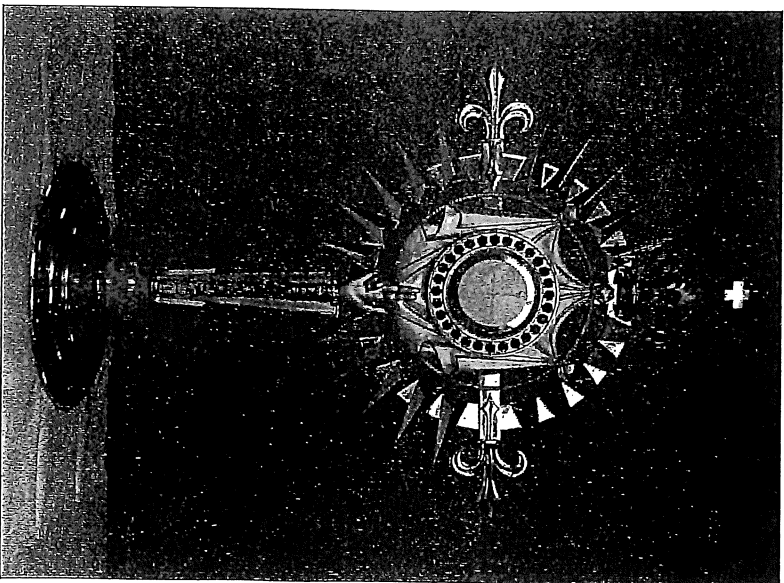


# How to Make a Holy Hour



So, you could not stay awake with Me for even an hour? Be on guard, and pray that you may not undergo the test (Mt 26:40-41).

There are different ways to “watch one hour” with the Lord. One of the most powerful and fruitful ways is to spend an hour in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. We call this a Holy Hour because it is an hour spent in the presence of the Holy Eucharist: Christ, Himself, the One who alone is Holy.

There are also different ways to make a Holy Hour: you can pray, alone or with others, before Jesus in the Tabernacle; or you can pray in the presence of the exposed Blessed Sacrament, privately or at a public service led by a priest or deacon.

## *The Church's Teaching on Adoration of the Holy Eucharist*

The Church strongly encourages both private and public devotion toward the Eucharist and teaches that prayer before the Lord sacramentally present in the Eucharist actually “extends the union with Christ which the faithful have received in communion.” It helps them to live in a more Christian way, trying “to maintain in their lives what they have received by faith and by Sacraments” (*The Rites of the Catholic Church*).

During times of public adoration, when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed by a priest or deacon, “there should be prayers, songs, and readings to direct the faithful to the worship of the Lord, to encourage a prayerful spirit. There should be readings from Scripture with a homily or brief exhortation to develop a better understanding of the Eucharistic mystery. It is also desirable for people to respond to the word of God by singing and to spend periods of time in religious silence. Part of the liturgy of the hours may be celebrated to extend the praise and thanksgiving of Holy Mass.

“The elements of prayer, the Scriptures, praise, and silence are all an integral part of public adoration. All the elements of the public adoration should

acknowledge the marvelous presence of Christ in the Sacrament and foster the worship which is due to Christ in spirit and truth. Such public adoration of the Blessed Sacrament must clearly express its relationship to the Mass” (*The Rites of the Catholic Church*).

## *Private Adoration*

In addition to these times of public adoration, we can each — as often as possible according to our personal schedules and circumstances — draw great nourishment from times of private adoration.

The most important thing to realize about making a private Holy Hour is that you don't have to do anything. You don't have to say any particular prayers, or read, or sing, or anything else. *All you have to do is be present to the One who is present to you.* Certainly, bodily presence is a first step — at times that is all we are capable of — but we should also try to be present with our hearts. This means a loving awareness of who is present. Many times, we need to be *silently*

present — not analyzing, thinking, or saying prayers with our lips.

“Be still  
and know  
that  
I am God.”

Ps 46

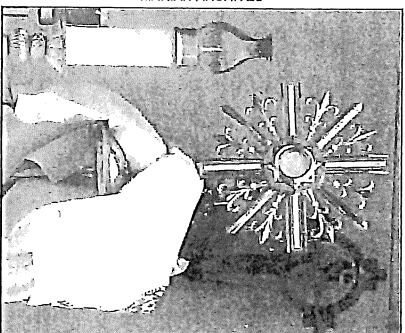
Even a few short moments of this silent presence to the Lord is a precious treasure, for it is in this silence that the Lord speaks to us.

As we sit in silence before the Lord, we are irradiated by His Eucharistic presence. We all need “radiation therapy” — and to receive it we only need to

*Be present to the One who is present*

by Fr. George W. Kosicki, CSB

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be *present*, just as in sun bathing we only need to be present to the ultra-violet radiation of the sun.

Especially in our age, which is so heavily bombarded with words — reading materials, radio, audio tapes, videos, and TV — we all need times to listen to the Lord, who speaks in a very special language called *silence*.

How beautifully Saint Maria Faustina describes her long, silent “talks” with the Lord:

Silence is so powerful a language that it reaches the throne of the living God. Silence is His language, though secret, yet living and powerful (*Diary*, 888).

In silence I tell You everything; Lord, because the language of love is without words (*Diary*, 1489).

Like St. Faustina, we all need to spend times of silence in the presence of the Eucharistic Lord to let Him minister to us with His healing, merciful love. And we also need these times of silent presence to love Him and make reparation for our sins and those of the whole world. It is a powerful and effective way to thank Him for His gift of mercy to us and, at the same time, to be “merciful to Him” since the Lord continues to suffer in His Body, the Church.

### *Eucharistic Prayers*

If, after an initial period of silent adoration, you feel a desire to pray, or read, or write, or sing, then you simply allow yourself to move naturally into whatever activity you feel led to do at each moment.

Reading the Scriptures, pamphlets, or books is always appropriate, and many people also like to pray the Rosary or make the stations of the cross. Traditional prayers in preparation for Holy Mass or in thanksgiving after Mass can also be very fruitful, particularly when they are addressed directly to Christ in the Eucharist.

There are also several prayers from the *Diary of Saint Faustina* that are especially suitable during

Eucharistic adoration (see the *O Blessed Host, Have Mercy on Us!* booklet, OBH, and *The Divine Mercy Message and Devotion* booklet M17):

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy (*Diary*, 1570);

Saint Faustina’s Praises of The Divine Mercy (*Diary*, 948-949);

At the Feet of Christ in the Eucharist (*Diary*, 80, 81, 1692, 1708);

For the Conversion of Sinners (*Diary*, 1397, 186, 187);

For Divine Mercy (*Diary*, 1570);

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy holds a special place of honor as a Eucharistic prayer because it is a continuation of the offering of the Mass. And the simple prayer “Jesus, Mercy!” is a continuation of the chaplet — a plea for God’s mercy for every moment of need.

### *How to Begin a Private Holy Hour*

There is no single “right” way to begin a Holy Hour, but here are some suggestions. Start with body-language, making some gesture of profound adoration, such as genuflecting or bowing to the Lord as a reverent acknowledgement of His Real Presence. Then, ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with His gift of praise. Unite your heart with the Heart of Mary, so that you can praise the Lord with the Heart of His mother. Call upon the angels and saints to help you to unite with their heavenly praise and worship. Let your heart be aglow with the Lord’s radiant presence and then follow the longing of your heart. Love Him, thank Him, and praise Him, who is present and loves you. As He tells us through one of the psalms,

“Be still and know that I am God” (Ps 46).

### *What about Distractions?*

Anytime you come into the Eucharistic presence of the Lord and find that you are distracted and anxious about situations in your life, you can begin your prayer

time with a litany of mercy as a way of letting go of all these thoughts.

How? Let me suggest a method that has helped me. Simply begin by asking the Holy Spirit to pray in you, and then respond to each of the distractions and anxieties — from whatever source — with short prayers such as: “Jesus, mercy” or “Jesus, I trust in You!”

Imagine that each of the distractions, anxieties, fears, or hurts is a slide in a slide-show. Project one “slide” at a time on the wall and pray your response, and then move on to the next “slide.” You will be surprised when suddenly you have run through all your slides and are at peace in the presence of the Lord.

### *How Do You End a Holy Hour?*

A good way to end a Holy Hour is to *thank* the Lord. Thank Him for His presence, for His Love, for all that He has done and will do in your life. You can call to mind and thank Him for the specific graces or resolutions you received during the hour. Then, again, express your adoration with your whole body and soul, and renew your commitment to try to live each moment of your life in such a way that you will be a living sign of His presence, of His mercy to the world.

### *With Ecclesiastical Approval*

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To order the *Diary of Saint Faustina* or *The Divine Mercy Message and Devotion* booklet, call 1-800-462-7426.



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