every morning by her parish priest. Despite this, she was not hungry or thirsty. Other than the damage to her back, her health remained strong and she kept a joyful spirit.

### **Medical experts could not explain the phenomenon.**

As people began to hear about this miracle, some were skeptical. In 1943 at the urging of her family, Alexandrina consented to stay in the nearby hospital for a medical observation. She was under the constant surveillance of skeptical doctors and nurses for forty days. Afterward, they confirmed that she had received no food or drink whatsoever during all that time, yet her vital signs were strong, her weight stable, and her blood tests those of a well-fed person. They could offer no explanation for what they witnessed.

### **Alexandrina lived for thirteen years on the Eucharist alone.**

Until her death in 1955, Alexandrina lived on nothing more than Holy Communion each morning. She once asked Jesus in prayer why he was allowing this to happen, and she heard him respond, "You are living by the Eucharist alone because I want to prove to the world the power of the Eucharist and the power of my life in souls."

### **Alexandrina's story shows the importance of the Eucharist.**

One can see photos of Alexandrina and read more about her online. Jesus worked this miracle in her life to remind the world that he is truly present in the Eucharist, and how deeply he desires to be one with each of us in this beautiful sacrament. If Jesus can choose to give a person physical nourishment in such a miraculous way through the Eucharist, how much more powerful must the Bread of Life be for your spiritual nourishment and growth?

