

*Christians devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. Acts 2:42-43*

## **Guidelines for Perpetual Exposition and Adoration of the Reserved Sacrament**

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The Worship Department requests your comments and suggestions to make this document more helpful. 920-437-7531 Ext. 8311

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**Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin**



## **Guidelines for Perpetual Exposition and Adoration of the Reserved Sacrament Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin**

### **Devotion of the Christian People (CSL 12, 13 and James 5)**

Christians are indeed called to pray in union with each other, but they must also enter into private and personal prayer. Further, according to the teaching of the Apostle, they should pray without ceasing. Is anyone among you in trouble? Let the person pray. Is anyone in good heart? Let the person sing praises. A good person's prayer is very powerful and effective.

Popular devotions of the Christian people are to be highly endorsed, provided they accord with the laws and norms of the Church, above all when they are ordered by the Apostolic See.

### **The Mystery of the Eucharist (OSEHE 3, 5, 6)**

The solemn exposition of the holy eucharist offers the opportunity to the people of God for prayerful reflection on their call to a deeper devotion to the holy eucharist and a more faithful living of the Christian life. It provides them with an opportunity to become more aware of Christ's presence with his people and invites them to a spiritual communion with him.

Therefore, the devotion prompting the faithful to visit the blessed sacrament draws them into an ever deeper share in the paschal mystery and leads them to respond gratefully to the gift of him who through his humanity constantly pours divine life into the members of his Body.

Prayer before Christ the Lord sacramentally present [in the eucharist] extends the union with Christ that the faithful have reached in communion. It renews the covenant that in turn moves them to maintain by the way they live what they have received through faith and the sacrament. They should strive to lead their whole lives in the strength of this heavenly food, as sharers in the death and resurrection of the Lord.

All should be eager to do good works and to please God, so that they may seek to imbue the world with the Christian spirit and, in all things, even in the midst of human affairs, to become witnesses of Christ.

## **Central Focus of the Eucharist, the Mass (CSL 10, 14)**

The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed. At the same time it is the fount from which all the Church's power flows. For the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made children of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's Supper.

The liturgy in its turn moves the faithful, filled with the paschal sacraments, to be one in holiness. It prays that they may hold fast in their lives to what they have grasped by their faith. The renewal in the eucharist of the covenant between the Lord and his people draws the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and sets them on fire. From the liturgy, therefore, particularly the eucharist, grace is poured forth upon us as from a fountain. The liturgy is the source for achieving in the most effective way possible human sanctification and God's glorification, the end to which all the Church's other activities are directed.

The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations called for by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" is their right and duty by reason of their baptism. (1Pt 2:9)

### **Summary of Sources:**

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy CSL 1963  
Mysterium Fidei 1965  
Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside the Mass 1973  
Code of Canon Law 1983  
Order of Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist 1993  
Association of Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration (Los Angeles)  
Response of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments 1995  
Guidelines for Perpetual Adoration of the Holy Eucharist,  
Diocese of Marquette, 1997

## History and Documentation for Perpetual Exposition and Adoration of the Reserved Sacrament

The Church has always sought a balanced and full understanding of the Eucharist. For this reason, she teaches the celebration of Mass should hold the pre-eminent place in the Church's prayer life and she has carefully regulated the solemn exposition of the Reserved Sacrament.

The early Church reserved the Eucharist in order to allow those to receive the sacrament who could not gather for the Sunday celebration because of sickness or other reasons. The practice of reservation of the sacrament for communication of the faithful outside of Mass eventually led to the worship of Christ present in the reserved sacrament.

Solemn Exposition of Forty Hours began in 1592 in Rome. It began to be observed for the first time in the United States in Baltimore in 1857. Today the Ritual recommends that solemn exposition of the Reserved Sacrament for an extended period of time should take place once a year. "This kind of exposition, however, may take place only if there is assurance of the participation of a reasonable number of the faithful." (#86)

*The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy 1963* clarified that devotions have a special dignity derived from the Sacred Liturgy and lead the people to it.

Pope Paul VI in his encyclical, *Mysterium Fidei* (1965) taught, "The Catholic Church as always offered and still offers the worship of *Latria* (Adoration) to the Sacrament of the Eucharist, not only during Mass, but also outside it. It does so by reserving consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to solemn veneration by the faithful and carrying them in processions to the joy of great crowds of the faithful." (#56)

The revised portion of the Roman Ritual entitled, *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass*, published by the Holy See in 1973, provides the most recent regulations and texts for adoration of the reserved sacrament. The Ritual emphasizes the relationship between exposition and the Mass. "The Eucharistic Sacrifice is the source and culmination of the whole Christian life. Both private and public devotion toward the Eucharist, therefore including devotions outside Mass, are strongly encouraged when celebrated according to the regulations of lawful authority."

The Code of Canon Law 1983, Canon 942, repeats this recommendation in closely similar words so "the total community may more attentively mediate on and adore the Eucharistic Mystery." Perpetual Exposition within the liturgical norms has been an exception and required a special indult. The Ritual states that according to their constitutions and regulations, some religious communities and other associations of the faithful have the practice of perpetual eucharistic adoration or adoration over extended periods of time.

In 1986, the Congregation for Divine Worship gave a corrective interpretation of paragraph 90 writing, "When all the conditions are observed the bishop can grant permission for an association of the faithful to have perpetual exposition."

In recent years, the Church has experienced a movement to encourage perpetual adoration of the exposed Blessed Sacrament in parishes. On June 2, 1991, the Pontifical Council of the Laity approved the statutes of an association of the faithful with juridical standing according to the Code of Canon Law. It is called the Association of Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration with headquarters in Los Angeles. It has as its purpose the promotion of "the practice of perpetual eucharistic adoration of the exposed Blessed Sacrament."

In 1993 the Bishops' committee on the Liturgy, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, published the *Order of Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist*, a book containing a collection of rites, texts and music for use during the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist. The book based on the ritual, *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass*, outlines the historical and theological developments as well as the rubrical directives relating to exposition of the eucharist.

In 1995, the U.S. Bishops asked the Bishops' Committee on Liturgy to resolve some concerns and questions regarding perpetual adoration. The Bishops' committee on Liturgy submitted five questions to the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments. To the question whether perpetual adoration or exposition of the Blessed Sacrament may take place in parishes, the Congregation distinguished between perpetual adoration of the Reserved Sacrament in the tabernacle and adoration of the exposed Sacrament in a ciborium or monstrance.

In the former case, no permission is necessary. In the latter case, permission of the local Ordinary is required. The latter is permitted in religious communities and associations of the faithful with official recognition. "If an association of the faithful is established within a parish, the activity is separate from the parish, although all members of the parish are free to participate in it."

Continuing its response to the questions, the Congregation wrote, "(Perpetual exposition) should be in a chapel distinct from the body of the church so as not to interfere with the normal activities of the parish or its daily liturgical celebrations. Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament should occur before the celebration of Mass begins in the chapel."

Numbers 82-100 of the Ritual regulate the worship of the Eucharist and require that there be no perpetual adoration during the Easter Triduum. In addition, the Congregation emphasized, "Every effort should be made to ensure that there should be at least two people present. There must absolutely never be periods when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed and there is no one present for adoration. It may prove necessary to expose the Blessed Sacrament for adoration only at stated times when members of the faithful are present. The local Ordinary alone determines the pastoral appropriateness of perpetual exposition in his diocese, and accordingly may permit it or not and may limit the number of places where it takes place."

## **Requirements and Directives for Perpetual Exposition and Adoration of the Reserved Sacrament**

### **Administrative Directives:**

1. That a sufficient number of parishioners be committed before Exposition begins. 350 would seem to be a minimum, especially since at least two persons should be present together during the late night and early morning hours. To ensure adequate presence of worshipers at all hours, it is recommended that Adoration begin for only part of the day and then gradually be extended to the full 24 hours.
  
2. That Exposition be in a chapel completely separate from the body of the parish church so that normal use of the church for services, rehearsals, preparation of the sanctuary area, etc., would not be hindered by the silence necessary for Perpetual Exposition and Adoration.
  
3. That there be adequate security, especially at night, and that there be convenient access to a telephone and to bathroom facilities.
  
4. That a person will be appointed by the pastor to organize and monitor the program and to report monthly to the pastor on how well the schedule of adoration is being observed.
  
5. That there be a written request by the pastor, after consultation with the parish council and with assurance that the above requirements have been met.
  
6. That at the end of the first three months, the pastor is to report to the Bishop's office on the observance of the schedule. Then permission for Perpetual Exposition and Adoration must be requested yearly.
  
7. That, at the recommendation of the Bishop, the people affiliate with an association of the faithful dedicated to Perpetual Exposition and Adoration.
  
8. A parish family should not feel less generous if they are unable to maintain perpetual adoration. Much better that they limit adoration to one or two days a week and adore with a larger complement of the parish members in attendance.

### **Liturgical Directives:**

1. That the Reserved Sacrament be changed at least once a month and preferably every week.
2. That when Mass is celebrated in the Chapel where the Reserved Sacrament is exposed, the eucharist must be replaced in the tabernacle before the celebration of the Mass begins. (83)
3. That the ordinary minister for exposition is a priest or deacon. In the absence of a priest or deacon, an acolyte or a special minister of communion (or others with permission of the Bishop) may open the tabernacle and place the ciborium on the altar or place the host in the monstrance.
4. That the liturgical seasons be taken into account and devotions should be in harmony with the sacred liturgy, and lead the people back to the liturgy.(79)
5. That a single genuflection is made in the presence of the Reserved Sacrament. (84)
6. That there will be no Perpetual Exposition and Adoration taking place during the Triduum.
7. That, at the time of exposition with the monstrance, four to six candles are lighted and incense is used. For exposition with the ciborium, at least two candles and incense are used. (85)
8. That, if perpetual exposition is not possible because of too few worshipers, the Reserved Sacrament may be replaced in the tabernacle during periods which have been scheduled and announced beforehand. This reposition may not take place more often than twice during the day, for example, about noon and at night. (88)
9. That regular catechesis should be offered by the pastor to enable the faithful to have a wholeness and balance in their understanding of Eucharistic theology and in their prayers of adoration. The following practices can assist the people in seeing this correlation and the harmony of private devotions with the liturgical seasons. Sunday Eucharistic celebrations should be exemplary so that the Scripture is well proclaimed, the preaching is effective, participation is active and liturgical ministerial roles filled. Fresh altar bread should be consecrated at every Mass for the distribution of Holy Communion. In the chapel of adoration, parishes may want to place prayer cards throughout the adoration chapel which remind the people to pray for the parish, the sick and the people of the world, especially the poor and the oppressed. A special intention included regularly in the prayer of those participating in this devotion is an increase in vocations to the ordained priesthood and the religious life here in the Diocese of Green Bay.

## **Outline with Ritual Directives for Exposition and Benediction of the Reserved Sacrament**

### **EXPOSITION (93)**

A song may be sung as the minister comes to the altar.

The Luna is placed in the monstrance (or the ciborium) on the altar.

The minister incenses the Sacrament.

### **ADORATION (95)**

During the exposition there should be prayers, songs, readings, silence, and responses to direct the attention of the faithful to the worship of Christ. (See OSEHE for suggested prayers and music)

Exposition which is held exclusively for the giving of benediction is prohibited. (89)

### **BENEDICTION (97-98-99)**

The minister goes to the altar, genuflects, and kneels.

A eucharistic hymn or song is sung during which time the minister incenses the Sacrament (if the monstrance is used).

The people rise and sing: "Let us Pray" and the prayer that follows. (6 options)

The minister puts on the humeral veil, genuflects, and takes the monstrance or the ciborium.

The priest or deacon makes the sign of the cross with the Reserved Sacrament over the people in silence.

### **REPOSITION (100)**

The minister replaces the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle and genuflects.

Meanwhile, the people may sing a hymn.

The minister departs.

\*Numbers in parentheses refer to paragraphs in Forms of Worship of the Eucharist

\*OSEHE is The Order of Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist.

The Liturgical press, 1993.



## **Benediction**

### **STRUCTURE**

Exposition

Adoration (with readings of the Word of God, songs, prayers and sufficient time for silent prayer) 89

Benediction

Reposition

### **PURPOSE OF EXPOSITION AND ADORATION**

- to acknowledge Christ's presence in the Reserved Sacrament
- to invite people to spiritual union with Christ that culminates in sacramental union
- to express the worship of the Sacrament in relation to the Mass
- to provide a time of reflection and meditation on the faithful living of the Christian life and the call to witness Christ in the world

### **DIRECTIVES**

There is no Mass celebrated in the church while the Sacrament is exposed.

Exposition which is held exclusively for the giving of benediction is prohibited. (89) A time of prayer and adoration is required.

A single genuflection is used.

If the monstrance is used, 4 to 6 candles are lit and incense is used.

If the ciborium is used, at least 2 candles are lit and incense may be used.

### **MINISTERS**

The ordinary minister for exposition of the Eucharist is a priest or deacon. At the end of the period of adoration, before the reposition, he blesses the people with the Sacrament.

In the absence of priest or deacon, an acolyte or special minister of communion (or others with permission of the Bishop) may open the tabernacle and place the ciborium on the altar or place the host in the monstrance. At the end of the period of adoration, they replace the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. It is not lawful for them to give the blessing with the Sacrament.

### **VESTMENTS**

If the minister is priest or deacon, he should vest in an alb or a surplice over a cassock and a stole. (Other ministers should wear the liturgical vestments used in that region or suitable for their ministry approved by the Ordinary).

The priest or deacon should wear a white cope and humeral veil to give the blessing when exposition takes place with the monstrance. In the case of exposition with the ciborium, the humeral veil should be worn.