



Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in Parishes Instructions for Musicians

Both choosing and performing music at Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament can be a difficult task. This document hopes to make this process more straightforward and a lot less daunting and encourage, especially for those who are new to it.

It is important to remember that Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is focused solely on Jesus Christ, truly present in the altar. Therefore, the music we sing and play should also be focused on the Lord. *It is crucial that the music we play help to both edify (improve) and encourage the faithful in their prayers.* Secular music and all music which does not fit with the spirit of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament should be avoided without exception. Music should always be an aid, never a distraction.

For Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, there are four main places where music has a role. These are:

- Exposition
- Incensation
- Reposition
- After the Dismissal/Final Blessing

Exposition: This is when the priest removes the Blessed Sacrament from the Tabernacle and inserts it into the Monstrance. For this moment, any Eucharistic hymn is typically appropriate but there are some obvious exclusions which don't make sense ("Draw Nigh and Take", for example) in the context. Some good hymns for this purpose are:

- *O Bread of Heaven*
- *Sweet Sacrament Divine*
- *Jesus, my Lord, my God, my all*
- *Soul of my Saviour*
- *Be Still for the Presence of the Lord*

Incensation: This is when the priest incenses the Host, before reciting the Divine Praises. Typically, in many cultures, the hymn *Tantum Ergo* is sung at this point. Similarly, the hymn *O Salutaris Hostia* may also be sung. This is a highly commendable practice but if this is not possible, prayerful silence or another Eucharistic hymn (such as those listed above) would be appropriate.

Reposition: This is when the Priest removes the host from the Monstrance and returns it to the Tabernacle. Again there are a few hymns which are commonly sung at this point. There are *O Sacrament Most Holy*, *Benedictus Qui Venit* and *Adoremus in Aeternum*. However, if neither of these three are possible, another short Eucharistic hymn may be sung whilst the action is completed.

After Dismissal/Final Blessing: This is a good opportunity to bring in hymns appropriate to the wider liturgical influences on a given day. It is also common for a Marian hymn to be sung at this point. Hymns to appropriate Saints, devotion and liturgical seasons may be sung here so long as they are appropriate and have good reason to be used.