

A Holy Hour for Life

The following Holy Hour is a model and is based on the ritual book "Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass," which should be followed in all respects. A recently published resource of the USCCB Committee on the Liturgy entitled, [Thirty-One Questions on Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament](#), may also be helpful.

Procession

After all have assembled, a priest or deacon, wearing cope and humeral veil, brings the Blessed Sacrament to the Altar in a monstrance, and a song may be sung. He may be accompanied by altar servers with candles. The Blessed Sacrament is placed on the altar. The presiding minister then kneels before the altar and incenses the Blessed Sacrament. The opening song is concluded and a period of silent prayer follows.

Opening Prayer

The presiding minister then goes to the chair, where he prays one of the following opening prayers:

A:

Lord Jesus Christ,
we worship you living among us
in the sacrament of your body and
blood.
May we offer to our Father in heaven
a solemn pledge of undivided love.
May we offer to our brothers and
sisters
a life poured out in loving service of
that kingdom
where you live with the Father and
the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

- Alternative Opening Prayer for Mass, Corpus Christi

B:

Lord our God,
in this great sacrament
we come into the presence of Jesus
Christ, your Son,
born of the Virgin Mary
and crucified for our salvation.
May we who declare our faith in this
fountain of love and mercy
drink from it the water of everlasting
life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*- Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside
of Mass, 224*

All: **Amen.**

After a period of silent prayer, the Liturgy of the Word begins.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

From one man in regard to his fellow man I will demand an accounting of human life.

A reading from the Book of Genesis (9:1-7, Lectionary for Mass 338)

God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them:

"Be fertile and multiply to fill the earth.

Dread fear of you shall come upon all the animals of the earth

and all the birds of the air,

upon all the creatures that move about on the ground

and all the fishes of the sea;

into your power they are delivered.

Every creature that is alive shall be yours to eat;

I give them all to you as I did the green plants.

Only flesh with its lifeblood still in it you shall not eat.

For your own lifeblood, too, I will demand an accounting:

from every animal I will demand it,

and from one man in regard to his fellow man

I will demand an accounting for his human life.

If anyone sheds the blood of man,

by man shall his blood be shed;

For in the image of God

has man been made.

Be fertile, then, and multiply;

abound on earth and subdue it."

The word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God**

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 139: 1b-3, 13-14b, 23-24 (Lectionary for Mass 440)

R. Guide me Lord, along the everlasting way.

O Lord, you have probed me and you know me;
you know when I sit and when I stand;
you understand my thoughts from afar.
My journeys and my rest you scrutinize,
with all my way you are familiar.

R. Guide me Lord, along the everlasting way.

Truly you have formed my inmost being;
you knit me in my mother's womb.
I give you thanks that I am fearfully,
wonderfully made;
wonderful are your works.

R. Guide me Lord, along the everlasting way.

Probe me, O God, and know my heart;
try me, and know my thoughts;
See if my way is crooked,
and lead me in the way of old.

R. Guide me Lord, along the everlasting way.

After a period of silent prayer:

Gospel Acclamation

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the living bread that came down from heaven, says the Lord; whoever eats
this bread will live forever. *John 6:51*

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.

+ A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (6:51-58, Lectionary for Mass 167)

Jesus said to the Jewish Crowds:

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven;
whoever eats this bread will live forever;
and the bread that I will give
is my flesh for the life of the world."

The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying,

"How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

Jesus said to them:

"Amen, amen, I say to you,
unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood,
you do not have life within you.

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood
has eternal life,
and I will raise him on the last day.

For my flesh is true food,
and my blood is true drink.

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood
remains in me and I in him.

Just as the living Father sent me
and I have life because of the Father,
so also the one who feeds on me
will have life because of me.

This is the bread that came down from heaven.
Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died,
whoever eats this bread will live forever."

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God**

Homily

At the conclusion of the last reading a priest or a deacon preaches the homily, followed by a period of silent prayer.

Intercessions

Standing at the chair, the presiding minister invites the people to pray:

Presiding Minister: God is the author of life. In him we place our trust and hope as we pray:

All: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Deacon or other Minister: That justice, truth, and a love for the gift of life might inspire all legislators, governors, and our President, we pray to the Lord:

All: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Deacon or other Minister: For all who do not embrace the rights of the unborn that, in love, they may come to know the dignity of every person in the eyes of God, we pray to the Lord:

All: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Deacon or other Minister: For those preparing to receive the Sacrament of Marriage: that they might embrace their role as sharers in God's creative love, we pray to the Lord:

All: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Deacon or other Minister: For all who touch the lives of the condemned, the old, and the forgotten, that they might have compassion, respect, and appreciation for the dignity of all human life, we pray to the Lord:

All: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Deacon or other Minister: For the dying that through the love, care, and devotion of others they may know the beauty of life in their dying moments, we pray to the Lord:

All: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Deacon or other Minister: For the all the victims of the culture of death that like Lazarus, forgotten and poor, they may be welcomed into God's eternal peace, we pray to the Lord:

All: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

After a period of silent prayer:

Reading

The following reading may be read by a minister:

Pope John Paul II, Encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*, no. 25.

The blood of Christ, while it reveals the grandeur of the Father's love, shows how precious man is in God's eyes and how priceless the value of his life. The Apostle Peter reminds us of this: "You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot" (1 Pt 1:18-19). Precisely by contemplating the precious blood of Christ, the sign of his self-giving love (cf. Jn 13:1), the believer learns to recognize and appreciate the almost divine dignity of every human being and can exclaim with ever renewed and grateful wonder: "How precious must man be in the eyes of the Creator, if he 'gained so great a Redeemer' (Exsultet of the Easter Vigil), and if God 'gave his only Son' in order that man 'should not perish but have eternal life' (cf. Jn 3:16)!"

Furthermore, Christ's blood reveals to man that his greatness, and therefore his vocation, consists in the sincere gift of self. Precisely because it is poured out as the gift of life, the blood of Christ is no longer a sign of death, of definitive separation from the brethren, but the instrument of a communion which is

richness of life for all. Whoever in the Sacrament of the Eucharist drinks this blood and abides in Jesus (cf. Jn 6:56) is drawn into the dynamism of his love and gift of life, in order to bring to its fullness the original vocation to love which belongs to everyone (cf. Gen 1:27; 2:18-24).

It is from the blood of Christ that all draw the strength to commit themselves to promoting life. It is precisely this blood that is the most powerful source of hope, indeed it is the foundation of the absolute certitude that in God's plan life will be victorious. "And death shall be no more", exclaims the powerful voice which comes from the throne of God in the Heavenly Jerusalem (Rev 21:4). And Saint Paul assures us that the present victory over sin is a sign and anticipation of the definitive victory over death, when there "shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory', 'O death, where is your victory' 'O death, where is your sting?' " (1 Cor 15:54-55).

After a period of silent prayer:

Litany for Life

Lord, have mercy.

R. Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

R. Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

R. Lord, have mercy.

You breathed life into Adam

R. Lord, you give us life!

You formed Eve from flesh *Gn 2:7*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You heard the cry of innocent blood *Gn 9:5-6*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You spared the life of Cain *Gn 4:16*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You saved Noah from the flood *Gn 8:16*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You filled Sarah's barren womb *Gn 21:2*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You gave Abraham a son *Gn 21:3*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You preserved the life of Jacob *Gn 32:31*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You punished those who took life *Nm 35:31*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You place before us life and death *Dt 30:19*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You restore lost life *Rt 4:14*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You nourish the aged and weak *Rt 4:14*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You delivered Saul from David *1 Sm 26:22-24*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You redeemed the life of David *2 Sm 4:9*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You gave Solomon length of days *1 Kg 3:14*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You raised the child by Elijah's cry *1 Kg 17:21:22*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You are the Life that is the light of men *Jn 1:14*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You are the bread of Life *Jn 6:35*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You have the words of eternal life *Jn 6:68*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You are the resurrection and the life *Jn 11:25*

R. Lord, you give us life!

You are the Way, the Truth, and the Life *Jn 14:6*

R. Lord, you give us life!

The Lord's Prayer

The presiding minister then sings or says "Now let us offer together the prayer our Lord Jesus Christ taught us"

All: **Our Father...**

Benediction

At the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, the presiding minister goes to the altar, genuflects, and then kneels. As he kneels, Tantum ergo or another suitable Eucharistic song is sung and he incenses the Blessed Sacrament. After the hymn is finished, he rises and sings or says:

Let us pray.

After a brief period of silence, the presiding minister continues:

Lord Jesus Christ, (HCWEOM, 98)

you gave us the Eucharist

as the memorial of your suffering and death.

May our worship of this sacrament of your body and blood
help us to experience the salvation you won for us
and the peace of the kingdom
where you live with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

All: **Amen.**

After the prayer, the presiding minister puts on the humeral veil, genuflects, and takes the monstrance. He makes the sign of the cross with the monstrance over those gathered, in silence.

Reposition

*After the blessing the Blessed Sacrament is removed from the monstrance and brought to the place of reservation. Meanwhile, the presiding minister may lead those assembled in the Divine Praises. **Each acclamation is repeated by all together.***

Blessed be God.

Blessed be His Holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

Blessed be the name of Jesus.

Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart.

Blessed be His Most Precious Blood.

Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the paraclete.

Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.

Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.

Blessed be her glorious Assumption.

Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.

Blessed be Saint Joseph, her most chaste spouse.

Blessed be God in His angels and in His Saints.

After the Divine Praises are finished, the hymn is sung, and the presiding minister and the servers bow to the altar and leave.