



MEMORANDUM

TO: Clergy, Liturgy Coordinators
FROM: Julian Venegas, Eucharist Parish Liaison/Assistant Director, Office for Worship
RE: Proper Ritual Practice for Worship and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
DATE: September 10, 2025

Introduction

The Most Holy Eucharist stands as the central mystery of our Church, Pope Saint John Paul II reminds us in his Encyclical Letter, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, “The Eucharist is too great a gift to tolerate ambiguity and depreciation”. It is vital to our faith that the faithful have clear understanding of the Church’s teachings on the Most Holy Eucharist and how we are to worship and adore our Lord.

In the United States of America, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) have promulgated a revised edition of the ritual book, *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery Outside Mass*. The mandatory implementation date, as set forth by the USCCB, was December 1, 2024. If your parish still has not purchased this ritual book, it is advisable to do so as soon as possible.

This memorandum comes in light of the revised ritual book and serves as a reminder to clergy, and the liturgy coordinators who assist them, of proper ritual practice of Worship of the Blessed Sacrament, with specific focus on proper practices which are to be observed for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament should derive from the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. As it is from the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass where we receive the sacred species under the accidents of bread and wine. The faithful may then be all the more united to Christ and His Sacrifice by adoring and worshipping the preserved sacred species.¹ Reservation of the Eucharistic species must therefore be dignified so that the faithful can adore and offer our God due worship.² According to the layout of each respective church and in accordance with local customs, reservation of the Eucharistic species is to be reserved in a tabernacle in a part of the Church that is “noble, prominent, readily visible, and adorned in a dignified manner” that is “suitable for prayer” by providing a quiet, accessible place.³ In the Diocese of Orange, it is desirable that the Tabernacle be placed in the center of the sanctuary. However, in parishes that receive many tourists, the tabernacle may be placed in a side chapel or more private setting.

¹ Cf. EM 17

² RS 129

³ RS 130



Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

While Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament can take place while reserved in a tabernacle. It is laudable, however, to offer the opportunity to the Faithful to adore our Lord exposed in a monstrance as frequently as possible and even offering Perpetual Adoration.⁴ In the Diocese of Orange, each parish is to have a 24-hour period of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at least once per month, as started by Bishop Johnson and reaffirmed by Bishop Vann. This time remains for the original intentions: An increase in vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life as well as the sanctification of the people of our diocese. When Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is planned, “Exposition ... must always be carried out in accordance with the prescriptions of the liturgical books”.⁵ For more information regarding Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery Outside Mass* should be referenced, specifically nos. 79–100.

“Exposition of the Most Holy Eucharist ... encourages the acknowledgment of Christ’s wonderful presence in it and invites us to a union of heart with him...”.⁶ As a church, we should provide as many opportunities as possible for the Faithful to adore our Lord and increase their devotion to Him. Pastors and Parish Priests should then strive for making the Eucharist the center of their parish life and the life of the faithful.⁷

The following norms have been set forth by the USSCB and should be observed in the Diocese of Orange for Exposition and Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament:

- When adoration is conducted with a Monstrance, four to six candles are to be lit on the altar and incense is used.⁸
- The ordinary minister for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is a Priest or a Deacon.⁹ The minister wears an alb or a suplice over a cassock, along with a white stole; he may also wear a white cope.¹⁰
- If adoration is to take place over a long period of time, the Blessed Sacrament “must never be left unattended even for the briefest space of time”.¹¹
- If adoration is to take place over a short period of time, there should be suitable time allowed for readings from the Word of God, hymns, prayers, and silent prayer prior to the Benediction and Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament.¹²

⁴ Cf. RS 140

⁵ RS 137

⁶ HCWEMOM 82

⁷ RS 32

⁸ HCWEMOM 85

⁹ HCWEMOM 91

¹⁰ HCWEMOM 92

¹¹ RS 138

¹² HCWEMOM 89



- When the people have gathered, the minister approaches the altar, or where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved with a humeral veil and accompanied by servers with lighted candles, and places the Blessed Sacrament into the monstrance. When exposition is complete, the minister incenses the Blessed Sacrament. Meanwhile an appropriate hymn or Eucharistic song is sung, such as *O Salutaris*.¹³
- During Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, prayers, liturgical songs, readings from the Sacred Scriptures, or Sacred Silence may be implemented.¹⁴
- Once the time for adoration is complete, the minister approaches the altar, genuflects and kneels, while an appropriate hymn or Eucharistic song is sung, such as *Tantum Ergo*. He then incenses the Blessed Sacrament and afterwards rises to recite an appropriate prayer.¹⁵
- Once the prayer has been said, the minister puts on a humeral veil, genuflects, takes the monstrance, and makes the Sign of the Cross over the people without saying anything. Another minister may incense the Blessed Sacrament as the Sign of the Cross is made over the people. After the blessing, the Divine Praises may be sung or said prior to Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament.¹⁶ Although not prescribed by the ritual books, the ringing of bells is traditionally associated with solemn and prayerful moments in the Church. Bells may be rung, when the priest makes the sign of the cross over the people, drawing attention to the Real Presence and fostering a sense of reverence.
- The minister then places the Blessed Sacrament back in the tabernacle and genuflects.¹⁷

All clergy and liturgy coordinators are encouraged to review and implement the proper ritual practices with fidelity and reverence. Our shared commitment to honoring the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist through proper ritual action not only strengthens the devotion of the faithful but also upholds the dignity and mystery at the heart of our worship.

Please feel free to contact the Office for Worship, (714) 282- 4283 or email at jvenegas@rcbo.org should you have any questions.

¹³ Cf. HCWEMOM 93

¹⁴ Cf. HCWEMOM 95-96

¹⁵ Cf. HCWEMOM 97-98

¹⁶ Cf. HCWEMOM 99

¹⁷ Cf. HCWEMOM 100



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Abbreviations & References

EM	Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction <i>Eucharisticum Mysterium</i> , 1967
HCWEMOM	Roman Ritual, Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery Outside Mass, 2024
RS	Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacrament, Instruction <i>Redemptionis Sacramentum</i> , 2004