

Prayers and Devotions for Eucharistic Holy Hour

A Redemptorist Pastoral Publication
Compiled by Brother Daniel Korn, CSsR



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Imprimi Potest:

Richard Thibodeau, CSsR
Provincial, Denver Province
The Redemptorists

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Most Reverend Michael J. Sheridan
Auxiliary Bishop, Archdiocese of St. Louis

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I dedicate this book in
loving memory of
Brother Florian Shalowski, CSSR,
who by his example taught me the value of
eucharistic adoration.



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Adoration of the Eucharist



Throughout the Catholic world, devotion to the Blessed Sacrament is increasing. Perpetual adoration groups are forming in dioceses throughout our country, and parishes are selecting weekly or monthly hours for adoration and prayer before the exposed Eucharist.

Eucharistic devotion is time spent in common or private prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, exposed for our adoration outside of the celebration of the Mass. In his *Letter on the 750th Anniversary of the Feast of Corpus Christi*, Saint John Paul II wrote, “Remaining in silence before the Blessed Sacrament, it is Christ totally and really present whom we discover, whom we adore, and with whom we are in contact.”

This booklet is an encouragement for those who feel drawn to eucharistic devotion. These prayers help us enter into disciple-friendship with Jesus Christ. His presence in this sacrament of the altar is his gift to us. In the Gospel of John, Jesus speaks to us, saying, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty” (John 6:35). Time spent in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament is one way for us to nourish our spiritual life. Jesus will feed our hungry hearts and take away our thirst. As we spend time in silent reflection on the Word of God prayed in his eucharistic presence, our minds and hearts open to the inner meaning of the gospel. This sacred time spent in the presence of Christ will help us live the gospel in our daily lives.

All adoration of the Eucharist stems from one source, the sacrifice of the Mass.

Saint John Paul II wrote, “Prayer of adoration in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament unites the faithful with the Paschal Mystery; it enables them to share in Christ’s sacrifice of which the Eucharist is the permanent Sacrament” (*Letter...Corpus Christi*).

In the celebration of the Mass, we enter into the mystery of Christ's dying and rising. We gather to hear the Word of God proclaimed in Scripture, we receive instruction in the homily, we make intercessions, and we offer bread and wine to be transformed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. We receive the Lord in holy Communion and are sent forth to be his living presence in the world.

Traditional forms of eucharistic adoration—processions, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, perpetual adoration, and visits to the Blessed Sacrament—are practices familiar to many Catholics. We appreciate both the tradition of these devotions and the liturgical renewal of the Second Vatican Council, which gave us these beautifully restored rituals. The new emphasis is on the communal celebration of the Eucharist and on the continuation of that celebration as we live out the mystery of Christ's presence in our lives.

For those who desire to enter into a close relationship with Jesus in the Eucharist, much can be learned from sitting at the feet of the Master in silent prayer. Prayer books and favorite devotional prayers are

helpful but not an end in themselves. They only lead us to the prayer of silence in the presence of Christ.

Eucharistic adoration is not a replacement for the communal celebration of the Eucharist. (*See Church Teaching on the Eucharist, page 75.*) We also should make serious attempts to educate ourselves about the Eucharist by reading and by participating in eucharistic and liturgical seminars and conferences.

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Here is an invitation from Christ for those who seek an intimate relationship with him. In his eucharistic presence you will find rest and strength for the journey. After many decades of living the religious life, I have found silent adoration before the Eucharist to be a prayer that heals and encourages me in living the gospel. When I was in formation, an old Brother would often tell me, “Go to the Master Jesus. He is present in the Blessed Sacrament waiting for your visit.”

Through your eucharistic devotion, may you come to know the Lord in new and deeper ways.

Rite of Benediction



Public Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

During the exposition there should be prayers, songs, and readings to direct the attention of the faithful to the worship of Christ the Lord. To encourage a prayerful spirit, there should be readings from Scripture with a homily or brief exhortations to develop a better understanding of the eucharistic mystery. It is also desirable for the people to respond to the Word of God by singing and to spend some periods of time in religious silence.

*The Rites of the Catholic Church,
Vol. I (The Rites)*