

Understanding Eucharistic Adoration

Eucharistic Adoration at Saint Thomas Academy

What is Eucharistic Adoration?

Eucharistic Adoration is the act of simply being in the midst of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist – the real body, blood, soul and divinity of Christ.

What is the Purpose?

The actual act of adoration of Jesus Christ, present in the Eucharist, and giving of thanks and honor to Him through prayer is the ultimate goal of this time we spend in His presence. One of the extraordinary benefits of this posture is its invitation to gratitude and humility – an invitation to find perspective in our busy lives and open ourselves up for the possibility of peace and calm.

Is Eucharistic Adoration new?

No, in fact it is a very, very old tradition of the Catholic Church. Belief in the real, physical presence of Christ in the Eucharist grew out of the teaching of the evangelists and St. Paul. The skepticism of Christ's followers, when He preached the reality of His Body and Blood as food and drink, made John record the fact that "many of His disciples withdrew and no longer went about with Him." Seeing this, Jesus asked the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave me?" Simon Peter did not understand any more than those who left Christ, but his loyalty was more firm. "Lord," he answered, "to whom shall we go?" (John 6:66-68).

Although Adoration had been in practice for centuries, during the 16th century, the Council of Trent provided great clarity with this declaration: "The only-begotten Son of God is to be adored in the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. The Sacrament is to be publicly exposed for the people's adoration."

Pope John Paul II reemphasized the importance of the practice often during his papacy: "The Eucharist, in the Mass and outside of the Mass, is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and is therefore deserving of the worship that is given to the living God, and to Him alone." Eucharistic Adoration is a beautiful, devotional practice that has endured through the ages!

What is Do I Do During Eucharistic Adoration?

Eucharistic Adoration is usually (and at STA) a personal, not a group, experience. During Adoration you have the opportunity to relax, pray, listen, reflect, read, to just breath – and find calm, peace and tranquility.

Some people take this time to reflect and pray about challenging situations or to simply thank God for their many blessings; others use the time to read books they've been meaning to get to, such as the Bible, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, or other reading that enriches the "inner life." Some pray the rosary. Many do all of the above! There is no one right way to have a positive experience during Eucharistic Adoration.

The only requirement is that an attitude of reverence and humility is adopted in recognition of the Real Presence. When you enter the chapel, sign in and feel free to borrow any of the reading material or rosaries that will be available for you. Before seating or kneeling in a pew, genuflect to recognize Christ in your midst. What you chose to do after that – pray, read, reflect – is your personal decision and between you and our Lord!

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How Will I Feel During Adoration?

Everyone feels differently because everyone is different – at different points in their lives, at different points in their faith journey and prayer life. If you’ve never taken a full hour out to sit or kneel in silence and pray, the first several times you do this it will be strange and possibly uncomfortable. You may have the greatest intentions to have an hour of focused prayer, but the distractions are many. Our minds can easily turn to the lists and tasks of our everyday life. Prayer is not something that just happens naturally; like most things, it requires practice. If you are new to Eucharistic Adoration, your first few times may not be as fulfilling or transformative as you may have hoped. But over time, the ability to relax, slow down and take in the peacefulness of the experience will grow.

Does It Really Do Any Good?

Yes, it really does! This one hour can change your mood, your outlook, or even change your life – always for the better because of the Real Presence of Christ. Pope John Paul II, called by many “The Pope of the Real Presence,” strongly encouraged all of the faithful to participate in Eucharistic Adoration as a welcome refuge from a world that demands our every moment and all of our attention – and often robs us of our time and energy to connect with God through prayer and proper reflection. Regular participation in Eucharistic Adoration does provide that opportunity to slow down, breath deep, and focus for a moment on our “inner life.”

Why Is Eucharistic Adoration Offered at STA?

Eucharistic Adoration is common at most Catholic institutions throughout our Archdiocese – and throughout the world. Eucharistic Adoration is a wonderful part of Saint Thomas Academy’s Catholic identity. Our sister school Visitation also offers Eucharistic Adoration as a part of their Catholic mission, as well. Having the Blessed Sacrament exposed and open for our praise and thanks on premises at STA is also a blessing to ours sons and the faculty and staff who teach them each day.

Can I Participate in Adoration at STA if I am Not Catholic?

All members of the Saint Thomas Academy Community are invited to participate in Eucharistic Adoration at STA! Even if you do not believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the very act of dedicating one hour – or whatever time you can spare – in prayer and reflection can be a very rewarding experience. To do so among our sons and the good people who care for them each day makes the experience all the more meaningful.

Can I Drop by for Adoration if I am not Committed to a Specific Hour?

Yes! All are welcome – for whatever amount of time you would like between 8:00 am and 2:30 pm. We only ask that those who have made specific holy hour commitments will fulfill them or, if an emergency or major conflict arises, a substitute is secured from the Sub List.