

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never thirst" *John 6: 35*



A Guide to a *Holy Hour*

**For Teachers and
School Staff**

What is a Holy Hour?

A Holy Hour is a time of prayer where we spend an hour in Eucharistic Adoration in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

What is Exposition/Adoration?

Exposition highlights the fundamental mystery of the Holy Eucharist—that our Lord is truly present, body and blood, soul and divinity in the Blessed Sacrament. The Blessed Sacrament is exposed in a Monstrance so people can sit and ‘adore’ Jesus and spend time in His presence.

What is the Blessed Sacrament?

The Blessed Sacrament is a name used to refer to the Real Presence of Jesus in the form of simple bread and wine. In *Dominicae cenae* (no. 3), John Paul II wrote, ‘Jesus awaits us in this Sacrament of love.’

Preparing the pupils

To make a Holy Hour a time of reflection and prayer, thought needs to be put into the physical surroundings. Things to check in the Church/Chapel:

- **What is it?** - Explain to your group/class what a Holy Hour is. You may want to explain what we, as Catholics, believe the Blessed Sacrament is. It is important to acknowledge that Jesus is physically present with us, exposed to us, during a Holy Hour - we are spending time with the Lord.
- **Why do we do it?**
 - One way to explain why we might go to a Holy Hour is to talk about **Jesus as our closest friend**. When we are with our friends in everyday life we do not always need to be talking or doing anything in particular - being in His presence is enough.
 - Another way might be to think of it as **sunbathing**. When we are in the sun we take in the goodness, and people can often tell when you have a bit of a tan (hopefully not sunburnt!). The amazing thing about Exposition is you can never get too much of Jesus' love! **You can also tell your class to look closely at the monstrance** - it is often shaped like a sun with rays pointing in all directions leading outwards from Jesus.
- **What do we do?** - When you go to a Holy Hour, it is a very personal timer between an individual and Jesus. The following points explain what one would do when arriving/partaking/leaving time with the Blessed Sacrament - **You can use these to help your group understand what to expect.**
 - **Genuflect** - When you enter the Chapel/Church remind your group to Genuflect to the Blessed Sacrament. He may still be in the Tabernacle or He may be in the Monstrance on the Altar. Wherever Jesus is, that is where you Genuflect.
 - **Sit/Kneel** - Encourage your group to sit by themselves around the Chapel/Church to limit the distractions from others. Some may want to use kneelers to kneel during your time with the Blessed Sacrament
 - **Silence/Internal Reflection/Music** - During your time as a group with the Blessed Sacrament, you may want to have silence or encourage reflection on a piece of scripture or even worship together with some music. Further suggestions to help you with this can be found overleaf.
 - **A Prayer** - as your time in Exposition comes to a close you could say a prayer for the silent intentions of the group
 - **Genuflect** - If the Blessed Sacrament is still exposed (in the Monstrance), remember to remind your group to genuflect as you leave the Chapel/Church. It is also important to keep the calm and quiet atmosphere as you leave the Chapel/Church - especially as there might be other groups waiting to go in.

Preparation





Exposing the Blessed Sacrament

What to do while the Blessed Sacrament is being exposed

- Everyone should kneel while the Priest/Deacon/Minister exposes the Blessed Sacrament, from the Tabernacle into the Monstrance, placing it at the centre of the corporal on the altar.
- When the Blessed Sacrament has been placed in the Monstrance you may be invited, or can invite your group, to take a seat and be comfortable in this time with Jesus.

What to do during your Holy Hour

- Traditional Holy Hours are silent - allowing for each person to spend time with the Blessed Sacrament for personal reflection and conversation with God without the interruption of music or speech.

During the Holy Hour

However there are many different ways to experience a Holy Hour, each offering a different environment of prayer:

Holy Hour with Scripture

Choose a passage from scripture (this could be the Gospel of the day or a passage you feel called to share)

Begin the Holy Hour in silence and give people time to begin their conversation with God.

Read the chosen passage through - you may be inspired by the Holy Spirit to share any thoughts that came to you during the reading.

Enter into another period of silence inviting people to reflect on the passage with Jesus.

After a pause read through the passage again - perhaps inviting people to listen out for a word or phrase they feel is speaking to them.

Ask people to keep this word/phrase close to their hearts as you sit with Jesus, sharing this time together.

Towards the end of the Holy Hour you could say a short prayer bringing the intentions of the group together and offering them to our Lord.

Holy Hour with Music

For many people music is an important part of their prayer life. Music can be a great addition to a Holy Hour, especially contemporary praise and worship music.

You may wish to sing one or two songs, some suitable suggestions can be found at the end of this guide.

Make sure to include some times of silence in between the music to give individuals, and musicians, some reflection time with the Blessed Sacrament.



What to do while the Blessed Sacrament is being reposed

- If the Blessed Sacrament is being reposed by a Priest/Deacon there will be Benediction (a blessing where the monstrance is held and is elevated and moved in the sign of the cross). If being reposed by a minister the blessing will not occur.
- As the Blessed Sacrament is reposed it is appropriate to sing/say the following verse three times:

Reposing the Blessed Sacrament



O Sacrament most Holy,
O Sacrament Divine,
All praise and all thanksgiving,
Be every moment Thine!



After Exposition



What happens after a Holy Hour?

- It may be appropriate to talk briefly with your group about their experience of Exposition. As it can be a very personal experience it is important that only those who are willing to share with the wider group should.
- Was it different than what you expected?
- What challenged you the most?
- How might you describe your experience in one word?
- What will you take away from your time in the Holy Hour?

Suggested Scripture / Music

Matthew 5: 3-11 The Beatitudes

Matthew 9: 18-26 Jesus raises a dead girl and heals a sick woman

Matthew 14: 13-21 Jesus feeds the five thousand

Mark 9: 2-13 The Transfiguration

Mark 14: 32-42 - Jesus in the Garden

Luke 8: 1-15 The Parable of the Sower

Luke 8: 22-25 Jesus Calms the Storm

Luke 24: 13-35 The Road to Emmaus

John 4: 1-26 Jesus talks with a Samaritan Woman

John 13: 1-17 Jesus washes His Disciples' feet

John 15: 1-17 The Vine and the Branches

When you walk into the room - Bryan & Katie Torwalt

Receive our Adoration - Benton Brown

Here as in Heaven - Elevation Worship

O Praise the Name - Hillsong Worship

God I look to you - Bethel Music & Francesca Battistelli

Adoramus te, Domine - Taizé

Laudate Dominum - Taizé

Be still for the presence of the Lord - David Evans

Love divine, all loves excelling - John Stainer

All who are thirsty - Benton Brown

O come to the Altar - Elevation Worship

Bread of life - Jo Boyce and Mike Stanley