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**Secretariat for the Liturgy**  
3211 Fourth Street, N.E.  
Washington D.C. 20017  
Tel: 202-541-3060  
Fax: 202-541-3088  
[www.usccb.org/liturgy](http://www.usccb.org/liturgy)

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## Nine Questions on the Rites for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

*In recent months, the Secretariat for the Liturgy has received several inquiries concerning the proper rites for adoration of the exposed Blessed Sacrament. While several of these inquiries are answered in the BCL publication Thirty-one Questions on Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, a few additional clarifications are provided here for the information of our readers.*

### 1. How does adoration of the exposed Blessed Sacrament differ from adoration of the Holy Eucharist reserved in the tabernacle?

Eucharistic adoration of the reserved Blessed Sacrament is a devotional act. Eucharistic exposition is a liturgical action, by which the Blessed Sacrament is displayed outside the tabernacle in a monstrance or ciborium for public veneration by the faithful. It is a public celebration that enables the faithful to perceive more clearly the relationship between the reserved Sacrament and the “sacrifice of the Mass [which] is truly the origin and the purpose of the worship that is shown to the Eucharist outside Mass.” (*Eucharisticum mysterium*, no. 3e)

### 2. What are the liturgical rites for adoration of the exposed Blessed Sacrament?

These rites are found in the third chapter ritual book *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* [HCW], entitled *Forms of Worship of the Holy Eucharist*. The rites for adoration of the exposed Blessed Sacrament are found in numbers 82-100. These rites consist of Exposition, Adoration, Benediction, and Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

### 3. What are the rites of Exposition and Adoration?

While the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, and the ciborium or monstrance is placed upon the altar, it is fitting that a song be sung by those gathered. If the monstrance is used (rather than the ciborium) the minister incenses the sacrament. (Cf. HCW, no. 93). For the period of adoration “there should be prayers, songs, and readings to direct the attention of the faithful to the worship of Christ the Lord.” (HCW, no. 95) A homily or brief exhortation is also appropriate, as are extended periods of silence.

### 4. What are the Rites of Benediction and Reposition?

For the rites of Benediction, described in HCW, no. 97, the Priest incenses the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance, prays one of the prescribed prayers (cf. HCW, nos. 98, 224-229), and, with the humeral veil, silently makes the sign of the cross over the people. (cf. HCW, no. 99) As the Blessed Sacrament is then reposed in the tabernacle, the people may sing an acclamation. (cf. HCW, no. 100)

**5. When the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, how many candles should be used?**

“For exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance, four to six candles are lighted and incense is used. For exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the ciborium, at least two candles should be lighted, and incense may be used.” (HCW, no. 85)

**6. What vesture should be worn for the rites of Adoration of the exposed Blessed Sacrament?**

“The minister, if he is a priest or deacon, should vest in an alb, or a surplice over a cassock, and a stole. Other ministers should wear either the liturgical vestments which are used in the region or the vesture which is suitable for this ministry and which has been approved by the Ordinary. The priest or deacon should wear a white cope and humeral veil to give the blessing at the end of adoration, when the exposition takes place with the monstrance; in the case of exposition in the ciborium, the humeral veil should be worn.” (HCW, no. 92)

**7. May these rites be adapted or shortened for particular circumstances?**

No. The liturgical rites may not be adapted or shortened beyond the scope envisioned by the rubrics of *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass*. Simply opening the tabernacle to enhance private or devotional prayer, in not in conformity with the liturgical requirements of HCW, nos. 93-85. It might be noted, however, that the Benediction is omitted when the exposition is led by a lay person. (cf. HCW, no. 91)

**8. Is it permissible to use an “Exposition Tabernacle,” which includes a small window with a sliding cover, for exposition of the Blessed Sacrament?**

No. “The holy Eucharist is to be reserved in a solid tabernacle. It must be opaque and unbreakable.” (HCW, no. 10; Cf. Code of Canon Law, 938 §3; *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, no. 314.)

**9. May Evening Prayer (Vespers) be celebrated in the presence of the exposed Blessed Sacrament?**

Yes. “Part of the liturgy of the hours, especially the principal hours, may be celebrated before the Blessed Sacrament when there is a lengthy period of exposition. This liturgy extends the praise and thanksgiving offered to God in the Eucharistic celebration to the several hours of the day; it directs the prayers of the Church to Christ and through him to the Father in the name of the whole world.” (HCW, no. 96)

## **Holy See Issues Changes to the Liturgical Calendar 2008**

In the Table of Liturgical Days of the *General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar*, promulgated by the Sacred Congregation of Rites on March 21, 1969, solemnities of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and saints listed in the General Calendar give way to the Easter Triduum, Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension, Pentecost, the Sundays of Advent, Lent, and the Easter season, Ash Wednesday, the weekdays of Holy Weeks from Monday to Thursday inclusive, and the days within the octave of Easter. In the Liturgical Year 2008, the solemnity of St. Joseph (March 19) falls on Wednesday of Holy Week, and the solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord (March 25) falls on Tuesday in the Octave of Easter. Both solemnities have, therefore, been transferred in the *2008 Liturgical Calendar for the Dioceses of the United States of America* to the first free days following the octave of Easter, namely Monday, March 31 and the day following, Tuesday, April 1.

However, a notification contained in the March-April, 2006 issue of *Notitiae* (475-476, page 96), the journal of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, makes an exception to this practice. The following unofficial translation of an excerpt from the notification is provided for the information of our readers:

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments wishes to draw attention to the occurrence of certain celebrations which will occur in the year 2008. In particular, the solemnity of Saint Joseph (19 March) falls on Wednesday of Holy Week and the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord (25 March) on Friday of the Octave of Easter...

Therefore, it is established that in the year 2008, the Solemnity of Saint Joseph will be celebrated on March 15<sup>th</sup>, that is, the Saturday preceding Palm Sunday, while the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord will be celebrated on March 31<sup>st</sup>, that is Monday of the Second week of Easter.”

In the light of this notification, the following changes should be made to the *2008 Liturgical Calendar for the Dioceses of the United States of America*:

<b>MARCH 2008</b>			
<b>15</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>Saint Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary</b>	<b>white</b>
<i>solemnity</i> 2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16/Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22/Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24a or Lk 2:41-51a (543) Pss Prop			
<b>31</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<b>The Annunciation of the Lord</b>	<b>white</b>
<i>solemnity</i> Is 7:10-14; 8:10/Heb 10:4-10/Lk 1:26-38 (545) Pss Prop			
<b>APRIL 2008</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b>Tue</b>	<b>Easter Weekday</b>	<b>white</b>
Acts 4:32-37/John 3:7b-15 (268 ) Ps II			

## **Preaching Notes on Persons with Special Disabilities**

*The National Apostolate for Inclusion Ministry (NAFIM), and organization dedicated to persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities recently distributed to their membership an interesting article on preaching, which is provided to our readers for their information and reflection.*

Adults and children with mental retardation comprise 1 to 3 percent of the U.S. population, and 1 person in 10 in this country has a personal involvement with them. The majority of persons with cognitive, intellectual and developmental disabilities are adults many of whom are dependant on Supplemental Security Income. The Pastoral Letter of the U.S. Bishops on Persons with Disabilities (1978) claims all people including those with disabilities to be of the family of God. Thus, truth and justice compel the conclusion that people with IDD must be included as active receivers and responders to the proclamation of the Word and the Homily.

To be truly inclusive, the Preacher should, at the outset, have a deep conviction of the spiritual equality and worth of his disabled hearers. Theological reflection and firm grounding in the faith are necessary qualities in order for the Homilist to reach people who operate at a core and elemental level, emotionally, spiritually and psychologically. He must believe what he is saying and say what he believes in order to draw their hearts and minds to God Who is within them and with them in their daily activities. There should be an effort on the part of the Homilist to get to know parish members with IDD and their living situation, such as living with parents, in a group home, an apartment or an institutional setting.

The Homilist can reach those with IDD assembled for Mass if he identifies a simple image, concrete concept or symbol for the theme of his sermon. He may display or use real objects when appropriate. The image, concrete object or symbol may be recalled from time to time throughout the homily. Important thoughts, ideas or uplifting spiritual directions can begin with simple sentences, and then be developed using increasingly more sophisticated language.

Use of the theory of multiple intelligences and the recognition of various learning styles in preparing a homily is a good strategy for reaching not only persons with IDD, but also the entire congregation as well. It has been said that those actually listening remember twenty percent of what they have heard, thirty percent of what they hear and see, seventy percent of what they say and ninety nine percent of what they do. Listening does not need to be the only way to participate in a homily. By addressing other intelligences and learning styles in its presentation, the homily will have greater impact. God given intelligences include: linguistic, musical, logical/mathematical, spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal and intra-personal. Learning styles can include auditory, visual and physical.

When it addresses multiple intelligences and learning styles, the homily becomes more engaging, perhaps more entertaining, and better integrated into the psyche of the individual and of parish life. The sensitive homilist will fill his sermons with spatial displays, projected illustrations, music, song, gestures, sign language, concrete objects, and moments of silence. The homilist will promote opportunities for interpersonal response after the Sacred Liturgy. Disabled parishioners will particularly benefit from homiletic approaches that respect the learning abilities with which God has blessed them.

By remembering to include adults and children with IDD when preparing his homily, the homilist will not only reach this audience but he will also tap into the various intelligences of all members of the congregation. For more information about people with IDD, visit the website of the National Apostolate for Inclusion Ministry, [www.nafim.org](http://www.nafim.org) or call 1-800-736-1280

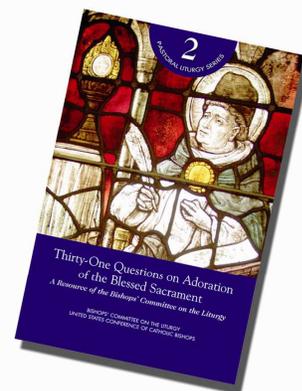
## FROM USCCB PUBLISHING

### Thirty-One Questions on Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament *Pastoral Liturgy Series 2*

This resource takes a pastoral approach to the long-standing practice of Eucharistic adoration. It addresses frequently-asked questions about Eucharistic adoration especially the relationship between Mass and Eucharistic adoration, the importance of Eucharistic adoration, and the difference between Eucharistic adoration and exposition. It also includes excerpts from *Redemptionis Sacramentum* and *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass*.

No. 5-595, 52 pp., \$2.50

To order this resource, call toll free 800-235-8722. Or visit the bishops' Internet site at [www.usccbpublishing.org](http://www.usccbpublishing.org).



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