

Sensory-Friendly Eucharistic Adoration



for Persons with Disabilities
and Their Families

Guidebook

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Introduction



Come let us adore

Sensory-Friendly Eucharistic Adoration is designed to create a welcoming space for persons with disabilities and their families within Catholic faith communities. This liturgy aims to provide a peaceful and accessible environment where all individuals, regardless of abilities, can grow in their faith through Eucharistic adoration.

Traditionally, adoration is a time of quiet. Parents and caregivers of persons with disabilities may not feel comfortable attending because their loved ones often express themselves through loud sounds and movement. This guidebook offers an adoration experience that is open to such expression by worshippers.



This guidebook was produced by the NCPD Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities with special thanks to the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas and Catholic Charities of Kansas City - St. Joseph.

Event Features



1

Environment

Design an environment that minimizes sensory overload by incorporating dimmed lighting, providing an uncluttered space, quieter music, and omitting incense.

Mobility Needs

2

Site should be wheelchair accessible. Include seating options for various mobility needs, and allow families to be seated together. Preferred that the adoration room not have an incline.



3

Large Print

Large-print worship aids or visual schedules should be provided to aid participation.

Calming Area

4

A designated calming area will be available, if possible, for persons who need to take a break.





5

Hearing

Assistive listening devices or sign language interpreters will be provided when requested, if possible.

Fidgets

Have sensory items such as fidgets, weighted lap pads, rosaries, etc.

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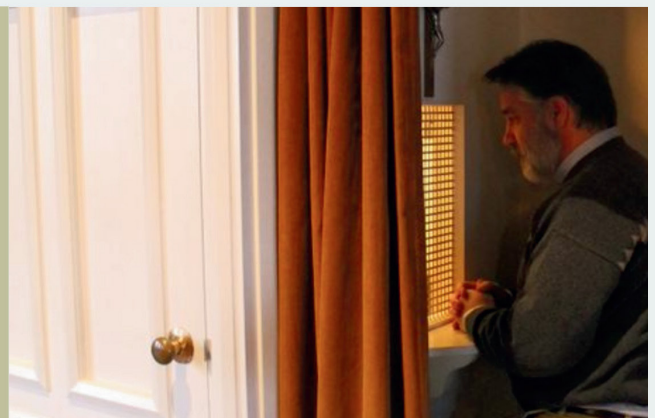
Fellowship

After adoration, it is recommended that refreshments be provided to foster fellowship and build community.

Reconciliation

Offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation if possible.

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Planning Team Roles

It is best to have a team to carry this out.

Roles on the team could include:



Program Coordinator

1. Work with the team on all details preceding, during, and after the event
2. Manage communication with pastor/ staff.
3. Review “Disability Etiquette and Hospitality” with persons assisting at the adoration service.
4. Prepare and organize space to be used.
 - a. Ensure facility is open and accessible.
 - b. Tidy up afterward.



Promotion Manager

1. Develop promotional materials that specify the intended audience and describe the purpose of the event.
2. Coordinate distribution and display of all promotional materials.
3. Manage social media postings.
4. Communicate to parish groups.



Social Coordinator

1. Organize a post-event social gathering with refreshments to promote fellowship and community building. Provide name-tags. Offer gluten-free and soft foods options. Ensure the space is cleaned up afterwards.
 - a. Make sure the social gathering is part of the promotion
 2. Place signs about the post-event gathering:
 - a. at property entry points on the day of the event
 - b. next to liturgical aids if available.
 3. Greeters can announce before and after adoration that there will be a social.
-



Greeters/ Hospitality

1. Recruit volunteers who are understanding and empathetic toward persons with disabilities to be greeters who can assist with hospitality efforts.
 2. See section on “Disability Etiquette and Training.”
 3. Attend a brief training by and/or handout from program coordinator.
-

Other Event Considerations



Liturgical considerations

1. Coordinate with clergy.
 - a. Communicate the desire to not use incense.
 - b. Need for simplicity of reflection, if applicable.
 - c. Instructive approach as this may be a first adoration.
2. Review the possibility of potential noise from participants and that this is ok and expected.



Site Details

1. Choose a church/location that is wheelchair accessible (e.g., worship space, restrooms, fellowship hall).
2. Adjust the lighting and acoustics of the space to minimize sensory overload.
3. Consider if using another space would be more beneficial (e.g., parish hall, classroom, gym).
4. Ensure ample accessible parking spaces are available.



Sensory Environment

1. Create a calming atmosphere using lower lighting.
2. Provide fidgets for persons who need them.
3. Encourage attendees and volunteers to refrain from wearing perfume or cologne in promo materials or emails.
4. Avoid the use of incense.



Promotion

1. Reach out to local disability advocacy organizations, support groups, and diocesan media to spread the word.
 2. Repeatedly advertise in the bulletin and announce at Mass starting a few weeks prior.
 3. Post signage advising that this is a disability-friendly adoration in the parish narthex, community space and/or bulletin board.
 4. Invite someone with a disability to hand out flyers after Mass.
-



Accessibility Services

1. Arrange for American sign language (ASL) interpreters, if requested.
 2. If the parish is equipped with assistive technology for individuals who are hard of hearing, ensure listening devices are available and in working order.
 3. Provide a means of contacting the parish in advance to advise that an attendee has a specific need (e.g. website form, email, phone number)."
-



Scheduling

1. Select a date and time that are convenient for the intended audience.
2. Reserve rooms.
3. Ensure access with ample time for setup and cleanup.



Safety and Health

1. Review the emergency protocols that are in place with the parish.
 2. Ensure your team knows where to find the first aid kit and AED and clean-up materials for bodily fluids.
-



Feedback and Evaluation

1. Collect feedback informally from attendees at the reception to assess success. Collect later from planners.
 2. Collect feedback later from attendees and planners via a survey.
-



Budget

1. Seek funding for sensory items (e.g., fidgets, rosaries) and/or refreshments.
 2. Ask parish groups for financial or material contributions.
-



Sacrament of Reconciliation

1. Will confession be available?
 - a. If so, duration and location?
2. Make sure priest is familiar with the Sacramental Guidelines for Persons with Disabilities.
 - a. (<https://www.usccb.org/committees/divine-worship/policies/guidelines-sacraments-persons-with-disabilities>) (See section on Reconciliation, Para. 27)



Fellowship and Refreshments

1. Organize a post-event gathering to promote community building with refreshments and seating. Consider common dietary restrictions by being nut free and including options that are soft and gluten free.
 - a. Consider an ice breaker to get people to mingle. (See appendix for ideas.)
 - b. If there is an active community that is already meeting at a regular frequency for fellowship, a social after may not be needed.
2. Have a means to collect contact information for those attending.
3. If relevant, let attendees know about upcoming disability ministry events and/or groups.



Disability Etiquette and Hospitality

Physical/Mobility

- Ask about preferred location for seating.
- Don't push or touch a person's wheelchair without their permission.
- Don't assume people with canes or crutches prefer to use a ramp over stairs.
- Don't grab people's arms who use canes/crutches. They need their arms to balance themselves.
- Speak to the person in the wheelchair and not to the person that may be accompanying them.
- Be eye level with person in wheelchair when talking to them.
- Ask before offering help. Don't be offended if the person says no.
- Never pet anyone on the head.
- A person with respiratory or heart condition may have difficulty walking long distances. Offer a place to rest before ushering to seat.
- Ensure that if presider gives verbal cue about kneeling, he includes "as you are able."

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

- Use age-appropriate language. Don't baby talk.
- Repeat information about yourself if necessary.
- Rephrase, rather than repeat, sentences that the person doesn't understand.
- Treat people equally.
- Even if person doesn't read, offer reading materials.
- Provide social narrative about adoration. Include a link or QR code to the social narrative in promos.
- Have simple language versions of reading and prayers available.
- Include on the worship aid a QR code for meditations and prayers and encourage use of personal devices and headphones.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

- Ask the person if they prefer to use sign language, writing, gesturing, speaking or a combination of all to communicate.
- To get the attention of a person who is deaf/HOH you can tap them on their shoulder, wave your hand or flicker the lights.
- Do not shout to a person who is wearing a hearing aid. Your shouting will be more distorted. Move closer to the individual.
- Face person directly when speaking and do not obscure your mouth when communicating.
- When using a sign-language interpreter, look directly at the person who is Deaf, and maintain eye contact.
- Talk directly to the person who is Deaf.
- Don't be afraid of interaction. There is nothing worse than being left out and ignored.
- Offer assisted listening devices if available; have a note pad and pen available.

Speech Disabilities

- Ask person to repeat themselves if you can't understand.
- Wait for the person to finish then restate to be sure you understand.
- Suggest another way of facilitating communication.
- Don't nod to a person you can't understand.
- Don't interrupt or finish a person's sentence.

Blindness/Partially Sighted

- Identify yourself and your role (I am the greeter/usher).
- Ask person "Would you like assistance?" Offer your arm. Describe the scene.
- Walk on the opposite side of a guide dog.
- Don't touch person's cane or guide dog.
- Give verbal cues (e.g. Don't say "watch out", say "there is a trash can in front of you...", "there is a step coming up...")
- Guide an individual's hand to a banister or the back of a chair to help direct him to a stairway or seat.
- Offer large-print or brailled bulletins and large-print prayer books and hymnals.

Behavioral Needs

- Create a space parishioners can go to in order to de-escalate challenging behaviors.
- Don't force conversation.
- Don't argue. Wait for rational moments.
- Ask how you can help, find out if there is a support person who can be sent for.
- Ask what will make him/her most comfortable and respect his/her needs to the maximum extent possible.
- Remember that these behaviors are just as stressful for parents and family members. Engage family in conversations related to best strategies and natural supports at a time and manner that conveys empathy and understanding.

Mental Health

- Be sure to greet.
- Give your name and ask theirs but respect boundaries.

Other Tips

- Gestures often convey acceptance. Sit next to person with disability but respect boundaries.
- As an usher or greeter, please respect person's needs and requests whenever possible.
- Don't make decisions for people with disabilities about what they can or can't do.
- A person who may appear drunk or sick may have a disability or medical emergency.
- Need for both visual and auditory cues.

Sometimes, the disability isn't obvious, as in the case of some intellectual/developmental disabilities or mental illnesses.

If you observe behavior that you don't understand, it is good to remain aware for possible need of assistance and be nonjudgmental.

These tips have been provided using resources from:

National Catholic Partnership on Disability

Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Administration

Liberty Resources, Inc.

National Pastoral Life Center

Archdiocese of Newark

Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Diocese of Boston

Diocese of Wichita

WORSHIP AID

Prelude: soft music

When the presider (priest, deacon, or lay person if priest or deacon is not present) opens the tabernacle, all kneel, if possible. The monstrance is prepared on the altar.

Once the celebrant has reached the front of the altar and kneels, the congregation sings *O Saving Victim*.

O saving Victim, open wide	To your great name be endless praise,
The gate of heaven to us below.	Immortal Godhead, One in Three;
Our foes press on from every side;	O grant us endless length of days
Your aid supply, your strength bestow.	In our true native land with thee. Amen

EXPOSITION

During this period, options can include: prayers, litanies, music, Scripture, exhortation or reflection. * Persons in attendance kneel or are seated during adoration. Though persons are welcome to move within the space as needed.

BENEDICTION

After a period of meditation and reflection the celebrant proceeds to the altar, genuflects, and kneels. All kneel, if possible, and join in singing *Tantum Ergo*.

Down in adoration falling,	To the everlasting Father,
This great Sacrament we hail;	And the Son who made us free,
Over ancient forms of worship	And the Spirit, God proceeding
Newer rites of grace prevail;	From them Each eternally,
Faith will tell us Christ is present,	Be salvation, honor, blessing,
When our human senses fail.	Might and endless majesty. Amen.

If kneeling, remain kneeling, when the presider stands and states the following:

Priest/Deacon: You have given them Bread from heaven.

ALL: Having all sweetness within it.

Priest/Deacon: Let us pray! O God, who in this wonderful Sacrament have left us a memorial of your Passion, grant us, we pray, so to revere the sacred mysteries of your Body and Blood that we may always experience in ourselves the fruits of your redemption. Who live and reign with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

ALL: Amen.

The celebrant will then bless all present with the Blessed Sacrament.

After the presider has blessed everyone, he will come back in front of the altar and kneel and lead everyone in the *Divine Praises*.

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. Amen.

REPOSITION

When the priest or deacon reposes the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle and genuflects, all stand, in body or spirit, and join in singing.

Holy God, we praise thy name;

Lord of all, we bow before thee;

All on earth thy scepter claim;

All in heaven above adore thee.

Infinite thy vast domain, Everlasting is thy reign!

Hark, the loud celestial hymn;

Angel choirs above are raising;

Cherubim and Seraphim,

In unceasing chorus praising,

Fill the heavens with sweet accord:

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord!"

For more information see "Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery Outside of Mass," published in August, 2024, USCCB.

*See texts on next page.

SCRIPTURE READINGS DURING A PERIOD OF EXPOSITION

The following Scripture passages may be proclaimed during an extended period of adoration or exposition. The reading(s) should be accompanied by preaching and periods of silence. The full pericopes can be found herein or in *The Lectionary for Mass for the Dioceses of the United States*, nos. 976-981 (Votive Mass: The Most Holy Eucharist).

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis 14:18-20

Exodus 12:21-27

Exodus 24: 3-8

Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15

Exodus 24:3-8

Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a

1 Kings 19:4-8

Proverbs 9:1-6

Melchizedek brought forth bread and wine.

Seeing the Blood on the lintel and the two door posts, the Lord will pass over that house.

This is the Blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you. (no. 989)

I will now rain down bread from heaven for you.

This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you.

He fed you with manna, a food unknown to you and your fathers.

Strengthened by that food, he walked to the mountain of God.

Come, eat of my food and drink of the wine I have mixed.

EASTER SEASON

Acts 2:42-47

Acts 10:34a, 37-43

Revelation 1:5-8

Revelation 7:9-14

They devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes

We ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his Blood.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 23:1-3, 4, 5, 6

Psalm 34: 2-3, 4-5, 6-7,
8-9, 10-11

Psalm 40:2 and 4ab, 7-8a,
8b-9, 10

Psalm 78:3 and 4a and
7ab, 23-24, 25 and 54

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord
OR Alleluia

Here I am, Lord, I come to do your will.

The Lord gave them bread from heaven.

Psalms 110:1, 2, 3, 4

Christ the Lord, a priest for ever in the line of Melchizedek OR You are a priest forever in the line of Melchizedek

Psalms 116:12-13,
15-16bc, 17-18

Our blessing cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ

Psalms 145: 10-11, 15-16,
17-18

You open your hand to feed us, Lord, you answer all our needs.

Psalms 147: 12-13, 14-15, 19-20

Whoever eats this bread will live forever.

NEW TESTAMENT

1 Cor 10:16-17

We, though many are one bread, one body.

1 Cor 11:23-26

For as often as you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord

Hebrews 9:11-15

The blood of Christ will cleanse our consciences
OR He entered once for all into the sanctuary with his own blood (no. 992)

Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24

You have approached the sprinkled Blood that speaks more eloquently than that of Abel.

1 Peter 1:17-21

You were ransomed with the precious Blood of Christ...

1 John 5:4-8

So there are three that testify, the Spirit, the water, and the Blood.

GOSPEL

Mark 14:12-16, 22-26

This is my Body. This is my Blood.

Mark 15:16-20

They clothed him in purple and weaving a crown of thorns, they placed it on him.

Luke 9:11b-17

They all ate and were satisfied

Luke 22:39-44

His sweat became like drops of blood, falling on the ground.

Luke 24:13-35 OR
24:13-16, 28-35

They recognized him in the breaking of the bread.

John 6:1-15

He distributed to those who were reclining as much as they wanted.

John 6:24-35

Whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.

John 6:41-51

I am the living bread that came down from heaven.

John 6:51-58

My flesh is true food and my Blood is true drink.

John 19:31-37

One soldier thrust his lance into his side and immediately Blood and water flowed out.

John 21:1-14

Jesus came over and took the bread and gave it to them.

Contact List

Create a team member list with their contact information

Name/ Role	Phone	Email

Sign-in sheet for more information and notifications of other upcoming events

NAME	ROLE	EMAIL	PHONE

Sensory Friendly Adoration Feedback Form



Date:

Location:

Your Role (Person with Disability, Parishioner, Caregiver, Family Member, etc.):

How did you hear about this event and were details communicated effectively?


Share any suggestions for improving accessibility:

Share any specific moments or aspects that stood out positively or negatively:

What did you like about the social? Any suggestions for improvement?

Do you have any additional comments, feedback, or ideas for future events?

Please see optional contact form/sign-in sheet
if you wish to leave your contact information to receive notifications of upcoming events.



SENSORY FRIENDLY ADORATION

**FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES,
FAMILY, FRIENDS, CAREGIVERS
AND ALL PARISHIONERS**

Sensory-Friendly Eucharistic Adoration is designed to create a welcoming space for persons with disabilities and their families within Catholic faith communities. This liturgy aims to provide a peaceful and accessible environment where all individuals, regardless of their abilities, can grow in their faith through Eucharistic adoration.

Due to the typically quiet nature of adoration parents and caregivers of persons with disabilities may not feel comfortable attending because their loved ones often express themselves through loud sounds and movement. This adoration experience is open to such expression by worshippers.



A special thanks to:



ncpd.org

Sensory Friendly Adoration for Persons with Disabilities, Families, Friends, Caregivers and All Parishioners



WORSHIP AID

Prelude: soft music

When the presider (priest, deacon, or lay person if priest or deacon is not present) opens the tabernacle, all kneel, if possible. The monstrance is prepared on the altar.

Once the celebrant has reached the front of the altar and kneels, the congregation sings *O Saving Victim*:

O saving Victim, open wide	To your great name be
The gate of heaven to us below.	endless praise, Immortal Godhead, One in Three;
Our foes press on from every side;	O grant us endless length of days
Your aid supply, your strength bestow.	In our true native land with thee. Amen

Thank you for attending our sensory
friendly adoration!

Please join us after for light
refreshments and fellowship!

For more information see “Holy
Communion and Worship of the
Eucharistic Mystery Outside of
Mass,” published in August, 2024,
USCCB.

REPOSITION

When the priest or deacon reposes the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle and genuflects, all stand (in body or spirit) and join in singing:

Holy God, we praise thy name;
Lord of all, we bow before thee;
All on earth they scepter claim;
All in heaven above adore thee.
Infinite they vast domain,
Everlasting is thy reign!

Hark, the loud celestial hymn;
Angel choirs above are raising;
Cherubim and Seraphim,
In unceasing chorus praising,
Fill the heavens with sweet accord:
“Holy, holy, holy, Lord!”

EXPOSITION

During this period, options can include: prayers, litanies, music, Scripture, exhortation or reflection. Persons in attendance kneel or are seated during adoration. Though persons are welcome to move within the space as needed.

BENEDICTION

After a period of meditation and reflection the celebrant proceeds to the altar, genuflects, and kneels. All kneel, if possible, and join in singing *Tantum Ergo/Down in Adoration*:

Down in adoration falling,
This great Sacrament we hail;
Over ancient forms of worship
Newer rites of grace prevail;
Faith will tell us Christ is present,
When our human senses fail.

To the everlasting Father,
And the Son who made us free,
And the Spirit, God proceeding
From them each eternally,
Be salvation, honor, blessing,
Might and endless majesty. Amen.

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ALL: Having all sweetness within it.

Priest/Deacon:

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ALL: Amen.

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Divine Praises

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 St. Joseph,

her most chaste Spouse.

Blessed be God in his Angels and in his Saints.

Notes

If you have a story or news article
that you want to share about your sensory friendly
adoration please do so at the following link:
<https://www.ncpd.org/form/sensory-friendly-liturgies>





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