



DIOCESE OF  
CLEVELAND



# EUCHARISTIC PROCESSIONS

Guidelines for Preparing and  
Celebrating Eucharistic Exposition  
with a Public Procession of the  
Blessed Sacrament

DIOCESAN EUCHARISTIC REVIVAL COMMITTEE  
DIOCESAN OFFICE FOR WORSHIP

*The celebration of the Eucharist is the center of the entire Christian life, both for the Church universal and the local congregations of the Church.*

*HOLY COMMUNION AND WORSHIP OF THE EUCHARIST OUTSIDE MASS, 1*



**"The other sacraments, all the ministries of the Church, and the works of the apostolate are united with the Eucharist and directed toward it. For the holy Eucharist contains the entire spiritual treasure of the Church, that is, Christ Himself, our passover and living bread. Through His flesh, made living and life-giving by the Holy Spirit, He offers life to all, who are thus invited and led to offer themselves, their work, and all creation together with Him."**

*Second Vatican Council, Decree *Presbyterorum ordinis*, 5.*



*When the Eucharist is carried through the streets in a solemn procession with singing, the Christian people give public witness of Faith and devotion towards the sacrament.*

**HOLY COMMUNION AND WORSHIP OF THE EUCHARIST  
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# PART 1: LITURGICAL NORMS

## INTRODUCTION

This section provides a collection of legislative norms that present the Church's teaching on the worship of the Eucharist outside Mass. These norms should be studied and consulted when preparing to celebrate Eucharistic adoration, liturgical processions with the Blessed Sacrament, and benediction. All of these norms are taken directly from the Church's magisterial and ritual texts.



## THE CODE OF CANON LAW

**Canon 941 - §1** In churches or oratories where it is permitted to reserve the Most Holy Eucharist, there can be expositions either with the ciborium or with a monstrance, observing the norms prescribed in the liturgical books.

§2 Exposition of the Most Holy Sacrament is not to be held in the same part of the church or oratory during the celebration of Mass.

**Canon 942** - It is recommended that in these same churches and oratories an annual solemn exposition of the Most Holy Sacrament be held during a suitable period of time, even if not continuous, so that the local community may meditate and may adore the Eucharistic Mystery more profoundly; but this kind of exposition is to be held only if a suitable gathering of the faithful is foreseen and the established norms are observed.

**Canon 944** - §1 When it can be done in the judgment of the diocesan bishop, as a public witness of the veneration toward the Most Holy Eucharist, a procession is to be conducted through the public streets, especially on the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ.

§2 - It is for the diocesan bishop to enact regulations which concern the participation in and the dignity of the processions.



## ROMAN MISSAL (THIRD TYPICAL EDITION)

The following rubric appears at the end of the ritual texts for the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi):

It is desirable that a procession take place after the Mass in which the Host to be carried in the procession is consecrated. However, nothing prohibits a procession from taking place even after a public and lengthy period of adoration following the Mass. If a procession takes place after Mass, when the Communion of the faithful is over, the monstrance in which the consecrated host has been placed is set on the altar. When the Prayer after Communion has been said, the Concluding Rites are omitted and the procession forms.



## INSTRUCTION *EUCCHARISTICUM MYSTERIUM*

On 25 May 1967, the Sacred Congregation of Rites issued the following directives on Eucharistic devotions and processions in light of the Second Vatican Council's teaching on the relationship between the Church's liturgy and devotional prayer:

### III. Eucharistic Devotions

58. Devotion, both private and public, toward the sacrament of the altar even outside Mass, that conforms to the norms laid down by lawful authority and in the present Instruction is strongly advocated by the



Church, since the Eucharistic sacrifice is the source and summit of the whole Christian life [LG, no. 11]. In structuring these devotional exercises, account should be taken of the norms determined by Vatican Council II concerning the relationship to be observed between the liturgy and other, nonliturgical sacred services. Particular attention should be paid to this one: “These devotions should be so fashioned that they harmonize with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some way derived from it, and lead the people to it, since, in fact, the liturgy, by its very nature far surpasses any of them” [SC, no. 13].

#### IV. Eucharistic Processions

59. In processions in which the Eucharist is carried through the streets solemnly with singing, especially on the feast of Corpus Christi, the Christian people give public witness to their faith and their devotion toward this sacrament. However, it is for the local Ordinary to decide on both the advisability of such processions in today’s conditions and on a place and plan for them that will ensure their being carried out with decorum and without any loss of reverence toward this sacrament.



### DIRECTORY ON POPULAR PIETY AND THE LITURGY

Promulgated in December of 2001 by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, the *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy* offers significant theological, liturgical, and pastoral insights for understanding the Church's teaching on Eucharistic devotions:

#### Ordinary Time: Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ

161. Eucharistic devotion, which is so deeply rooted in the Christian faithful, must integrate two basic principles:

- the supreme reference point for Eucharistic devotion is the Lord's Passover; the Pasch as understood by the Fathers, is the feast of Easter, while the Eucharist is before all else the celebration of Paschal Mystery or of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ;
- all forms of Eucharistic devotion must have an intrinsic reference to the Eucharistic Sacrifice, or dispose the faithful for its celebration, or

prolong the worship which is essential to that Sacrifice.

Hence, the *Rituale Romanum* states "The faithful, when worshipping Christ present in the Sacrament of the Altar, should recall that this presence comes from the Sacrifice of the Eucharist, and tends towards sacramental and spiritual communion."

162. The Corpus Christi procession represents the typical form of an Eucharistic procession. It is a prolongation of the celebration of the Eucharist: immediately after Mass, the Sacred Host, consecrated during the Mass, is borne out of the Church for the Christian faithful "to make public profession of faith and worship of the Most Blessed Sacrament."

The faithful understand and appreciate the values inherent in the procession: they are aware of being "the People of God", journeying with the Lord, and proclaiming faith in him who has become truly "God-amongst-us."

It is necessary however to ensure that the norms governing processions be observed, especially those ensuring respect for the dignity and reverence of the Blessed Sacrament. It is also necessary to ensure that the typical elements of popular piety accompanying the procession, such as the decoration of the streets and windows with flowers and the hymns and prayers used during the procession, truly "lead all to manifest their faith in Christ, and to give praise to the Lord," and exclude any forms of competition.

163. The Eucharistic procession is normally concluded by a blessing with the Blessed Sacrament. In the specific case of the Corpus Christi procession, the solemn blessing with the Blessed Sacrament concludes the entire celebration: the usual blessing by the priest is replaced by the blessing with the Blessed Sacrament.

It is important that the faithful understand that this blessing is not an independent form of Eucharistic piety, but the end of a prolonged act of worship. Hence, liturgical norms prohibit "exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for the purpose of giving the blessing."

### **Processions**

245. Processions are cultic expressions of a universal character and have multiple social and religious significance. In them, the relationship



between Liturgy and popular piety is especially important. Inspired by biblical examples (cf. Es 14,8-31; 2 Sam 6, 12-19; 1 Cor 15, 25-16,3), the Church has instituted a number of liturgical processions which have differing emphases:

- ...others are votive processions, such as the Eucharistic procession on the feast of Corpus Christi: the Blessed Sacrament passing through the streets arouses sentiments of gratitude and thanksgiving in the minds and hearts of the faithful, it arouses in them faith-adoration and is a source of grace and blessing (Acts 10, 38)(346);...

246. From the middle ages, votive processions acquired a particular importance in popular piety, and reached their apogee during the age of the Baroque. The Patron Saints of a city, or streets, or guild were honoured by carrying their relics, or image, or effigy in procession.

In their true form, processions are a manifestation of the faith of the people. They often have cultural connotations and are capable of re-awakening the religious sense of the people. From the perspective of the Christian's faith, votive processions, like other pious exercises, are exposed to certain risks: the precedence of devotions over the sacraments, which are relegated to second place, of external displays over interior disposition; regarding the procession as the apogee of a feast; the impression given to some of the less competently instructed of the faithful that Christianity is merely a "religion of Saints"; the degeneration of the procession itself from a manifestation of faith to a mere spectacle or a purely secular parade.

247. To preserve the character of processions as manifestations of faith, it is necessary for the faithful to be carefully instructed on their theological, liturgical and anthropological aspects.

From a theological perspective, it is important to emphasize that a procession is a sign of the Church's condition, the pilgrimage of the People of God, with Christ and after Christ, aware that in this world it has no lasting dwelling. Through the streets of this earth it moves towards the heavenly Jerusalem. It is also a sign of the witness to the faith that every Christian community is obliged to give to the Lord in the structures of civil society. It is also a sign of the Church's missionary task which reaches back to her origins and the Lord's command (cf. Mt 28, 19-20),

which sent her to proclaim the Gospel message of salvation.

From a liturgical point of view, processions, even those of a popular tenor, should be oriented towards the Liturgy. The journey from church to church should be presented as the journey of the community living in this world towards the community living in Heaven. Such processions should be conducted under ecclesiastical supervision so as to avoid anything unsuitable or degenerative. They should begin with a moment of prayer during which the Word of God should be proclaimed. Hymns and canticles should be sung and instrumental music can also be used. Lighted candles or lamps should be carried by the faithful during the procession. Pauses should be arranged along the way so as to provide for alternative paces, bearing in mind that such also reflects the journey of life. The procession should conclude with a doxology to God, source of all sanctity, and with a blessing given by a Bishop, Priest or Deacon.

From an anthropological perspective, the procession should make it evident that it is "a commonly undertaken journey". The participants join in the same atmosphere of prayer and are united in singing, and concentrated on arriving at the same goal. Thus the faithful feel united with each other, and intent in giving concrete expression to their Christian commitment throughout the journey of life.



## HOLY COMMUNION AND WORSHIP OF THE EUCHARIST OUTSIDE MASS

Promulgated by the Congregation for Divine Worship on 21 June 1973, this ritual text, along with the *Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist*, provides the primary directives for the celebration of Eucharistic adoration, processions, and benediction. The following norms are from the section entitled "Eucharistic Processions" in the ritual text:

101. When the Eucharist is carried through the streets in a solemn procession with singing, the Christian people give public witness of faith and devotion towards the sacrament.

It is for the local Ordinary, however, to judge whether this is opportune in today's circumstances, and to determine the time, place, and order of such processions, so that they may be conducted with dignity and



without loss of reverence to the sacrament.

102. The annual procession on the feast of Corpus Christi, or on an appropriate day near this feast, has a special importance and meaning for the pastoral life of the parish or city. It is therefore desirable to continue this procession, in accordance with the law, when today's circumstances permit and when it can truly be a sign of common faith and adoration.

In the principal districts of large cities there may be additional Eucharistic processions for pastoral reasons at the discretion of the local Ordinary. If the procession cannot be held on the feast of Corpus Christi, it is fitting to hold some kind of public celebration for the entire city or its principal districts in the cathedral church or other appropriate places.

103. It is fitting that a Eucharistic procession begin after the Mass in which the host to be carried in the procession has been consecrated. A procession may also take place, however, at the end of a lengthy period of public adoration.

104. Eucharistic processions should be arranged in accordance with local customs concerning the decoration of the streets and the order followed by the participants. In the course of the procession there may be stations where the Eucharistic blessing is given, if this custom is in effect and is of pastoral advantage. Songs and prayers should be so directed that all proclaim their faith in Christ and direct their attention to the Lord alone.

105. The priest who carries the Blessed Sacrament may wear the vestments used for the celebration of Mass if the procession takes place immediately afterward, or he may vest in a white cope.

106. Lights, incense, and the canopy under which the priest carrying the Blessed Sacrament walks should be used in accordance with local customs.

107. It is fitting that the procession should go from one church to another. Nevertheless, if local circumstances require, the procession may return to the same church where it began.

108. At the end of the procession Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament should be given in the church where the procession ends or

at another appropriate place. Then the Blessed Sacrament is reposed.



## ORDER FOR THE SOLEMN EXPOSITION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy in 1993, this ritual text "is offered as a means of assisting parishes in the proper celebration of solemn exposition in harmony with the liturgical principles decreed by the Second Vatican Council." All of the above rubrics from *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* are included in the introduction to this present text. Some additional directives are noted below:

20. Processions within the body of the church are no longer permitted [Congregation for Divine Worship, *Notitiae* 11(1975), 64.]. A procession with the Blessed Sacrament should go from one church to another. Nevertheless, if local circumstances require, the procession may return to the same church where it began.

21. In the course of the procession there may be stations where the Eucharistic blessing is given, if there is such a custom and some pastoral advantage recommends it. Songs and prayers should be planned with the purpose of expressing the faith of the participants and the centering of their attention on the Lord alone.

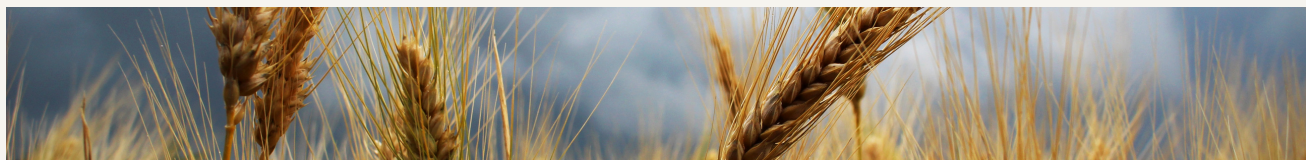
At the conclusion of the ritual texts for "Opening Celebration of the Eucharist," the following rubric for the optional procession states:

35. If there is to be a procession, the directions in nos. 17-25 are followed.

The celebrant, wearing either the Mass vestments or a white cope, puts on the humeral veil and, assisted by the deacon, takes the monstrance.

During the procession psalms, songs, or litanies (see nos. 178-179) may be sung.

At the end of the procession, after the monstrance is placed on the altar, a suitable song is sung.







## CEREMONIAL OF BISHOPS

The Congregation for Divine Worship promulgated the *Ceremonial of Bishops* on 14 September 1984. Since *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* and the *Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist* do not offer extensive rubrics for Eucharistic processions, the *Ceremonial* can be a helpful resource when communities are preparing the liturgical logistics for a parish procession. That which applies to the Bishop presiding at a Eucharistic procession may be adapted for parish use when a priest presides. The *Ceremonial* includes the following rubrics which are not found in other ritual texts already noted above:

387. It is fitting that a Eucharistic procession begin after the Mass at which the host to be carried in procession is consecrated. A procession may take place, however, at the end of a lengthy period of public adoration that has been held after Mass.

388. The following preparations are made in addition to what is needed for the celebration of a stational Mass:

1. *In the sanctuary (chancel):*

- a. on the paten a host to be consecrated for the procession;
- b. monstrance;
- c. humeral veil;
- d. second censer and incense boat;

2. *In a convenient place:*

- a. copes, white or of some other festive color (see no. 390 of this Ceremonial);
- b. torches and candles;
- c. baldachin (canopy) [optional]

389. After the Communion of the faithful, the Deacon places the monstrance on the altar, then reverently places the consecrated host in it. The Bishop and Deacons assisting him genuflect and return to the chair (cathedra), where the Bishop says the Prayer after Communion.

390. After the Prayer after Communion, the concluding rites are omitted, and the procession takes place. The Bishop presides, wearing a chasuble as at Mass or a white cope. When the procession does not begin immediately after Mass, the Bishop wears a cope.

It is fitting that canons and presbyters who were not concelebrants of

the Mass wear a cope over the cassock and surplice.

391. When incense has been placed in the censer and blessed, the Bishop, kneeling before the altar, incenses the Blessed Sacrament.

He then receives the humeral veil and goes up to the altar, genuflects, and, assisted by a Deacon, takes the monstrance and holds it with hands covered by the two ends of the veil.

The procession is then formed in this order: first the crossbearer, accompanied by acolytes carrying candlesticks with lighted candles; next, the clergy; Deacons of the Mass; canons and presbyters, wearing copes; concelebrants; visiting bishops, wearing copes; the minister carrying the Bishop's pastoral staff; two censerbearers carrying censers with burning incense; the Bishop carrying the Blessed Sacrament; a little behind him the two Deacons assisting him; the ministers who assist with the book and the miter. All carry candles, and torchbearers escort the Blessed Sacrament.

Whether or not a baldachin (canopy) is held over the Bishop as he carries the Blessed Sacrament depends on local custom.

If the Bishop is unable to carry the Blessed Sacrament, he should walk in procession immediately before the priest carrying the Blessed Sacrament. The Bishop is vested and walks with head uncovered, carrying the pastoral staff, but not blessing as he walks.

Other bishops present for the procession vest in choir dress and take their places in the procession after the one carrying the Blessed Sacrament, in the order indicated in no. 1100 of this *Ceremonial*.

*[Nos. 392 and 393 repeat rubrics from other ritual texts for the procession through the streets, stations for benediction along the procession route, the use of hymns to keep the participants focused on the Lord alone, and the movement from one church to another.]*

394. At the end of the procession, Eucharistic benediction is given in the church where the procession ends or in some other suitable place.

The ministers, deacons, and presbyters on entering into the sanctuary (chancel) go directly to their places. When the Bishop has gone up to the altar, he remains standing, and the Deacon on his right takes the monstrance for the Bishop and places it on the altar. Then the Bishop, together with the Deacon, genuflects and, laying aside the humeral veil, kneels before the altar.

After incense has been placed in the censer and blessed, the Bishop takes the censer from the Deacon, bows with the Deacons assisting him, and incenses the Blessed Sacrament, swinging the censer back and forth three times. After bowing once more to the Blessed Sacrament, the Bishop returns the censer to the Deacon. During the incensation the hymn *Tantum ergo Sacramentum* or some other Eucharistic hymn is sung.

Then the Bishop rises and says, **Let us pray**. A short pause for silent prayer follows. If necessary, a minister holds the book open before the Bishop, who then continues with the prayer **Lord Jesus Christ, you gave us the Eucharist** or some other prayer from *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist outside Mass*.

After the prayer, the Bishop receives the humeral veil, goes up to the altar and genuflects. Then, assisted by the Deacon, he takes the monstrance, holds it elevated in both hands, which are covered with the humeral veil, and, facing the people, makes the Sign of the Cross in silence.

After the blessing, the Deacon takes the monstrance from the Bishop and places it on the altar. The Bishop and Deacon genuflect. Then, while the Bishop remains kneeling in front of the altar, the Deacon reverently takes the Blessed Sacrament to the chapel of reservation.

As circumstances suggest, after the blessing, the people may sing an acclamation.

The procession returns to the vesting room (sacristy) in the usual way.



## INSTRUCTION *REDEMPTIONIS SACRAMENTUM*

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments promulgated *Redemptionis sacramentum* on 25 March 2004. In addition to reiterating the Bishop's responsibility for regulating Eucharistic processions and encouraging the faithful's devout participation, the document adds the following directive:

144. Although this (i.e., a Eucharistic procession through the streets) cannot be done in some places, the tradition of holding Eucharistic processions should not be allowed to be lost. Instead, new ways should be sought of holding them in today's conditions: for example, at shrines, or in public gardens if the civil authority agrees.



# PART 2: PASTORAL AND LITURGICAL PREPARATION

## INTRODUCTION

During his pontificate, Pope St. John Paul II moved the Corpus Christi procession from St. Peter's Basilica and Vatican square to the streets of Rome. This change highlighted the significance of the Eucharistic



procession as a public proclamation of our Catholic belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. It also emphasized the move from Mass to mission - that the Eucharistic celebration sends the faith community into the world to engage in the ministry of evangelization. Christ accompanies us on our pilgrimage of faith. We proclaim Him and the Gospel message as our life, hope, and peace.

In his homily on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of

Christ (Corpus Christi) in 2005, Pope Benedict XVI challenged us to discover the deeper meaning of the Eucharistic procession:

"We bring Christ, present under the sign of bread, onto the streets of our city. We entrust these streets, these homes, our daily life, to His goodness. May our streets be streets of Jesus! May our houses be homes for Him and with Him! May our life of every day be penetrated by His Presence."

"With this gesture, let us place under His eyes the sufferings of the sick, the solitude of young people and the elderly, temptations, fears — our entire life. The procession represents an immense and public blessing for our city: Christ is, in person, the divine Blessing for the world. May the ray of His blessing extend to us all!"

"In the Corpus Domini procession, we walk with the Risen One on His journey to meet the entire world."

In his Corpus Christi homily in 2016, Pope Francis expressed the hope that the Eucharistic procession's witness would bear fruit in evangelical and apostolic action:

"May this action of the Eucharistic procession, which we will carry out shortly, respond to Jesus' command. An action to commemorate him; an action to give food to the crowds of today; an act to break open our faith and our lives as a sign of Christ's love for this city and for the whole world."

As parish communities prepare to celebrate Eucharistic adoration and to walk in procession with the Eucharistic Lord, care should be taken not just to get the ritual right, but to assist those who will participate to engage their hearts and minds in the saving Mystery of Christ. He walks with us in our pilgrimage of faith and life. He nourishes, strengthens, and transforms us as our Food for the journey. He invites us to feast upon the whole of Himself - Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity - so that we may become what we have received. We, in turn, walk with Him and one another. We are made the bearers of His Presence to our homes, neighborhoods, and world - called to proclaim Him alive and with us through our words and actions. We are not meant to keep Christ to ourselves, but by our witness to bring Him into every human experience.

## INITIAL GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

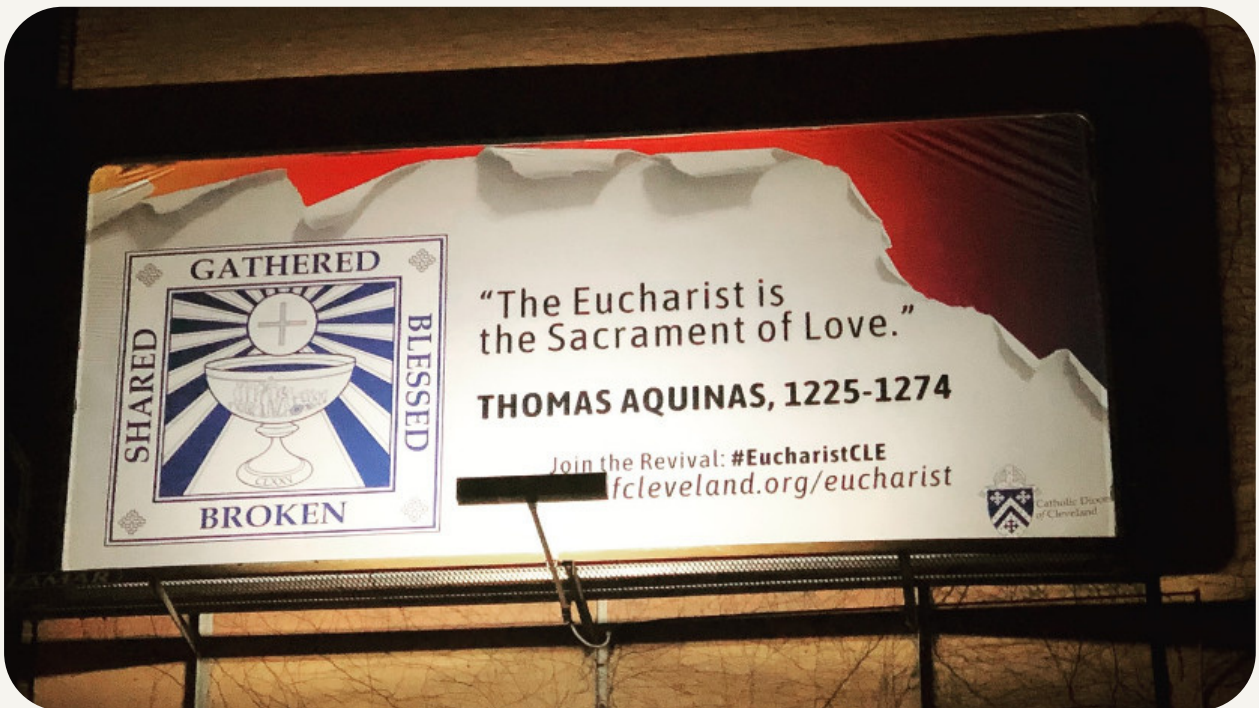
As a part of a parish's remote preparation for the planned Eucharistic procession, the following liturgical principles and ritual practices should be kept in mind:

- A Eucharistic procession is liturgy in the formal sense. Its celebration is governed and guided by the appropriate liturgical ritual texts and norms. As with all liturgies, it is an act of Christ by which human lives can be blessed, graced, and transformed. It is also an act of a believing community, an expression of their faith, and a participation in the Church's prayer.
- As a public expression of the Church's Eucharistic faith, the procession must be carefully prepared and celebrated. In taking its faith to the streets, the community is presenting the face of Christ and His Church to everyone who witnesses this pilgrim walk.
- Since most parishes may not have had a Eucharistic procession through a neighborhood, those who will serve as liturgical ministers (e.g., cross bearer, thurifers, altar servers, candle or torch bearers, cantors, choir members, baldachin bearers, etc.) should be well prepared and rehearsed. It would be helpful to designate one or two persons to act as Masters of Ceremonies and who would assume the responsibility of guiding the movement of the procession from the exposition of the Eucharist at the end of Mass to the procession through the streets to its conclusion with benediction at the appropriate site.
- While the ritual books encourage the use of a baldachin (canopy), it is not necessary for every parish to have one for a Eucharistic procession. The ritual norms indicate that it is optional. The baldachin does create a sacred space for the Blessed Sacrament and the ministers. It also makes it easy to identify where the Eucharist is located in the procession, as well as providing a protective covering. A baldachin may be purchased or constructed by the parish. Examples of a baldachin's size, structure, and ornamentation can be found online if a parish chooses to exercise this option.
- The ritual texts indicate that singing is an essential part of this Eucharistic liturgy. It can also be one of the most challenging aspects



- of celebrating a Eucharistic procession. Therefore, consideration should be given to the use of sing-able hymnody, instrumentation (e.g., handbells, etc.), worship aids, cantors, choir members, etc. Singing gives praise to God for the saving Mystery of Christ, unites the community in faith and prayer, and contributes to the evangelizing character of the procession's witness.
- In addition to the use of hymnody during the procession, the ritual texts indicate that other forms of prayer may be used as well. Psalms, litanies of the Eucharist, appropriate devotional prayers (e.g., the *Anima Christi*, the Rosary, especially the Luminous Mysteries, etc.) may be prayed along the procession route. In order to ensure active participation, these prayers, along with the hymns, should be printed in a worship aid.
- Stations may be set-up along the procession route where a reading from Sacred Scripture may be proclaimed, a brief reflection given, hymns sung, prayers prayed, and the Eucharistic blessing imparted. Stations may be prepared in the front yard of parishioners' homes with an altar (i.e., a table with altar linens), cross, and candles. Other decorations and floral arrangements may add to the solemnity of the station. Stations along the route are not required, but may add to the liturgy and afford an opportunity to gather those in the procession in a designated place for prayer and song.
- Short periods of silence may be utilized as well even during the procession. Inviting those processing to consider how Christ is present in their daily life's journeys, and how the Eucharist is the gift of Himself as Food along the Way, may enhance their experience of this liturgical prayer.
- Some consideration should be given to the use of sound equipment to assist in leading and maintaining the singing and praying of those in the procession.
- In parishes where it may be difficult to process through the streets or where it may be difficult to organize a procession, neighboring parishes may wish to collaborate and share their resources for both preparing and celebrating a Eucharistic procession. In particular, it would be important for collaborating parishes to choose a route that

- is accessible and maintains the Church's sense of the procession being a public proclamation of our Eucharistic faith.
- When preparing the procession route, parishes should review local community ordinances for such gatherings and confer with public authorities and law enforcement officials. It may be necessary to apply for local permits and provide security escorts, especially if the procession will be using city streets.
- Once the initial preparations for a Eucharistic procession have been developed and a route established with local permissions, the parish should communicate these plans to the Office for Worship so that they can be reviewed and Bishop Malesic's approval sought.



### LITURGICAL TEXTS

In preparing the liturgy (i.e., the Mass at which the Host for the procession will be consecrated, the Eucharistic procession itself with its accompanying hymns and prayers, and the concluding Benediction), the following ritual texts should be consulted:

- *Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist*, especially the following sections:

- Chapter 1: Opening Celebration of the Eucharist
- Chapter 5: Closing Celebration for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist
- Appendix I: Scripture Readings
- Appendix II: Litanies and Prayers
- Appendix III: Suggested Music
- *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass*, especially the following sections:
  - Chapter III: Form of Worship of the Holy Eucharist
    - Section 1: Exposition of the Holy Eucharist - Introduction and Rite of Eucharistic Exposition and Benediction
    - Section 2: Eucharistic Processions
- *Ceremonial of Bishops*, especially the following sections:
  - Part IV: Chapter 15: Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ - Eucharistic Processions
  - Part VI: Chapter 21: Processions
  - Part VI: Chapter 22: Eucharistic Exposition and Benediction

Most of the liturgical norms and rubrics from these three texts can be found in Part I of this present document. The *Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist* and *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* include the ritual prayer texts and additional rubrics for the actual celebration of the Church's liturgy. These two ritual books must be consulted when preparing the celebration of the Mass and the Eucharistic procession that will follow.

If the celebration of the Mass and the Eucharistic Procession occur on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, then the proper ritual prayer texts and Scripture readings will be found in the *Roman Missal* (Third Typical Edition) and the *Lectionary* (volume I). If the proposed day for the Mass and procession is other than Corpus Christi, the *Order of Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours and Celebration of the Eucharist (Ordo)* should be consulted. When choosing a day for the liturgy, please observe the norms associated with the liturgical calendar. If the *Ordo* indicates that a V1 or V2 Mass is permissible, then the rubrics found at no. 29 in the *Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist* may be observed:



29. The Mass of the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ or the votive Mass of the Eucharist (Votive Mass, no. 5) may be celebrated, except on the Sundays of the seasons of Advent, Lent, and Easter, on solemnities, on days within the octave of Easter, on All Souls, on Ash Wednesday, and during Holy Week.

Preface I or II of the Holy Eucharist may be used, unless a proper preface is required.

The readings may be chosen from among those given in the Lectionary for Mass for the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ (see Appendix I, nos. 151-153) or the votive Mass of the Eucharist (see Appendix I, nos. 154-159), except when prohibited (see above, no. 29, par. 1). The sequence for the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ may be omitted.

**SACRISTY NOTES**

In addition to the usual preparations being made for Mass, the following are prepared by the sacristans as well:

- an additional host to be consecrated for exposition
- the luna and monstrance
- two thuribles with incense boats for the Eucharistic procession
- a cope, if used for the procession
- the humeral veil
- the baldachin (canopy), if used for the procession
- candles or torches for the procession
- worship aids with the liturgical hymns and prayers for the procession
- liturgical materials (e.g., altar linens, candles, etc.) for the stations along the route, if used for the procession



# PART 3: LITURGICAL RITUAL

## INTRODUCTION

The ritual celebrations for the Mass, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the Eucharistic procession, and Benediction can be found in *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* and the *Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist* as noted above. The liturgical norms and ritual texts found therein should be used to prepare the liturgy and utilized for its celebration.



## THE RITUAL CELEBRATION

In general, the ritual follows this pattern:

The Mass is celebrated as usual with the addition of that which is noted below.

At the Preparation of the Altar and Gifts (the Offertory), an additional host to be consecrated and placed in the luna is presented along with the other gifts of bread and wine.

At the Lamb of God (*Agnus Dei*), the empty luna is brought to the altar along with any additional vessels needed for the distribution of Holy Communion. The Deacon places the consecrated Host for exposition into the luna and sets the luna on the corporal.

During the Communion Procession, the altar servers clear the altar of the chalice and *Roman Missal*. The consecrated host for exposition in the luna and the corporal remain.

At the conclusion of the Communion Procession, any remaining consecrated Hosts are placed in the tabernacle by the priest or deacon. The purification of the vessels occurs at the credence table.

As soon as the purification of the vessels is completed, the Deacon brings the monstrance from the credence table and places it sideways on the altar.

The Celebrant and the Deacon position themselves behind the altar, facing the liturgical assembly.

The Deacon places the host, consecrated for exposition, and the luna into the monstrance. He places the monstrance on the altar, facing the liturgical assembly.

The Celebrant and the Deacon genuflect and then return to their places.

(*Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist*, #32-36, for all that follows)

All the liturgical ministers are seated for the Period of Sacred Silence after Communion.

Following the Period of Sacred Silence, the Celebrant stands and prays the Prayer after Communion.

After the Prayer after Communion, the concluding rites of the Mass are omitted, and the procession takes place.

At this point, if the Eucharistic procession will occur immediately after Mass, the Celebrant may remove his chasuble and replace it with a cope. If the procession occurs immediately after Mass, the Celebrant also has the option of wearing the Mass vestments during the procession. If the procession will occur after a significant period of adoration and the



Celebrant has exited the church following the rite of exposition, then he wears a cope when he returns for the Eucharistic procession.

Immediately after the Prayer after Communion (and the optional change from chasuble to cope), the Celebrant, the Deacon, and the book bearer (carrying the *Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist*) assemble before the altar along with the other liturgical ministers.

The thurifer brings the thurible and boat to the Celebrant and the Deacon.

After placing incense in the thurible and blessing the incense, the Celebrant and the other ministers genuflect and then, all kneel.

The thurifer hands the thurible to the Deacon who hands it to the Celebrant.

The Celebrant and the other ministers bow. He incenses the Eucharist, and then all bow again. The Celebrant gives the thurible back to the Deacon, who hands it to the thurifer.

During the incensation of the Eucharist, a Eucharistic hymn of praise is sung by the entire liturgical assembly.

After a period of silent prayer following the hymn, the Celebrant stands and says/sings: "Let us pray."

The book bearer stands and holds the *Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist* (ribbon at page 15) for the Celebrant.

After a brief silence, the Celebrant prays the prayer.

Immediately following the prayer, the book bearer takes the *Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist* to the credence table. He leaves the book there and returns to the Celebrant with the humeral veil.

The book bearer assists the Celebrant in putting on the humeral veil, after which the book bearer kneels in place again.

Together, the Celebrant and the Deacon go to the altar and genuflect. The Deacon assists the Celebrant to pick up the monstrance with the humeral veil.

The procession is then formed.



In general, the procession typically follows in this order:

- the cross bearer, accompanied by acolytes carrying candlesticks with lighted candles
- the Deacons who are present at the Mass
- canons and presbyters, wearing copes, who did not concelebrate at the Mass
- priests concelebrants in Mass vestments
- twothurifers carryingthuribles with burning incense
- the Celebrant carrying the Blessed Sacrament
- a little behind him the Deacon(s) who assisted the Celebrant at Mass
- the altar server who assists with the book (i.e., the *Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament*)
- the lay faithful who may carry congregational candles

If the baldachin (canopy) is used, it is usually carried by four bearers. The baldachin is carried over the Celebrant who is carrying the monstrance with the Blessed Sacrament. In addition to the canopy bearers, four to six torch bearers may also walk on either side of the baldachin during the procession.

Please see Part Four of this document for a diagram indicating the incorporation of other groups into the Eucharistic procession.

In the course of the procession, there may be stations where the Eucharistic blessing is given, if some pastoral advantage recommends it. Once those who are participating in the procession have gathered at the station, any or all of the following may occur:

- a Eucharistic hymn
- a brief Scripture reading
- a short reflection
- prayers
- another Eucharistic hymn
- blessing with the Blessed Sacrament

If the Eucharistic blessing will be given, it should be preceded by at least one hymn and a prayer.

At each station, "songs and prayers should be planned with the purpose of expressing the faith of the participants and keeping their attention centered on the Lord alone" (*Ceremonial of Bishops*, no. 392).

The procession continues by moving from one church to a neighboring church or, if necessary, by returning to the church from which the procession began.

"At the end of the procession, Eucharistic Benediction is given in the church where the procession ends or in some other suitable place" (*Ceremonial of Bishops*, no. 394).

Upon entering the sanctuary, all the liturgical ministers, except the Celebrant and the Deacon(s), go to their places.

The Celebrant and the Deacon(s) go up to the altar and remain standing behind it facing the liturgical assembly.

The Deacon takes the monstrance from the Celebrant and places it on the altar. Then, together, the Celebrant and the Deacon(s) genuflect.

The Deacon takes the humeral veil from the Celebrant and sets it aside.

The Celebrant and the Deacon(s) move to the front of the altar and stand, along with the thurifer with incense, the book bearer, and any of the other liturgical ministers.

The Deacon and thurifer assist the Celebrant with preparing the thurible.

After incense has been placed in the thurible and blessed, the Celebrant and other liturgical ministers genuflect and then, kneel.

The thurifer hands the thurible to the Deacon who hands it to the Celebrant.

The Celebrant and all the liturgical ministers bow. The Celebrant incenses the Blessed Sacrament, swinging the thurible back and forth three times.

After bowing again to the Blessed Sacrament, the Celebrant hands the thurible back to the Deacon who gives it to the thurifer.

While the Celebrant is incensing the Blessed Sacrament, the liturgical assembly sings a Eucharistic hymn (e.g., *Tantum ergo Sacramentum*, etc.).

At the conclusion of the hymn, the ministers remain in silent prayer for a moment.

When he is ready, the Celebrant stands and sings/says: "Let us pray."

The book bearer stands, holding the ritual book for the Celebrant. The other ministers remain kneeling.

The Celebrant sings/says one of the concluding prayers for Benediction provided in the *Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist*.

At the conclusion of the prayer, the book bearer takes the ritual book to the credence table and gets the humeral veil.

The book bearer places the humeral veil on the Celebrant's shoulders and then, kneels in his place.

The Celebrant goes to the altar along with the Deacon. Together, they genuflect. The Deacon assists the Celebrant to pick up the monstrance with the humeral veil. The Deacon then kneels in place.

The Celebrant blesses the assembly with the Blessed Sacrament.

The Celebrant returns the monstrance to the altar with the assistance of the Deacon, if necessary, and genuflects.

The Deacon stands, removes the luna from the monstrance, places the Blessed Sacrament into the tabernacle, genuflects, and closes the tabernacle door.



As the Blessed Sacrament is being reposed in the tabernacle by the Deacon, the liturgical assembly sings a hymn or acclamation. This may be a Eucharistic hymn of praise, a sung version of the Divine Praises, a Eucharistic litany, or some other appropriate Eucharistic acclamation.

The Celebrant and the Deacon return to the front of the sanctuary.

The Deacon or the book bearer may take the humeral veil from the Celebrant and return it to the credence table.

All the liturgical ministers stand.

The liturgical assembly continues to sing the Eucharistic hymn or acclamation.

During the hymn, all the liturgical ministers genuflect and then return to the church's gathering area or the sacristy.



# PART 4: PROCESSION DIAGRAM

## INTRODUCTION

The diagram below is a suggestion for organizing the liturgical ministers, members of religious communities or parish organizations, the lay faithful, and others in the Eucharistic procession. The ordering of these groups and individuals is based upon what is proposed in the liturgical ritual books and liturgical custom. When arranging the procession, the primary concern remains the placement of the Blessed Sacrament.



## THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE PROCESSION

At the conclusion of the Mass after the incensation of the Blessed Sacrament, the Celebrant takes the monstrance with the Eucharist and exits the church. He is preceded by the other liturgical ministers (i.e., the cross bearer, the altar servers with candles, the thurifer, etc.). He waits in his position in the procession until the faithful have joined it.

Cross Bearer

Acolyte with Candle    Acolyte with Candle

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Religious Associations and Sodalties  
With Banners Representing the Organization

Knights of Columbus  
Knights of Saint John  
Knights of Saint Peter Claver  
Avilas of the Diocese of Cleveland  
Serra International Clubs  
Parents of Priests  
Catholic Men’s Fellowship of Northeast Ohio  
Catholic Order of Foresters  
Christ Child Society  
First Friday Clubs  
Secular and Third Order Religious  
World Apostolate of Fatima  
Other Diocesan or Parish Groups

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Religious Communities  
of Women and Men

---

Seminarians

---

Deacons  
Priests  
(Those who were present at the Mass)

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Thurifer with Incense    Thurifer with Incense  
Incense Boat Bearer

Baldachin Pole Bearer    Baldachin Pole Bearer

Torch Bearer

Torch Bearer

Celebrant with the Blessed Sacrament

Torch Bearer

Torch Bearer

Deacon    Deacon

Book Bearer

Torch Bearer

Torch Bearer

Baldachin Pole Bearer    Baldachin Pole Bearer

Other Members of the Lay Faithful





# PART 5: RESOURCES

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