

Forty Hours Devotion

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

A Redemptorist Pastoral Publication



Catholic. Pastoral. Trusted.

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Denver Province, the Redemptorists

Published by Liguori Publications, Liguori, Missouri 63057

Liguori Publications, a nonprofit corporation, is an apostolate of the Redemptorists
(Redemptorists.com).

Phone: 800-325-9521 Web: Liguori.org

Forty Hours: Eucharistic Adoration
A Redemptorist Pastoral Publication

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ISBN 978-0-7648-2873-7

E-ISBN: 978-0-7648-7256-3

Cataloging-in-Publication data has been applied for with the Library of Congress

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Note: Some of the prayers and text contained here are adapted from the previously published book *Eucharistic Devotion: Renewing a Timeless Tradition*, a Redemptorist Pastoral Publication, Liguori Publications (808425), 2002.

Printed in the United States of America

29 28 27 26 25 / 5 4 3 2 1

First Edition

Cover design: Wendy Barnes

Cover photo: Stock Studio/Shutterstock

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“I urge you to devote yourselves in particular to prayer of adoration: this is important. Today, the meaning of prayer of adoration, of spending time in worship, has been somewhat lost. This prayer is not often done; I ask you to do it. To worship, to immerse yourselves in divine love and give it to those you meet on your path. It is beautiful to worship in silence before the Blessed Sacrament, to be in the consoling presence of Jesus and there to draw the apostolic impetus to be instruments of goodness, tenderness, and welcome in the community, in the Church, and in the world.”

Pope Francis, October 22, 2022

*Address to the participants in the General Chapters
of the Order of the Most Holy Savior of Saint Bridget
and the Comboni Missionary Sisters*

“If we really loved the good God, we should make it our joy and happiness to come and spend a few moments to adore him and ask him for the grace of forgiveness, and we should regard those moments as the happiest of our lives.”

Saint John Vianney (1786–1859)

“I adore you, and I thank you for all the graces you have bestowed on me, especially for having given me yourself in this sacrament, for having given me your most holy Mother, Mary, to plead for me, and for having called me to visit you in this church.”

Saint Alphonsus Liguori (1696–1787)

Section One

Celebration of the Forty Hours Devotion

The Roman Ritual *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* states, “In churches where the Eucharist is regularly reserved, it is recommended that solemn exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for an extended period should take place once a year, even though this period is not strictly continuous. In this way, the local community may reflect more profoundly upon this mystery and adore Christ in the sacrament.”

In the document *The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church*, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) says, “We rejoice in the growing numbers of the faithful who pray in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, a testament of faith in the Real Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist. We encourage this devotion, which helps all of us to be formed by the self-giving love we behold in the Lord’s gift of himself in the Eucharist.”

The instructions that follow include the liturgical norms and guidelines for the Forty Hours devotion outlined in the *Order for Solemn Exposition of the Eucharist*, published by the USCCB in 1993. The content provided here is adapted from those guidelines.

OPENING MASS

The Forty Hours devotion opens with the celebration of Mass, for “the celebration of the Eucharist in the sacrifice of the Mass is the origin and consummation of the worship shown to the Eucharist outside Mass” (*Eucharisticum Mysterium*, 3e).

EXPOSITION

During or at the conclusion of the Communion Rite of Mass, the ministers and altar servers prepare the altar for exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Traditionally, the altar is adorned with four to six lighted candles. The monstrance is placed on the altar. At the conclusion of the distribution of Communion, the celebrant says the prayer after Communion. The celebrant then places the host, which has been consecrated at Mass, in the monstrance. He positions the monstrance on the altar to face the people, then incenses the holy Eucharist in the monstrance while a traditional hymn is sung.

At the conclusion of the hymn and the incensation, the celebrant and altar servers depart the sanctuary. There is no final blessing or dismissal at this Mass.

Hymn—Traditionally Sung During Exposition

“O Salutaris Hostia”

Latin

*O salutaris Hostia
Quae caeli pandis ostium:
Bella premunt hostilia,
Da robur, fer auxilium.
Uni trinoque Domino
Sit sempiterna gloria,
Qui vitam sine termino
Nobis donet in patria.
Amen.*

English

O Victim bringing saving grace,
who opens wide the gate of heav’n:
our foes assail and press us hard;
give us your strength, bring us your aid.
To you be everlasting praise
and glory, One and Triune Lord,
who grants us life that knows no end,
for ever in our heav’nly home.
Amen.

ADORATION

Adoration of the most holy Eucharist takes place for the remainder of the period of public prayer, interrupted only for the celebration of daily Mass. The host is removed from the monstrance and returned to the tabernacle before daily Mass begins. When Mass concludes, the host is placed once again in the monstrance, and exposition continues.

Exposition is “intended to acknowledge Christ’s marvelous presence in the sacrament” and “invites us to the spiritual union with him that culminates in sacramental Communion” (*Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass*).

PUBLIC PRAYERS

During the period of public exposition, there is opportunity for public prayer. The format of prayers selected for this purpose allows for a variety of liturgical choices. See Section Two for options.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD/PREACHING

It is appropriate during exposition to proclaim the word of God and offer a fitting sermon that celebrates the holy Eucharist. Traditionally, the proclamation of the word and the preaching that follows is supported by a liturgical service that has been prepared for this purpose. See Section Two for options.

BENEDICTION

When the designated forty-hour period of exposition has concluded, the devotion closes with solemn Benediction, in which the church, joined in prayer, is blessed with the Body of Christ. This service is celebrated before the closing Solemn Mass, and it formally ends the Forty Hours devotion. When possible, it is preferred to celebrate a closing Mass of Thanksgiving directly following Benediction.

Hymn—Traditionally Sung During Benediction

“Tantum Ergo Sacramentum”

Latin	English
<i>Tantum ergo Sacramentum</i>	Let us, therefore, bow and worship
<i>Veneremur cernui:</i>	such a wondrous Sacrament;
<i>Et antiquum Documentum</i>	let the ancient law and custom
<i>Novo cedat ritui:</i>	to a newer rite now yield;
<i>Præstet fides supplementum</i>	let our faith supply conviction
<i>Sensuum defectui.</i>	where the senses tire and fail.
<i>Genitori, Genitoque</i>	To the Father, unbegotten,
<i>Laus et jubilatio,</i>	and the Sole-begotten Son,
<i>Salus, honor, virtus quoque</i>	be salvation, blessing, honor,
<i>Sit et benedictio:</i>	jubilation, pow’r, and praise;
<i>Procedenti ab utroque</i>	to the One from both proceeding
<i>Compar sit laudatio.</i>	equal glory and renown.
Amen.	Amen.

Verse and Prayer

Celebrant: Let us pray. O God, who in this wonderful Sacrament have left us a memorial of your Passion, grant us, we pray, so to revere the sacred mysteries of your Body and Blood that we may always experience in ourselves the fruits of your redemption. Who live and reign, for ever and ever. Amen.

Divine Praises

Blessed be God.

Blessed be his holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

Blessed be the Name of Jesus.

Blessed be his most Sacred Heart.

Blessed be his most Precious Blood.
Blessed be Jesus in the most holy Sacrament of the altar.
Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.
Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.
Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.
Blessed be her glorious Assumption.
Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.
Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste Spouse.
Blessed be God in his Angels and in his Saints.

May the heart of Jesus, in the most Blessed Sacrament, be praised, adored, and loved with grateful affection, at every moment, in all the tabernacles of the world, even to the end of time. Amen.

Hymn—Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament

“Holy God, We Praise Thy Name”

Verse 1

Holy God, we praise thy name;
Lord of all, we bow before thee!
All on earth thy scepter claim,
All in heaven above adore thee;
Infinite, thy vast domain,
Everlasting is thy reign.

Verse 2

Hark! the loud celestial hymn
Angel choirs above are raising;
Cherubim and Seraphim,
In unceasing chorus praising;
Fill the heavens with sweet accord:
“Holy, holy, holy Lord!”