

Eucharistic Exposition and Reposition by a Layperson

Recently, there has been a great increase in interest in Eucharistic Adoration. More people are frequenting adoration, more churches are offering adoration, and they are offering more extended periods of adoration. What a great sign of the love of Jesus, that people wish to be with Him, even to spend an hour with him!

Because a priest or deacon cannot always be present to expose and repose the Blessed Sacrament, a number of the priests have asked whether lay people may expose and repose, and what the proper ritual should be.

To the first question, a lay person can expose. In *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* (HCWEO), paragraph 91 on the minister of exposition, we read "In the absence of a priest or deacon or if they are lawfully impeded, the following persons may publically expose and later repose the holy Eucharist for the adoration of the faithful:

- a) an acolyte or a special minister of communion
- b) a member of a religious community or of a lay association of men or women which is devoted to Eucharistic adoration, upon appointment by the local ordinary."

For "special minister of communion," we should read "extraordinary minister of Holy Communion." So, a duly mandated Eucharistic minister can, in the absence of a priest or deacon, expose and repose the Blessed Sacrament.

The format for this exposition and reposition is for the sake of providing an opportunity of Eucharistic adoration for the community. A lay minister is not permitted to give the benediction. Thus, the format is very simple, as follows on the following page.

For Exposition

1. The minister does not wear any particular vesture.
2. The altar is prepared in advance. Adoration may take place either with the sacrament in the ciborium, or in a monstrance. If in the ciborium, two candles are lit. If in the monstrance, the monstrance is prepared in advance on the corporal with 4 or 6 candles. (cf. HCWEO 85)
3. The minister brings the sacrament from the tabernacle to the altar, either the ciborium or the luna to be placed in the monstrance.
4. A hymn (such as *O Salutaris Hostia*) may be sung while the minister places the sacrament on the altar.
5. If the sacrament is exposed in the monstrance, the sacrament should be incensed. (cf. HCWEO 85)

For Reposition

1. A simple devotion or recitation of some portion of the Liturgy of the Hours may take place.
2. Before reposition, a Eucharistic hymn (e.g. *Tantum Ergo Sacramentum*) may be sung.
3. At the end of the period of adoration, the minister approaches the altar and genuflects. The minister removes the sacrament from the monstrance or takes the ciborium and returns it to the tabernacle and genuflects. An acclamation (like the Divine Praises) may be said. (cf. HCWEO 100)