



## Guidelines for Eucharistic Processions

Pope St. Paul VI writes of special forms of worship of the Eucharist, “The Catholic Church has always displayed and still displays this latria that ought to be paid to the Sacrament of the Eucharist, both during Mass and outside of it, by taking the greatest possible care of consecrated hosts, by exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and by carrying them about in processions to the joy of great numbers of the people.”<sup>1</sup> May our processions also bring joy to all who participate! This is not an unfounded joy, but one founded on the knowledge that Christ comes to us, to be among us, to make is dwelling in our midst, to teach us, and lead us to the Father.

The following are helpful guidelines for preparing a Eucharistic Procession according to the norms of the Church.

1. The source texts for Eucharistic Processions is Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass (HCWEOM), nos. 101-108, and Ceremonial of Bishops, nos. 385-394.
2. The following are the things that should be prepared for the procession in addition to what is needed for the Mass:
  - a. A host to be used in the monstrance
  - b. Monstrance
  - c. Humeral Veil
  - d. [Second Thurible]
  - e. Candles for the procession
  - f. [Canopy]
3. A day of special importance for Eucharistic devotion, and thus also for processions, is the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. While processions may be done on other days, it is for the local ordinary to determine these other times (cf. HCWEOM, nos. 101-102). A period of more intense Eucharistic devotion or renewal is a suitable context for such processions, in addition to special feast days or other similar observances.
4. “It is fitting that a Eucharistic procession begin after the Mass in which the host to be carried in the procession has been consecrated. A procession may also take place, however, at the end of a lengthy period of adoration.”<sup>2</sup>
5. The procession, then, may take place immediately after the final Mass of the day, or after a period of adoration. The period of adoration may begin with exposition at the end of Mass.
6. If the procession begins immediately following Mass, it takes place as follows. “After the communion of the faithful, [the presider or a deacon] places the monstrance on the altar, then reverently places the consecrated host in it. [The presiders and deacons(s)] genuflect and return to the prayer where [the presider] says the prayer after communion. After the prayer after communion, the concluding rites are omitted, and the procession takes place.

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<sup>1</sup> *Mysterium Fidei*, no. 56

<sup>2</sup> HCWEOM, no. 103

[The presider wears] a chasuble as at Mass or a white cope... When incense has been placed in the censer and blessed, [the presider], kneeling before the altar, incenses the blessed sacrament. he then receives the humeral veil and goes up to the altar, genuflects, and, assisted by a deacon, takes the monstrance and holds it with hands covered by the two ends of the veil.”<sup>3</sup>

7. The order of ministers and faithful in the procession is as follows.<sup>4</sup> The celebrant with the monstrance may be covered with a canopy, which will require ministers to carry the canopy.

Cross Bearer  
Candle Candle  
(Lay Associations – eg. Catholic Daughters, Knights and Ladies of the Holy  
Sepulchre, Knights of Columbus)  
(Religious)  
Clergy  
[Deacons of Mass]  
Thurifer Thurifer  
Celebrant with the monstrance  
[Deacon(s) assisting the celebrant]  
People

8. It is appropriate to have stations at various points along the path of the procession at which Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament is given.  
9. Eucharistic hymns should be sung during the procession.  
10. When the procession returns to the Church, Benediction should be given, and the Blessed Sacrament should be reposed according to the norms established in the liturgical texts.

Here are a few helpful tips regarding civil regulations to keep in mind for outdoor processions:

- If processing on private, parish or Catholic school property, no contact with local officials or others is needed (presuming pastor and/or school approval)
- If processing on public property, please contact your local police department. They provide information regarding:
  - a. The constitutional right to assemble
  - b. Local traffic laws
  - c. Potential need for permit – for example, here is the city of [Atlanta's permit application](#)
  - d. If desired, hiring additional police as accompaniment

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<sup>3</sup> Ceremonial of Bishops, no. 389-392.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ceremonial of Bishops, no. 391.